



Hybrid Canola Field Reports

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Location: Lake Bolac
2012 canola season

Early vigour a standout

Ask any canola grower what traits in addition to yield they consider important and along with blackleg resistance, early crop vigour is right up there. So with that in mind, when Western Districts Lake Bolac farmer Neil Vallance reviewed his last season, he gave IH50RR canola the thumbs up.

The new Bayer Roundup Ready® (RR) hybrid yielded a very pleasing 3.0 t/ha and while this yield was the same as 45Y22 grown in the same paddock, it did have slightly higher oil content of 42.4%.

Neil said the early vigour of IH50RR was a standout and it outgrew other varieties in the first eight to ten weeks. To spread the risk last year he grew a range of canola types including hybrid clearfield, triazine tolerant and RR on over 1,000 ha.

In his higher rainfall farming system Neil's crops have to contend with a range of issues including earwig and slug pressure and occasionally snails.

When cereal stubbles are thick enough, a good hot burn goes a long way to reducing these problems. It is an option he used last year, but of course it also leaves the soil exposed to the elements and quick crop cover is important.

Early vigour is a trait growers like to see because it confers better competitiveness and Neil says it's not only an advantage over weeds.

His adviser, Craig Drum agreed and said he was particularly interested in reviewing IH50RR. The Gorst Rural Supplies agronomist recalls the breeding efforts of Bayer from more than a decade ago when the company introduced outstanding varieties with high yield potential.

"I said to Neil we should have a look at this new material," Craig said. "It's a mid season RR hybrid rated as moderately resistant to resistant (R-MR) against blackleg.

"It's also of interest because we are finding the mid season varieties are yielding just as well as the longer season ones.

"Even down here a big issue is heat and wind stress to plants during flowering, so the earlier crops can get into flowering during the cooler weather the better.



Lake Bolac farmer Neil Vallance (right) and Gorst Rural Supplies Agronomist Craig Drum, in a crop of the new Bayer Roundup Ready hybrid canola, IH50RR. Neil said the early vigour of IH50RR was a standout.

"Ideally we'd like to see them start flowering here in early September and even mid August wouldn't be too early. Mid season varieties that keep on flowing and adding more pods go on to produce high yields."

Neil said the IH50RR seed was treated with Jockey® Stayer® and Gaucho®, and Cosmos® was added for earwig control.

"Snails in some paddocks, and slugs right through the Western District, can cause enormous problems with canola. In 2011 some growers spent up to \$120/ha on slug bait alone and in some cases they still had to re-sow the crop," said Craig.

"They seem to be issues that are especially bad when growers retain stubble and we've found burning is one step growers can take to reduce pest populations.

"Good early vigour and crop growth helps cover the soil and keep ahead of the pests. It's very important and makes a big difference for things like slugs so the early hybrid vigour of IH50RR was excellent," he said.



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