

Chickweed control in spring barley

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Many spring growers in east Cork have said that they are finding it increasingly difficult to control weeds. The most commonly mentioned weeds are chickweed, corn marigold and sometimes speedwell. Wild oats and canary grass are widespread in the area, but growers say they are getting good control with the available chemistry.

Spring barley was generally sown in late March/early April last year, but April weather was cool and this may have contributed to poor uptake of herbicides.

Growers that delayed herbicide application got very poor control of larger chickweed and corn marigold. Some ended up having to apply a second herbicide.

The crop yielded very well last harvest, but growers are now looking at different strategies to control some of these difficult weeds.

Resistance

Similar to other parts of the country, most spring barley growers in east Cork control weeds with a sulfonylurea (Ally Max, Cameo Max, Harmony Max) and a partner product tailored to the weeds present in the field.

Growers are aware of resistance to sulfonylurea herbicides in common chickweed and corn marigold, so the partner product will contain actives that target these weeds.

Fluroxypyr (Hurler etc) is normally added at the maximum allowed rate of 0.75l/ha to control chickweed



and products containing clopyralid (Galaxy etc) are used at the maximum rate where corn marigold is the target.

This has worked well in the past, but in seasons where application is delayed, these products struggle to control larger weeds.

For the 2022 season, the aim will be earlier herbicide application. Growers generally know what weeds to expect, so they will target fields with chickweed and corn marigold first. History has taught us that waiting too long for weed emergence leads to control problems, especially if bad weather further delays the herbicide application.

Broadleaved weed control can be combined with wild oat and canary grass control. Herbicide resistance has been confirmed to pinoxaden (Axial Pro) in other parts of the country, but so far there are no reports of resistance in east Cork.

Growers are really conscious of the threat of resistance and recommended rates are used in combination with early timing to reduce the risk of resistance.

