Wheat price rise increases the value of fungicides

Fungicide planning in wheat is about maximising yields, rather than just keeping disease at bay.

What diseases should you focus on at later timings?
- T0 is the most important timing in wheat. This is the spray that controls disease on the top two leaves, not just the flag leaf. The timing (GS39 – flag leaf fully visible) has come about because it’s a compromise timing that gives you excellent protectant control on the flag leaf, along with good control of disease on leaf two. These top two leaves contribute about 70% of the crop yield so they are vitally important.
- The T3 is a mixed bag now.

Golden rules
- Timing is key – an application is delayed, adjust the dose.
- Have a strategy, and then tweak it as the season progresses.
- Protect the yield – be prepared to add extra inputs rather than save cost.

How does timing influence disease control?
- All fungicides perform best as protectants, so early treatment is usually best. Too early, before the target leaves have emerged, however, is as bad as too late, when the disease is established.
- Ideally, the target leaf is fully emerged, but has not yet been infected with disease.
- The leaf will get a complete dose of the applied fungicide that can do its ideal job of protecting against infection.
- The latter is there to give you insurance against rust and septoria. Like the strobilurins, they add value to programmes through their physiological effects – greening and preventing stress impacts. Always use them in mixtures and sequences to avoid the risk of resistance developing.

What extras do you need to build in and when?
- Strobilurins are still a useful addition – they have very good rust activity and additional greening effects late in season. They do different things to the SDHIs and it may be that two- or three-way mixes can be used at the T2 timing. On high-yielding sites where water is not limiting, their antioxidation effects can give extra days of greening. During grain filling, you can get more than 0.25t/ha per day extra yield, provided the crop is still green (see the Strobilurins Academy on p32-13).
- If fusarium is a target, specific earwash mixes should be based on proquinazid, metconazole, tebuconazole or epoxiconazole. Mildew is less of a problem nowadays, but late-drilled wheats on organic soils can still cause problems. Fungicide resistance is limiting the activity of many specific mildew products so it is advisable to mix products. Specific mildew products such as programed and metamorphone are best in protectant mode, so best used early before the disease becomes too established.

The ONLY strobilurin with 4 star activity* against both yellow and brown rust, PLUS MUCH MORE

- Strobilurin with highest activity ratings by HGCA in wheat and barley
- Excellent control of rust with some activity on Septoria tritici in wheat
- Unique physiological effects, enhanced nitrogen utilisation
- Broad spectrum activity in barley, including protection against rusts, Rhynchosporium, net blotch and abiotic spotting


Comet 200 contains pyraclostrobin. Always read the label. Use pesticides safely.