

June 27-11 – Canola Update by Brian Hall, OMAFRA Canola Specialist

Apply Fungicides Early to Beat Sclerotinia (White mould)

*The clear message is that growers need to apply fungicides early before sclerotinia gets established. Fungicides only offer protectant activity and timing is at 20 – 50% flower stage with **optimum being 20 -30% flower when there is near maximum number of flowers open and before pedal drop.***

Predicting the occurrence of severe sclerotinia is difficult but good soil moisture leading up to flowering and showery weather coincides with inoculum production. High risk conditions occur when several dry days follow that allow for spore release are followed by a day with light showers. Spores are spread easily by wind, and infected petals which drop and stick to wet stems and leaves are the food source for sclerotinia spores. Petal stick is favoured by light rains and heavy dews, whereas heavy rains will wash pedals off. Moderate temperatures (22^o C) and humidity in the canopy for 2-3 days in the canopy are important for the fungus to gain a foot hold. A thin canopy or temperatures of over 28^o C reduce risk of infection.

It is important not to apply too early. The goal with a sclerotinia fungicide is to achieve maximum flower petal coverage. Petals are an essential part of the infection process, providing nutrients for sclerotinia spores to germinate.

The wide range in stages of the crop this year means it is important to assess each field on its own and for the weather at the time. In some fields, there is considerable variation in canola plant stage, which will present challenge in timing fungicide application. Last year we had a lot of wet weather towards the end of flowering when early fungicide timings would have run out.

Fungicide Options and Timing

Fungicide options include Astound (Syngenta), Lance (BASF) and Proline (Bayer CropScience) and all work similarly in providing effective protection for 10-14 days. A preventative biofungicide Serenade is also available from UAP and offers residual control for 7 – 10 days. A second application of Serenade, Astound or Lance is registered at approximately 50% flower, prior to significant petal fall, if weather conditions favourable for disease persist. Do not exceed the maximum dose per season. Good spray coverage is essential, so do not use less than 80 L (20 gal) per acre water volume.

Because fungicides offer protectant activity, it is critical to spray high-risk canola fields at early flowering prior to disease appearance. Infected flower petals that stick to stems and leaves are the food source for the fungus.

Apply Proline only once per year. A second application of Lance may be made 7-14 days later if weather conditions are favourable for sclerotinia.

Keep water volumes up as good coverage is important to cover as many flower pedals as possible.

Identification of Flowering Stage of Canola

% Flowering Stage	Number of Open Flowers on Main Stem	Time from First Flower Days (approximate)
10	At least 10	2 – 4 days
20	14 – 16	5 – 6 days
30 %	20 Petal drop evident and 1 st pods visible	7 – 8 days
50% (Maximum Bloom)	20+ flowers ➤ Numerous pods present	10 -14 days