



Issued: 25th August 2020



IN BRIEF

- Virus levels have broadly stabilised now in crops with a wide range of infection levels.
- As crops recover after the drought, new regrowth of previously virus affected plants will become systemically infected and yellow symptoms will eventually develop on this new growth.
- Drought conditions have resulted in several problems such as magnesium deficiency causing yellowing and leaf senescence. Some incidence of boron deficiency has also been reported. Many crops recover from these when growth picks-up after rain.
- To maximise further yield production, it is vital to protect healthy canopies against foliar diseases, levels of which are currently relatively low but are expected to increase following rain. Powdery mildew remains the main prevalent disease, but cercospora leaf spot and rust are being increasingly reported and will be progressive.
- Check each crop and each variety separately and carefully for foliar disease, timely fungicide protection is key to protect canopies.
- Persisting patches of wilting and yellowing within fields may be related to BCN, it is worth inspecting roots for white female cysts.
- Start your harvest planning by prioritising your lifting according to canopy vigour.
- Launching soon – BBRO BeetCast.



ADVISORY

Harvest decisions

As a single rule the healthiest most consistent crop should be taken forward for later harvest as this will have the greatest yield response. It will be tempting to leave low population crops to fill out into the autumn or late established crops to catch up, however the gains from crops with optimum plant populations are likely to provide the biggest yield lift.

There are many unknowns with the interaction of virus, foliar disease, fungicide programmes and autumn growth, but at a harvest planning level the preference would always be to take crops with the most virus and disease before those that remain healthy.

Whilst all your fields may contain virus, infection levels can vary dramatically from field to field and ranking the virus level in each maybe the key to completing your harvest schedule and fungicide programmes.

If you have used the Conviso-SMART system, it is important to plan to harvest these crops in good conditions to avoid leaving beet behind. Additionally, careful management of the spoil from these fields are essential to avoid spread around your farm. Plan to keep spoil separate so it can be

returned to its field of origin. Increased discipline at this point will keep future stewardship simpler and more effective to manage any potential seed return and weed beet issues.

Foliar Disease

Now is a critical period to assess individual crops for symptoms of disease, especially if you have not applied a fungicide yet, or deciding to apply your second spray. BBRO data shows that to optimise protection against foliar disease, second fungicides should be applied within a 21 -28 days spray interval of the first application. By doing so you will improve canopy health which will be key to both maintaining yield production in later harvested crops and providing frost protection. Know what disease(s) are in your crop to select the best fungicide options. Details on diseases and fungicide options can be found in the 2019 BBRO Reference Book and 2020 Reference Book supplement <https://bbro.co.uk/publications/reference-book/>.

Always follow label recommendations for applying products at the correct growth stage. Ensure water volume recommendations are adhered to and are not cut back. Many products recommend that a higher water volume is used in crops with dense canopies to get better penetration and coverage.

Cercospora - Due to the developing nature of this disease under UK conditions, consistent information of varietal susceptibility to cercospora is currently unavailable but differences were observed last season. Please check different varieties carefully for this disease. Key symptoms of initial leaf infection to watch out for: regular circular spots with necrotic, tan-grey centres and reddish-brown borders. If the disease develops unchecked, these spots can coalesce into larger brown necrotic areas on the leaf and yield losses of up to 40% can occur.



Rust and powdery mildew - In many cases signs of more than one disease can be found with both rust and powdery mildew present. Early application of fungicides is essential for controlling disease spread.



BCN – Patches of yellowing and wilting have been associated with BCN and free-living nematodes. Female BCN cysts can be seen on the roots. Make use of your previous aphid magnifier by checking a few roots for BCN infection or use the magnification available on a camera to detect any presence.



If BCN identified consider using one of the three BCN varieties available in the 2021 RL; Daphna, Cantona or Lacewing.



EVENTS

NEW LAUNCH: Watch out for our new release on Weds 2nd Sept - BBRO BeetCast

A short 15 minute podcast, with timely crop reminders, growers insight and snippets from BBRO research activities.

A link to BBRO BeetCast will be sent via email and text.



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