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A media release from

Late Crop Herbicide Application (crop topping) on Barley



The topic of glyphosate use in agriculture has in 2018 seen increasing media focus and discussion around the world. This herbicide is of value to growers and its advantages flow to other sectors of the grains industry. The negative press that circulated around glyphosate use is at odds with the positions of chemical regulators, both within Australia and internationally. It is therefore timely that Barley Australia restates its position on late season herbicide use on barley and communicates this to the wider industry.

It is important to re-iterate that the current Australian emergency permit for use on barley, held by Grain Producers Australia, does not cover malting barley. This permit will expire on 31st July 2019. Glyphosate cannot currently be used on malting barley.

The position of Australian maltsters and brewers has not changed in recent years. They still oppose the use of herbicides that are not registered for use late in the season and have advised that they will not knowingly purchase malt made from barley that has been crop-topped or desiccated with glyphosate.

Crop trials to generate residue data for the purpose of continued glyphosate registration by the APVMA have been grown in 2017 and 2018. Additional trials needed to determine whether glyphosate residues on malting barley may affect germination and/or beer quality requires careful planning and are still being negotiated. It is the opinion of Barley Australia that market and buyer acceptance of late season glyphosate use on malting barley remains unlikely in the short term and is not recommended at this time. Barley Australia will continue to investigate options and opportunities to encourage appropriate research in this area as it is important for our industry in the long term.

Barley Australia understands that there is also current market risk uncertainty with relation to glyphosate residues on barley destined for some export destinations. Some companies have started to segregate glyphosate treated feed barley due to this uncertainty.

As with all agricultural chemicals the use of approved herbicides for the purposes of weed control must be carried out in strict accordance with herbicide labelling instructions. This is imperative for the safety of our industry and the sustainability of our valuable domestic and export grain markets.

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