

Potato Newsletter (21/06/2017)

General

The price of early varieties has maintained well. The dry matter percentage on early potatoes up until recently was on the lower end of the scale on the hydrometer. Higher than average soil temperatures in recent months will have resulted in more soil nitrogen being released contributing to the problem. Recent rainfall has provided adequate soil moisture during the critical period for common scab control in many crops. Lighter soils with earlier planted crops are becoming dry and will require to be irrigated in the near future. Recent rain and high wind speeds made blight spraying challenging as a result fungicide application intervals stretched beyond the routine 7 days and some blight appeared in crops. Recent winds have also done a significant amount of physical damage to crops particularly on exposed sites.

Late Blight

Recent weather has seen some blight appearing in crops. Once blight is detected in a crop the blight fungicide chosen should have strong curative activity and activity against blight zoospores. Such products include Infinito or a mixture of Ranman and the active ingredient Cymoxanil (Option, Cymbal or C50). Infected crops should be retreated 4 - 5 days later to ensure that the development of blight within the crop is halted. When blight lesions become inactive (dry) the fungicide application interval can revert to 7 days.

During the stable canopy phase of the crops products with good activity against foliar blight should be chosen such products include Revus, Infinito, Ranman and Valbon. Once crops start to approach senescence growers should revert to product with good activity against zoospores such products include Ranman and Shirlan. It is worth noting that the dose rate of the product Option has reduced from 187grams/ha to 150 grams/ha so ensure pesticide application records reflect this change.

Blight Spray Program	
Stable Canopy	Revus @ 600 ml/ha +/- Cymoxanil or Valbon @ 1.6 kg/ha +/- Cymoxanil
Senescence	Ranman Top @ 500 ml/ha or Shirlan @ 400 ml/ha

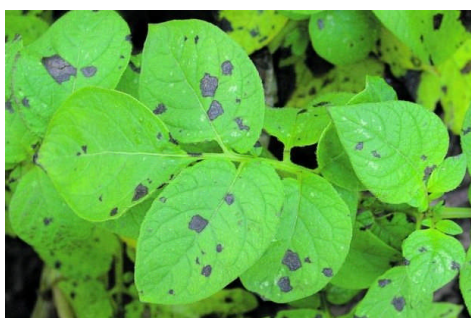
Slug Control

Slug numbers appeared higher in arable crops this spring so a little more attention to slug control in potatoes may be warranted this season. Recent rainfall will have been ideal for slug development. The more susceptible varieties to slug damage that will have a late lifting date will be most at risk of an attack. Crops should have received an application of pellets as the haulms started to meet across drills. A further application should be applied prior to dessication. In high risk situations growers may consider applying an additional application between haulms closing drills and dessication. Ensure

a product that has good resistance to pellet breakdown and that has a high pellet number at the recommended rate is used. The application of slug pellets will reduce subsequent slug damage to a certain degree however if you anticipate significant levels of damage within a crop it should be targeted for an early harvest in conjunction with slug pellet application.

<i>Product</i>	<i>Active Ingredient</i>	<i>Recommended Rate (kg/ha)</i>
Axcela	Metaldehyde	7
Meterex Inov	Metaldehyde	5
Sluxx MP	Ferric Phosphate	7

Alternaria



Alternaria has become more prevalent in potato crops in recent years. The key to alternaria control is to apply a fungicide to protect the crop before the disease establishes within it. In the more susceptible varieties such as Markies and Kerrs Pink the inclusion of mancozeb within the sprayer tank with initial blight sprays will offer some control of the disease. Once crops reach peak canopy development, Amistar Opti @ 1 l/ha (off-label approved) can be applied every two weeks. The combined amount of Amistar Opti applied should not exceed 3 l/ha.

Irrigation

Tuber initiation will start 20 -21 days post 50% emergence and will last for 4 weeks approximately. Fields should be assessed for soil moisture levels and where necessary irrigation should start 14 days post 50% emergence. Tuber numbers and yield will also be reduced if soil moisture levels are very low during tuber initiation. When you start irrigating little and often is the best approach. Ensure you do not “over irrigate” as this will increase the risk of diseases such as black leg and powdery scab particularly in susceptible varieties.

Weather Data

Agricultural Meteorology Data from 14/06/2017 to 20/06/2017								
Station	Temp		Rain (mm)		Radiation		Soil Temp	
Dublin Airport	16.7	+3.0	0.3	2%	16490	135%	19.8	+5.1
Cork Airport	16.3	+2.7	1.1	6%	18010	-	18.8	+4.6
Johnstown Castle	15.7	+1.9	1.8	11%	17860	145%	19.0	+3.9

Temp: Temperature and difference from normal in °C
 Rain: Total Rainfall in mm and % of the normal
 Radiation: Total solar radiation in Joules/cm2 and % of normal
 Soil Temp: Temperature and difference from normal in °C