British Beet BBRO Research Organisation Advisory Bulletin

Issue 9: 23rd July 2025

IN BRIEF

- Welcome rain for many over the last seven days, up to 70 mm for some!
- Foliar diseases: rust, powdery mildew and cercospora leaf spot are all starting to be found.
- Cercospora monitoring is now live and accessible on the BBRO website (Cercospora Monitoring and Forecasting for 2025 - BBRO).
- Low levels of yellowing seen in crop to date but in most cases this is due to other causes, including red and/or two-spotted spider mite.
- BCN reports have been recorded by the BBRO Plant Clinic.
- Beet Moth: Warm, dry conditions continue to encourage activity with increasing reports of caterpillars found in the crop.
- Many beneficial insects in crops at the moment too.
- Emergency authorisation: use of one application of Coragen (chlorantraniliprole) has been granted for beet moth control until 30th September 2025. BBRO ask growers to leave untreated area to assess for efficacy of treatments.
- BeetCast July: Overarching view of an agronomist

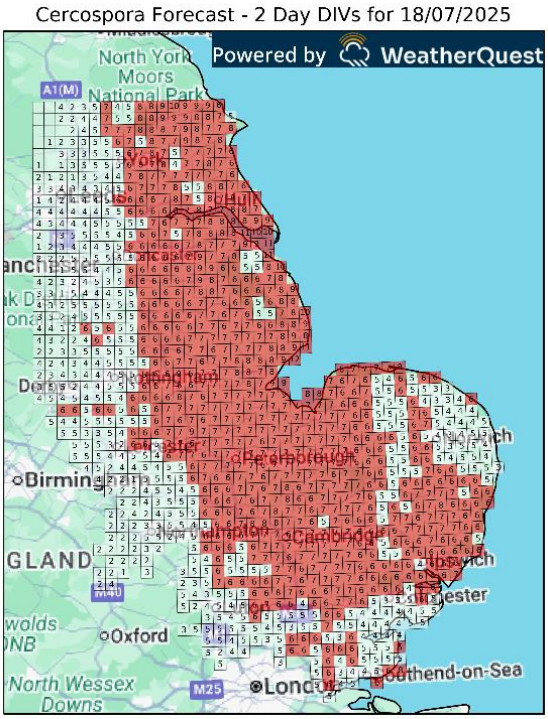

Figure 1: Cercospora risk warning issued on 18th July.

Foliar disease

Powdery mildew, rust and cercospora have now been identified in crop and in some cases the first fungicide has been applied. Of the three diseases, cercospora poses the greatest risk, particularly with the current weather conditions (warm and wet). Early infections can reduce yield by up to 40%.

Figure 2: Cercospora leaf spot

Cercospora is highly adaptable and can develop resistance to fungicides, it is therefore important to rotate actives. Available fungicides which are effective against cercospora are:

- Angle or Priori Gold (azoxystrobin and difenoconazole)– provides control of isolates of cercospora (up to two applications). In recent years BBRO spore monitoring has shown a sharp increase in resistant isolates after the use of strobilurins.

- Revystar (mefentrifluconazole and fluxapyroxad) - offers good control of cercospora isolates and has label approval for two applications.

- Caligula (fluopyram and prothioconazole) offers good control of cercospora isolates and has label approval for one application. It can only be applied **after** the 1st September.

To maintain efficacy, ideally actives should not be repeated back-to-back, also do not compromise on rates – this will reduce efficacy whilst encouraging resistance to develop. If cercospora develops in your crops it is absolutely vital to apply at the full label recommended rate.

Please check the label before use on droughted or stressed crops which are likely to be more susceptible to foliar diseases.

BBRO are monitoring spore development and weather forecasts to determine levels of risk. Results can be viewed on the BBRO website (https://bbro.co.uk/on-farm/cercospora-risk/). Text alerts to check crop will be sent to growers in areas of high risk.

Product Example	Powdery Mildew	Rust	Ramularia	Cercospora *
Angle/ Priori Gold	✓	✓	✓	✓
Caligula	✓	✓	✓	✓
Revystar XE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sulphur (e.g. Kumulus, Microthiol, Thiopron)	✓	✗	✗	✗
Twist	✗	✓	✗	✗

Note: Check with the manufacturer before mixing with other actives and pay attention to stewardship guidelines to protect manual workers. For example, in the case of Caligula, restrict entry into the field for 48 hours after application. For entry into the crop 48 hours – 6 weeks after application suitable PPE should be worn (boots, suitable protective gloves and long trousers).

Weed beet and bolters

We are still seeing a lot of weed beet and bolters in field. Remember, one weed beet can produce 1,500 viable seeds. Where possible, complete hand pulling prior to use of fungicides as noted above.

Beet moth

Reports of beet moth are causing concern, particularly, but not exclusively in the Bury factory area. Working with British Sugar's agriculture managers, we are monitoring spread closely. Areas affected in previous seasons seem most impacted, with coastal and northern areas relatively clear, possibly due to higher rainfall in those areas. The impact of beet moth has been more visible in drought stressed crops where the crown is more exposed, whilst strong upright canopies seem to be holding their own. The number of moths caught in pheromone traps have increased and could potentially continue to do so, as we would normally expect a peak of activity in September (see data from the Linton, Cambridgeshire site as an example).

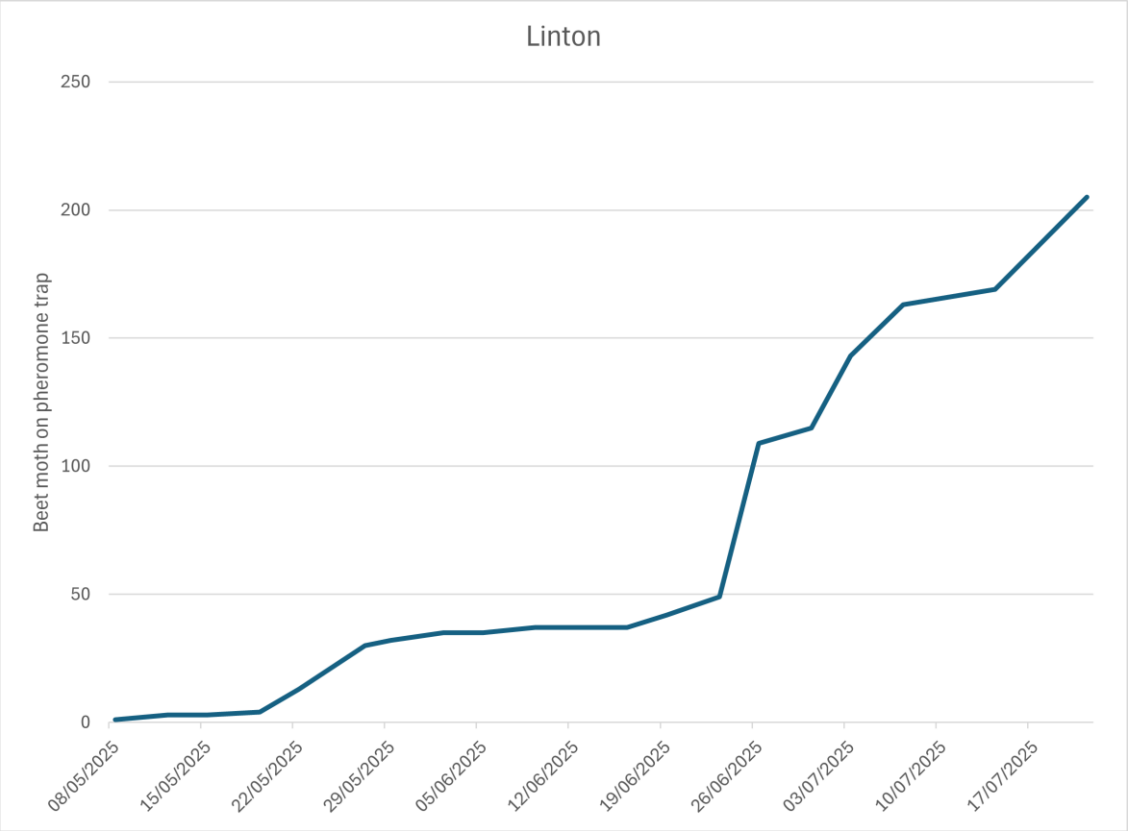

Figure 3: Beet moth monitoring via pheromone traps, Linton, Cambridgeshire.

We have issued further information on this pest which can also be accessed here. Unfortunately, we have little data regarding the efficacy of treatments as once the larvae enter the heart leaves of the canopy they become difficult to target. It is thought that ladybirds are also predators, which adds complexity concerning the use of pyrethroids.

Heavy rainfall is still deemed to provide the best control and should also help invigorate the crop.

If you intend to spray to control beet moth, we recommend you leave a small area untreated in order to assess the efficiency of the active used. Please email info@bbro.co.uk with any observations.

Virus yellows

We have received a number of reports due to crop yellowing. In most cases these have been due to drought, scorch or nutrient deficiency, but several seem to be due to red and/or two-spotted spider mite feeding damage which have entered the crop earlier than usual due to the warm, dry conditions. Signs tend to be more visible around the headlands where the mite has entered from surrounding hedgerows. If suspected check the back of leaves as the small mites are usually visible to the naked eye.

Currently there are no controls for this pest.

Figure 4 (above): Spider mites

Figure 5 (left): Spider mite damage, normally limited to headlands

Over 3,000 aphids have now been tested for BMYV and BChV with only nine testing positive (0.25% of tested population), this is the same level as the previous year. In order to ensure our testing results are robust we also test for turnip yellows which is another virus carried by aphids (harmless to beet but impacts brassica crops), of the aphids tested 86% were found to be positive for turnip yellows which provides us with confidence of our results, but might be of more concern for those growing oil seed rape.

Rhizoctonia

If you suffered from patches of black leg in the spring and are left with bare patches in the field or dry blemishes on beet it may be worth sending some samples into the plant clinic for diagnosis as it could be a sign of rhizoctonia. The warm spring and summer will have been influential, as well as previous cropping as maize can also host this disease. If signs of root rot appear – lift early.

Rhizoctonia (root rot)

When: Middle June onwards

Symptoms: Dry rot spots gradually deepen and disrupt the beet close to the soil surface. Patchy infested areas are typical

Risk: Wet, poorly drained soils. Optimum temperature of 25-33°C

Severity: Yield losses range from negligible to more than 50%

Advice: No treatment for root rot. Avoid close rotations of susceptible crops (eg maize, beans)

Beet Cyst Nematodes

We urge growers to check their crops for signs of BCN. This is best done in early morning, checking for any wilted patches in the field (check before any weather-related wilting occurs). Cysts are easily identifiable on the roots. There are several BCN tolerant varieties available, including a Conviso option for 2026.

Figure 4: BCN clearly visible on roots

If you are considering the use of cover crops in BCN infested or at-risk fields you must avoid BCN hosts such as brassicas, unless they are specific BCN-resistant types (ideally class 1 mustard or radish). See our Cover Crop Guide for more info [BBRO Cover Crop Guide]

EVENTS

Autumn BeetField events will be held on 27th – 29th August. Please see details and links to book below:

Linton Navenby Morley

CONTACTS

British Beet Research Organisation, Centrum, Norwich Research Park, Colney Lane, Norwich, NR4 7UG

Prof Mark Stevens	mark.stevens@bbro.co.uk	07712 822194
Francesca Broom	Francesca.broom@bbro.co.uk	07710 285689
Stephen Aldis	stephen.aldis@bbro.co.uk	07867 141705
General Enquiries	info@bbro.co.uk	01603 672169

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