



LUPIN BULLETIN (All types of Lupin)

This bulletin covers crop desiccation, and is also designed for those who are contemplating wholecropping or crimping their lupins. If you are planning to dry harvest with a combine, then some sections will not be relevant. Please also note that this bulletin applies only to crops of straight lupins and does not apply to mixtures such as lupin / triticale mixes. See the separate bulletin for the mixes.

Also – there will be a distinct difference between blue and white lupins. Blue lupins and crops in the South are starting to turn, starting with the leaves beginning to turn yellow. Growers should be careful not to simply rely on the colour of the crop as a guide to its stage, since the hot weather will give it the look of a crop that is more mature than it actually is. Please follow the advice given below.

Growth Stage

At this time of year, the pods are beginning to become less fleshy and the seeds are reaching full size and starting to firm up. Once the crop starts to die back, the colour of the canopy changes from green to a bronze/yellow colour, the seeds firm up, and the leaves progressively fall.

Whether for silage, crimping or combining, **growers should use the texture and flesh colour of the seeds as a guide.** Growers intending to silage should be aware that although the crop might look as though it may be ready for silage, often the pods are still very fleshy, and the seeds inside are small and soft. Growers should wait for the seeds themselves to become full size and have the consistency of a cheddar cheese before cutting. This is the point of maximum protein deposition and often means that the crop is beginning to yellow off slightly at the ideal cutting time. (see photo). **Please be aware that cutting too early (when the seeds are still immature and full of water), is a disastrous thing to do – you miss out on a huge amount of the protein and palatability can also be poor.**

Growers are advised to keep an eye on the stems as they will lignify rapidly at that time but will not normally present a problem unless you are wrapping bales from a crop which has been cut too late. If you cut the crop a bit green, it will require wilting. It is also particularly important with protein crops, that they are well consolidated in the clamp/bale and well sealed. Remember that protein crops are generally lower in the available sugars needed to stimulate a rapid anaerobic fermentation so applying an additive, or a source of energy, such as grass, molasses, beet pulp, etc, will help.



Too early
(Silage would be very wet)



Earliest stage for wholecrop



Too late for wholecrop
but ideal for crimping

Crimping Crops

For crimping you should wait until the crop is well on its way to being mature. The seeds should be about 30% moisture if you are planning to use this approach, (See the photo below). Some earlier crops are already close to this stage.

Combining Crops

Combining of white lupins will not be for at least another 4 weeks. After 90% leaf fall, the pods will have turned yellow in colour with the seeds in the pods firming up and the seed coats turning white in colour. The target moisture for a dry crop is 15% however the crop can be combined as soon as the seeds reach an acceptable moisture level for your drying and handling system. (We will cover this in our next bulletin). Crops of blue lupins are much more advanced, and are probably ready for desiccation now.



1 Far Left

Full seed at around 60% moisture where the pod fill phase is complete, and canopy senescence has probably begun. Good for silage/wholecrop.

If you are planning to combine the crop, then the correct stage for desiccation with either Spotlight Plus or Roundup is half way between 1 & 2

2 Middle

Half mature seed where moisture is around 30-40%. Note the colour change from dark green to light green. This is the very earliest stage for crimping. It is also a suitable stage for desiccation with either Spotlight Plus or Roundup.

3 Right side

Mature seed at about 18% moisture. Seeds at 18% or below should be dried to 15% for storage. Alternatively, seeds at 18% can be treated with a wet grain treatment (eg Propcorn). If moisture is much above 18%, it is probably worth leaving them for better weather.

DESICCATION

The first thing to understand is that many crops do not need desiccation. In the text-book scenario, lupins will reach a harvestable stage without any chemical intervention, however, crops with weeds and/or uneven ripening (or very late crops) will benefit from desiccation.

Desiccant for Combining

The withdrawal of Reglone has markedly reduced our options for desiccation, however, the good news is that we now have an Emergency Authorisation (EA) for the use of Spotlight Plus – albeit **on seed crops only**.

This leaves us with 2 options – Roundup or Spotlight Plus – depending on whether you are a commercial or a seed grower. For commercial growers, the option is the Roundup, whilst for seed growers, it is a question of using the Spotlight Plus.

Timing

The timing of the application is much the same for both products (around stage 2 in the photo on the previous page) when the seeds are half mature.

It is worth remembering that these 2 products work in different ways. Roundup has a systemic action, whilst Spotlight Plus has a contact action. This means that both of them need to hit green area to work, and the Spotlight needs to cover a good surface area, which means a higher water rate and the use of the recommended additives.

DO YOU WANT TO BUY OR SELL SOME LUPINS?

We would like to hear from you if you have any surplus production you would like to sell. With the price of soya still strong, it makes sense to buy in lupins rather than soya meal, so please also call us if you are interested in buying some lupins as feed.

The next bulletin on harvesting, testing moisture, and drying/storage will be sent out soon.

Always read the label carefully before using pesticides and only use as directed therein.
Use pesticides safely.

Soya UK Ltd recommend you seek the advice of your chemical advisor regarding your particular situation prior to applying pesticides.

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