British Beet BBRO Research Organisation Advisory Bulletin

Issue 11: 21st August 2025

IN BRIEF

- Spider mite (red and/or two-spotted) favoured by current warm/dry conditions causing yellowing around headlands: canopy expected to recover during autumn with minimal yield loss.
- Levels of virus yellows appear to be low - please keep monitoring and inform BBRO if high levels found
- Foliar diseases: powdery mildew is the most prevalent disease at present, however, incidences of rust and cercospora leaf spot increasing – follow BBRO eight-point fungicide plan and check Cercospora Monitoring and Forecasting for 2025 - BBRO
- Beet Moth: new automated monitoring system deployed. Adult moths continue to fly and ongoing weather favouring pest development in crop where present
- BCN is now evident on roots. Check wilted patches in your crops and contact Plant clinic if you need help to confirm infestation
- Many beneficial insects in crops at the moment too
- BeetCast August – the crop that keeps on giving!

ADVISORY

Yellowing in crop

More reports received regarding spider mite causing yellowing around the headlands. There is no treatment for this pest, but the damage caused is unlikely to be detrimental to yield. For further info see issue 9 of the Advisory Bulletin.

Virus Yellows

Virus yellows infections appear to be at a low level in 2025 but do be diligent and check your crops. Let your British Sugar Agriculture Manager or BBRO Plant Clinic know if you see anything of concern.

Foliar Diseases

Many growers have now applied a second fungicide. We urge growers again to ensure rotation of actives to avoid resistance, particularly with products aimed at cercospora control and to keep the intervals tight. Activity of fungicides will start to deplete after two-

three weeks. It may be tempting to forego subsequent applications of fungicide in late August and September to limit spray costs. However, for crops being lifted from late-November onwards it is usually economically rewarding to apply a three-spray programme. This will maximise yield accumulation into autumn, whilst helping protect the crowns of the beet in the event of winter frosts. Ultimately, this benefit will vary depending on both varietal susceptibility to the various diseases and their abundance throughout August and September. Previous BBRO data have shown up to a 14-tonne uplift in yield when a second spray is used.

We are seeing widespread powdery mildew this season, which is being controlled well where robust fungicide programmes are being applied. Both rust and cercospora can also be found in the crop with the latter expected to develop quickly if warm humid weather prevails.

Please ensure you follow the BBRO eight-point plan below:

Eight-point plan for autumn disease management

1. Know what disease(s) are in your crop in order to select the best fungicide options (see back pages for available fungicides).
2. Cercospora leaf spot appears to be an increasing problem in the UK and strains of this fungus are potentially resistant (due to QoI resistance) to strobilurin fungicides. If in doubt contact the BBRO for help with disease identification.
3. As seen from previous BBRO trials, do not apply fungicides too early, wait for early symptoms to show.
4. Conversely, do not apply products too late otherwise effective disease control will be difficult for the remainder of the season.
5. Always follow label recommendations for applying products at the correct growth stage.
6. Ensure the gap between the first and second, or second and third applications, is kept to within 28 days to prevent significant re-infection occurring between treatments.
7. Ensure water volume recommendations are adhered to and are not cut back.
8. Know where specific varieties are sown within fields to monitor any variety-disease interactions.

Beet moth

BBRO have introduced smart moth traps with AI capability to support our trapping efforts across the BBRO CropWatch network (see chart below). Early signs are that these are providing valuable automated daily catch data and indicate that moths continue to migrate.

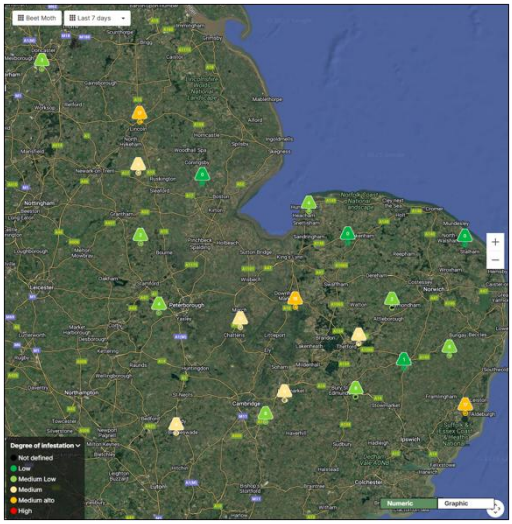


Figure 1: One of the first maps generated from new moth traps

We are aware that insecticide sprays (pyrethroids and diamide) to limit the spread of this pest have been used in some areas and in heavily infested areas two sprays have been applied. Currently, data on efficacy is limited but caterpillars protected within the leaves and/or crown can be difficult to control. We hope to be able to develop better prediction and spray timing information in future.

It is also important to consider the beneficials already in your crops. Lacewing larvae and ladybirds (both understood to predate beet moth) may already be present and will be at risk if using an insecticide, especially any pyrethroids. Chemical treatments available can be found in our beet moth information sheet here.

BCN – Beet cyst nematode

Check fields in early morning for wilted patches as these may be caused by BCN. Lift a couple of roots to inspect for white cysts. If you suspect BCN you can check roots yourself for the characteristic white cysts, which are the immature bodies of developing female nematodes. Inspect them with a hand-lens or magnifier and squeeze them between your fingernails to be sure (and distinguish them from sand particles). If unsure, send a sample to the BBRO plant clinic where we can also direct you to relevant services for soil sampling fields coming into sugar beet in 2026 and help you make sure BCN tolerant varieties are grown where they are needed.

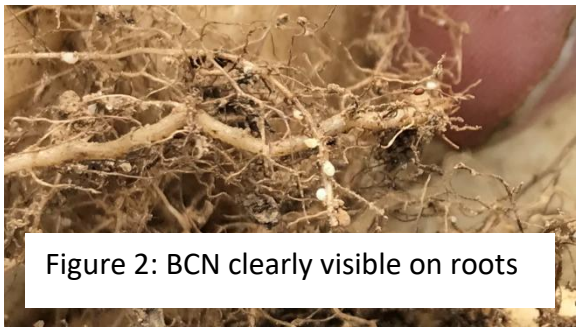


Figure 2: BCN clearly visible on roots

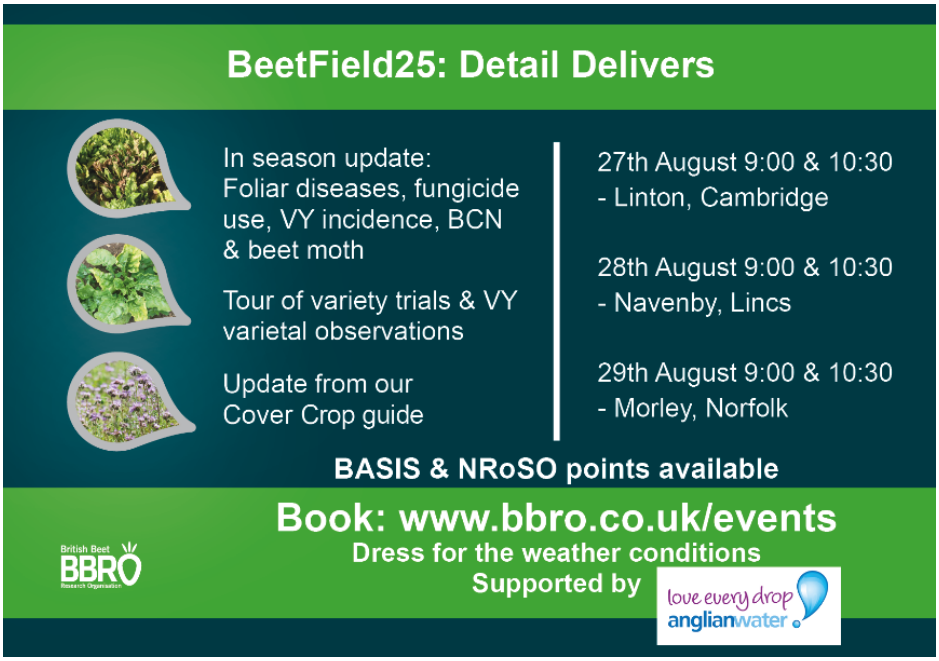
If sowing cover crops on BCN infested fields/farms be sure to avoid BCN host species. Planting a BCN susceptible species, e.g. a brassica, will increase nematode populations and cause problems further down the line, even if you plan on using BCN tolerant varieties.

However, BCN-resistant cover crop types are available and can help to reduce populations of nematodes. Try to source ‘class-1’ types or mustard or radish which will offer the best control. See our Cover Crop Guide for more info BBRO Cover Crop Guide. If you have

planted a cover crop which may cause a problem with BCN, inspect it regularly for signs of cysts. When any appear the cover crop must be destroyed which will stop the nematodes developing, thus helping to manage populations.

EVENTS

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



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BASIS POINTS

Two BASIS points in total (not per bulletin) have been allocated for the period between 01/06/2025 – 31/05/2026 - 188556298463. To claim these points please email cpd@basis-reg.co.uk

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