

# Wheat's Worth Managing in 2007

## Disease Management delivers results

Whether you're planting spring wheat, have winter wheat in the ground or both, 2007 is shaping up to be a year that you can squeeze an extra dollar out of the crop. Two key factors in wheat management are nitrogen timing and fungicides.

### Timely Nitrogen key to top yields

"With either spring or winter wheat, our goal is to achieve 700 to 800 heads per square meter," says Gerrit Van Keulen, District sales manager for C&M Seeds. "For spring, wheat get your nitrogen on early. For thin stands of winter wheat, get your nitrogen on early to promote tillering. Fields of winter wheat with thick stands and three or more tillers per plant should have only 35 to 40 pounds of nitrogen at top-dress time with the remainder going on after tillering is complete and the crop has started to elongate. With highly variable fall wheat stands this year, each field will require individual attention."

### Fungicides protect yield and quality

Powdery mildew, leaf septoria, leaf rust and glume blotch rob Ontario growers of yield and quality. Cereal leaf diseases result in a yield loss of 15% per year on a 5-year average. Follow this simple strategy to limit disease damage:

- Learn to recognize cereal leaf disease symptoms.
- Work with crop specialists to confirm disease levels and thresholds.
- Scout fields early and regularly throughout the season up to and including the boot stage and apply disease control products when disease thresholds are reached.

Head emergence and flowering varies, depending on weather conditions, soil conditions and planting date. When in doubt, hedge on the early side, just after heads on the main stem are fully emerged.

Optimum Time to  
Spray Folicur®

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Broad-spectrum fungicide treatment protects cereal yields from leaf diseases and can also contribute to larger kernels, improved straw quality and higher bushel weight.

## *When to apply a fungicide*

In 1999, a three-year study was initiated to determine the optimal timing for applying Tilt to control cereal leaf diseases. Forty field scale trials over the 3 years confirmed that when disease levels reach 1% to 10% on the middle leaves (4th to 5th leaf - Growth Stage 30 to 55 on the Zadoks' Scale), an application of Tilt will provide economic returns.

*"Tank mixing herbicides and fungicides will save time and trips across the field."*

For winter wheat, scout fields in late April and early May. For spring cereals, scouting should begin mid to late May. Tank mixing herbicides and fungicides will save time and trips across the field. Select a broadleaf herbicide with a wide application window that can be tank-mixed with a fungicide and applied to cereal crops early in the season. A tank mix of Buctril®M and Tilt will control weeds and protect against leaf diseases in a single pass.

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