

## **Control of Volunteer Canola**

Brian Hall, OMAFRA, Stratford

For growers who may still have sample grade canola in the field, there are a couple of options to manage volunteer canola.

Roundup Ready canola will limit herbicide options more than Liberty tolerant or other canola types. Controlling volunteers will depend on the following crop and tillage system.

Some growers may decide to harvest the canola even though it is sample grade, to reduce the weed seed bank. There is no argument with this approach. A canola crop that yields 1400 lb/ac would produce the equivalent of 182 million seeds/acre or 4177 seeds per square foot.

A grower may also decide to forgo the expense of combining and disposing of the canola (explore all marketing options first), and opt to spend the dollars on controlling the volunteer canola. If the grower decides to not harvest the canola, then the canola should be worked in this fall. Not doing so, could result in a lot of canola seedlings next spring to control. Work the field shallow this fall to stimulate a lot of the seed to germinate. Deep tillage (e.g. plowing) will only add to the perennial seed bank. Winter will kill off a lot of spring canola volunteers but not all.

Mike Cowbrough, Weed Management Lead with OMAFRA, says that the most cost effective option where the following crop is a spring cereal is MCPA. In research trials, MCPA was superior to all other treatments including 2, 4 D which rated poor-fair. Research trials show that winter wheat can tolerate quite high numbers of volunteer canola plants in the fall. MCPA or other hormone herbicides should not be used in the fall either prior to planting winter wheat or after the crop is planted. Refine is the only herbicide that should be used in winter wheat in the fall. Refine does a respectable job of controlling volunteers in the fall, but unless the volunteer canola pressure is huge, growers may want to wait and control them next spring. In early spring in either winter wheat or spring cereals, MCPA alone or in combination with Buctril M (depending on what other weeds are present) is the most effective. It is important to control the volunteer canola early in the spring, because they can be near impossible to control when they get large. Spring canola that survives the winter, behaves like winter canola, and can get away on you if control is not done early.

In corn or soybeans there are a number of options that are outlined in OMAFRA's weed control guide. Many growers have decided that you can grow Roundup Ready Canola or RR Soys but not both in your rotation. Wise decision.