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TEST FOR CEREAL ROOT DISEASES NOW

Knowing the status of paddocks with regards root diseases is an essential part of managing risk going into this season.

Diseases such as Rhizoctonia and Crown Rot can decimate crops, and Cereal Cyst Nematode, while it has been a lesser problem in recent years, is still there and can rapidly build up especially with a succession of susceptible crops or varieties.

Farmers will be aware of those paddocks which have a history of disease or are prone to attack and should have these tested using the Predicta B test. Once marketed by Bayer, these tests are now totally distributed by SARDI through its Root Disease Testing Service. The PredictaB test package gives you levels of Rhizoctonia, take-all, crown rot, cereal cyst nematode, root lesion nematodes and blackspot of peas.

PredictaB is available from resellers and agronomists.

There is a risk that with the dry seasons farmers might have been lulled into a false sense of security, but losses can be high even in years like last year.

With the tough times farmers might feel that they cannot afford the tests. Whilst at \$235 per test farmers and advisers might consider them expensive, so are the potential losses from disease. And of course it is not necessary to test all paddocks.

Management of profitability and risk rather than just concentrating on production is becoming increasingly important.

Knowing the disease status of "at risk" paddocks was essential so that informed decisions about crop type or variety can be made.

For further information contact Alan McKay, SARDI on 8303 9368 or 0419 842 952.