



Growers benefit from funding for chemical research

While the increasing uptake of integrated pest management is modifying the use of pesticides across horticulture – including within the olive industry – there of course remains a need for the strategic, effective use of chemicals.

Pesticide companies submit use patterns for registration to regulatory body the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), but because of its ‘minor crop’ status the olive industry is typically provided with limited registrations. That is, with a small market size, there are often not adequate commercial returns for the research and development investment required by the pesticides companies.

Enter minor use permits.

Through the industry’s Olive industry minor use program (OL16000) – a strategic levy project under Hort Innovation’s Olive Fund – levy funds and Australian Government contributions are used to apply for and renew minor use permits, which provide the industry with access to approved chemicals for specific uses. This work is complemented by research into new chemical controls for pests and diseases.

Earlier this year, Hort Innovation was successful in securing 26 grants totally \$1.2 million for chemical access to facilitate research, through the Australian Government’s

agriculture and veterinary chemicals grant funding (Agvet).

For the olive industry, this latest grant funding is supporting trials to determine efficacy, residue and crop safety for two chemicals and their use in olives – Bayer Crop Science Luna® Privilege fungicide for anthracnose and Adama Trivor® insecticide for olive lace bug and scale.

This research is needed before the new labels can be registered for use in the industry, to satisfy the requirements of registrant companies and the APVMA.

Previous data-generation activities under an earlier Agvet grant project also mean there are trials currently wrapping up and renewals pending for permits for Clothianidin (Samurai systemic insecticide) for olive lace bug and Nufarm Aero to control anthracnose, while levy-funded trials are underway to look at efficacy, residue and crop safety in the use of Esfenvalerate (Sumi-Alpha Flex insecticide) for olive lace bug.

Meanwhile, permits and renewals are pending for minor use of Dimethoate for olive lace bug, green vegetable bug and rutherglenbug, as well as for the use of Paraquat and Diquat (Spray Seed) in olives for a range of broadleaf and grass weeds.

The OL16000 project follows a Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (SARP) in 2014 that reviewed

current and future pest threats to the olive industry and potential solutions, which were mainly pesticides.

Through the SARP, Hort Innovation and the olive industry identified diseases, insect pests and weeds of major concern and evaluated the available registered or permitted pesticides and non-pesticide options for them, taking into account integrated pest management, resistance, residues, withholding period, efficacy, trade, human safety and environmental issues.

There is growing interest in the Australian olive industry for lower chemical use production methods and achieving organic and biodynamic certification, with growers striving to utilise innovative biological controls, improved tree nutrition and other non-chemical solutions.

A high priority for growers is the development of strategies and education materials on management practices and plant nutrition.



All current minor use permits for the industry are searchable at portal. apvma.gov.au/permits. Permit updates are also circulated in Hort Innovation’s e-newsletter, *Growing Innovation*, which levy-paying members receive monthly. Sign up for free here <http://horticulture.com.au/membership-application-form>