

## South-east snail control

Studies of the small conical snail, *Cochlicella barbara*, in the lower south-east of SA have indicated that the timing of control measures for these pests in that region should mirror that in other regions as the lifecycle of the snail in the lower south-east matches that of populations elsewhere in SA.

Research officer with SARDI's entomology unit, Megan Leyson, said the research was undertaken because some lower south-east producers had seen active small conical snails in paddocks during summer and were concerned that they might have a longer breeding phase in higher rainfall areas.

She said a monitoring program of snail populations on a property at Hatherleigh and another at Mt Benson was established in September 2002 and with the help of the property owners, lasted until October 2003.

"Monitoring was planned to investigate the timing of mating and breeding of these snails," Ms Leyson said.

"It showed that they begin breeding in early autumn with a cohort of juvenile snails entering the population in winter and spring," Ms Leyson said.

"This monitoring data indicated that the lifecycle of the small conical snail and the timing of its breeding phase in the lower south-east are similar to that of conical snails, white snails and white Italian snails in other regions of southern Australia."

Ms Leyson said snail research work in the south-east was continuing as a joint effort involving SARDI and the MacKillop Farm Management Group.

Under investigation is the effectiveness of various control techniques for snail control with monitoring counts being conducted before the control measure is implemented and then a week later so that mortality levels can be assessed.

"This data will give growers information for effective control techniques," Ms Leyson said.

"As well, baiting studies for small conical snails will continue at the Waite Institute.

"In small plot baiting trials at the Waite last year, using 5kg/ha of metaldehyde, mortality rates of the small conical snails ranged from 37 pc to 61 pc. This variability in baiting mortality for small conical snails is to be further investigated this year."

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