

Shielded sprayer use on the increase

The use of shielded sprayers is increasing as is research into their operations and effectiveness.

Writing in the latest edition of the newsletter produced by the SA No-Till Farmers Association, John Rochecouste of MauRoche Pty Ltd and Michael Burgis of Conservation Farmers Inc, give details of shielded sprayer research their organisations have conducted.

“Growers need to be specific on their needs when purchasing a shielded sprayer,” they say.

Messrs Rochecouste and Burgis counsel growers to thoroughly discuss shielded sprayer operations with suppliers before buying a unit – some of the discussion points being:

- The crops to be inter-row sprayed, the row configuration and the target weed or weeds.
- The type of herbicide to be used.
- The filtration and plumbing needs in relation to chemical use.
- The minimum and maximum water rates and presence or otherwise of nearby sensitive crops – these two issues affecting nozzle selection and location.
- The ability of the supplier to set-up the machine for field operations and the availability of back-up service.

“The current research is establishing and pointing to the better use of shields in cotton but the grains industry will need to develop its own parameters for using a shielded sprayer,” the authors say.

They then list 12 issues growers should consider when weighing up whether to purchase a particular sprayer – issues such as whether the hoods are horizontally adjustable to cope with different row spacings; the number of nozzles per shield and the standard size; and if the nozzle height is adjustable to allow for a variation in target weed height.

Their full report can be read in the latest SANTFA Newsletter – contact executive and scientific officer Rohan Rainbow on 8842 4278 for details.

ENDS: Shieldedok.