



THE PULSE AGRONOMY NETWORK  
PARTNERSHIP WITH INDUSTRY

## PAN ALL PULSE BULLETIN #15 – JUNE 1, 2005

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#### Scouting for Ascochyta Blight in Chickpea Crops



Photo courtesy SAF

*Excerpt from the Management of Ascochyta Blight of Chickpea in Saskatchewan CD-ROM  
(for a copy of the CD, contact info is below)*

The main reasons to scout for disease are:

1. To accurately identify disease symptoms early in the growing season so you have time to make a decision regarding foliar fungicide application before ascochyta blight becomes established in your crop, and
2. To determine if subsequent fungicide applications are needed, when they should be applied and what product to choose.

Crop scouting should begin at the seedling stage (two to three weeks after planting), when the plants have emerged and seedling rows are becoming evident. The length of time between scouting events is dependent on weather conditions, previous disease risk and whether a fungicide has already been applied.

If a fungicide application has been made, reassess disease risk by scouting your crop

again within seven days. If no fungicide application was made, reassess disease risk by scouting your crop again within three to five days. Scouting frequency should be increased if there have been frequent rain events. Continue scouting until the late-pod stage (11-14

weeks after planting), at this time the crop will begin drying down and the majority of seed has filled.

Scout crops more diligently that are at greater risk to ascochyta blight:

- • fields planted with ascochyta-infected seed (even if a seed treatment was used)
- • fields planted with a variety rated as having 'very poor' or 'poor' disease resistance
- • fields that had chickpea in the crop rotation more often than one in four years
- • fields planted adjacent to the previous year's chickpea residue
- • areas of the crop that may be heavier seeded or have increased fertility, i.e. headlands
- • areas where moisture may have accumulated, i.e. hollows or near fence lines
- • areas where plants received damage from wind-blasting, drought, herbicide injury, frost, hail, or other stresses.

Scout by walking an "M" pattern throughout the crop. Keep your eyes open for discoloured plants and/or small discoloured spots on the leaves. Stop at specific sites and look down within the crop canopy to closer inspect individual plants (a magnifying glass may help identify small lesions). If the field is less than 100 acres, check a minimum of 5 sites and if the field is greater than 100 acres, check a minimum of 10 sites. Use flags to mark specific areas for regular monitoring during the growing season. This allows you to return to a specific site to look for lesions developing on new plant growth and to determine the effectiveness of your fungicide program. Try to alter the scouting path slightly each time you scout so that you are less likely to miss areas of infection. There is some potential for disease spread by walking through a crop and this risk is greatest if the canopy is wet. Avoid scouting a field immediately after a rain or heavy dew. Scout the crops with less disease first. Thoroughly wash your boots and change your clothes after scouting a diseased crop.

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food has developed the **Management of Ascochyta Blight CD-ROM** (2004 version) that provides information on disease identification, crop scouting, the ascochyta blight infection process, developing a disease management plan, and more.

To order your copy of the CD-ROM contact Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food: by phoning (306) 787-5297 or sending your request to [jyasinowski@agr.gov.sk.ca](mailto:jyasinowski@agr.gov.sk.ca)

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We encourage you to share the PAN information with others. In return, we ask that you list the source as the Pulse Agronomy Network.

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