

VG16060 - Vegetable Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities - Quarterly Industry Update

SUMMARY

To establish direct grower interaction and ensure that the agrichemical needs of the vegetable sector are accurately recorded and understood, AUSVEG has commenced coordination of the project Vegetable Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities (VG16060), a strategic levy investment under the Hort Innovation Vegetable Fund.

The project's objective is to coordinate vegetable industry agrichemical pest needs by identifying and prioritising potential gaps through implementation of an effective prioritisation process for the vegetable industry.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

In this 3 year project, the Project Coordinator, Patrick Arratia, will establish a priorities database (by crop), that will identify industry pest priorities and categorise them regionally (where appropriate). He will also assist on the update of the Strategic Agrichemical Review Process documents (SARP). Using this database, the Project Coordinator will generate a yearly priority list for each commodity, resulting in the development of a gap list identifying the top five agrichemical priorities for each commodity, to be supplied to Hort Innovation as a draft and final list, prior to the annual AgChem Collaborative Forum.

GROUND WORK

The Project Coordinator has started industry consultation and engagement with growers and agronomists in the Werribee and Mornington Peninsula regions in Victoria, where over 20 growers and agronomists have been visited.

As the Werribee region is known as one of the major producers of brassica vegetables in Australia, the first workshop took place there, on the 20th of September, targeting brassica crops where their pest, disease and weed issues were discussed by the group. This workshop has been followed up by further grower/agronomist consultation. Pest, disease and weed issues have also been discussed and recorded for other crops grown in the region, such as fennel and lettuce.

The second workshop took place in Clyde, on the 28th of September, at Schreurs & Sons, targeting celery and leek. This workshop had ten attendees and had a duration of roughly 2 hours. Pest issues for targeted crops were discussed by the group, recorded and added to the projects database. This workshop has also been followed up by further grower visits.

In this workshops, information from SARP documents, gathered in 2014, was used for targeted crops to pre populate forms with priorities ranking and determine if the pest, disease and weed issues were still the same, if it has changed and/or if any new issues such as resistance have not been previously captured.

Priority agrichemical gaps identified in this three-year project will inform industry actions at the annual AgChem Collaborative Forum and identify potential solutions to address these gaps.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Further growers visit and workshops will take place in Gippsland, Shepparton, Mareeba, Bowen/Gumlu and Sydney Basin regions, so keep an eye open for more details, which will be released soon!

For further information on the project please contact the Project Coordinator – Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities, Patrick Arratia at patrick.arratia@ausveg.com.au or on 03 9882 6722.