

Rust Bust Media Release

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Rust showing up across NSW

THE Australian Cereal Rust Survey (ACRS) has started receiving rust samples from across New South Wales, a timely reminder for growers to be vigilant when it comes to rust.

Samples of wheat stripe rust have been received by the University of Sydney Plant Breeding Institute from Boree Creek, Tarcutta, Wagga Wagga and Ardlethan, while samples of wheat leaf rust have been received from Quirindi and Scone.

The wheat stripe rust has been detected in early-sown dual-purpose varieties such as Wedgetail and Marombi as well as Suntop, while wheat leaf rust had been sent in from a crop of Naparoo.

Samples of barley leaf rust have been received from a crop of Hindmarsh regrowth near Old Junee, oat stem rust in Yallara at Canowindra and oat crown rust from Eugowra, Godfreys Creek and Yass off crops of Eurabbie and Bimbil.

NSW Department of Primary Industries rust pathologist Dr William Cuddy, who works on the ACRS, said no new pathotypes had been discovered, rather it was a case of some growers being caught out with volunteer crops enabling rust survival over summer leading to early rust infection this year.

He said that the survey had also received samples of barley leaf rust from Western Australia, scabrum rust from Queensland, wheat leaf rust and wheat stripe rust from SA and oat crown rust from SA.

“Last year was a quiet year for the survey though Professor Robert Park did detect new pathotypes of barley leaf rust and wheat leaf rust. This year it will come down to whether there will be a dry spring to limit rust development, which varies across the country as to what is expected. The main thing is if people notice rust they should send us a sample,” Dr Cuddy said.

“Growers need to plan their disease management strategy for the season. Because leaf rust started before the weather cooled down, it is likely to take off hard when it warms up in spring.”

Chairman of the Australian Cereal Rust Control Program consultative committee Dr Dan Mullan says rust is a “social” disease, and the committee is raising awareness of growers’ responsibilities in disease prevention and control through the Rust Bust campaign.

“Everyone has to be socially aware of rust. The impact one farm can have on another in the event of an epidemic can be quite large, so being prepared for rust is quite important from a broader industry perspective,” Dr Mullan said.

“We work quite a lot in breeding and improving rust protection in wheat varieties, but it’s important that this sort of knowledge gets extended to the farming community as well, which is where the Rust Bust comes in.”

The Australian Cereal Rust Control Program is supported by growers through the Grains Research and Development Corporation.

Visit the Rust Bust at www.rustbust.com.au

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The Australian Cereal Rust Control Program (ACRCP, established in 1973) monitors cereal rust pathogens throughout Australia, finds and characterises new sources of rust resistance, and assists Australian cereal breeding groups to incorporate rust resistance in new cultivars. The ACRCP is funded largely by the grains industry, through the Grains Research & Development Corporation (GRDC).