

Special application ruling paves the way for improved weed control in oilseed rape

Source: FarmingUK Newsdesk

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A new Specific Off-Label Approval (SOLA) licence has successfully been awarded to United Oilseeds, which will allow growers to use a pre-emergent application of Avadex Excel 15G (Avadex) on crops of winter and spring-sown oilseed rape to provide improved protection against black-grass and broad-leaved weed infestation.

Evidence from trial work carried out by Agrovista suggests that whilst black-grass has developed some resistance to many of the more commonly used herbicides that are currently available, little or no resistance to Avadex has yet been recorded. The SOLA will therefore provide a useful addition to the herbicide armoury of growers and will improve their ability to control black-grass which is becoming more prevalent within UK crops of oilseed rape.

"With black-grass becoming an increasing issue for many oilseed growers, getting the basics right in terms of weed control has never been more important," says Agrovista's technical manager Mark Palmer.

"As long as it is used correctly, evidence from Agrovista's trials suggest that applying Avadex as a pre-emergent can significantly improve the efficacy of subsequent herbicide applications by sensitising the weed population," advises Dr Palmer.

Avadex Excel 15G has been used in UK agriculture since 1970 on a wide range of crops including cereals and broad-leaved crops. More recently it has been used to control wild oats and sensitise black-grass to subsequent herbicide applications. In addition, Avadex also helps to control additional broad-leaved weeds including Charlock, Speedwells, poppy and fumitory. Prior to the issuing of the SOLA, it was not however available for use on oilseed crops.

"The efficacy of Avadex in helping to control black-grass prompted United Oilseeds to apply for the SOLA licence, so that our members could benefit from improved weed control," explains Richard Elsdon, technical manager for United Oilseeds. "We worked in conjunction with Agrovista's technical team to

develop the recommendation, and used their ongoing trial work to support our application for a licence."

Avadex can be applied as a pre-emergent only. Only one treatment is allowed. Avadex should be applied by a specialist applicator such as those manufactured by Horstine, Nodet and Amazon, or by a suitably qualified spray contractor. It is essential that anyone using a herbicide product in accordance with a SOLA must read the text of the SOLA notice before commencing any spraying operation.