



Joint Statement from:

30 October 2020

Grains Research and Development Corporation  
National Working Party on Grain Protection

### **Reminder on Compliance with Label Directions & Market Requirements**

Wheat, durum, other cereal, pulse and oilseed growers are reminded to adhere to all label directions for herbicides used as a desiccant in order to meet their legal obligations of chemical use and to avoid unacceptable chemical residues.

#### **Key Points:**

1. For herbicides used as desiccants such as diquat, glyphosate, paraquat and saflufenacil, label directions stipulate the crop type, rate and withholding periods prior to harvest that must be followed.
2. Even when complying with label directions, use of a desiccant may lead to the presence of chemical residues in excess of some market requirements.
3. Speak with your marketer to determine if there are concerns or restrictions on using a particular chemical for a particular crop type.

Late season rain creates a risk of leading to downgrading of the standing crop. This is unfortunate given the potential for the 2020/21 season in many areas of the Australian cropping area, especially in Eastern Australia.

Growers are understandably considering options to manage the crop and maximise the yield, weed control, grain quality and thus financial returns.

However where chemical desiccants are being considered there is the potential for chemical residues to arise that may exceed certain market requirements even when used in accordance with the label directions. For example, for durum, the Australian maximum residue limit (MRL) for diquat is 2mg/kg whereas in a major potential market for Australian durum, the European Union, there is a significantly lower MRL of 0.02mg/kg.

Given the difference in MRL, exporters may consider the risk of residues arising and exceeding market MRLs as being too high, and will not receive grain from crops if treated with certain chemicals such as in the above example, diquat on durum.

Before considering using a crop desiccant, growers are strongly encouraged to speak to their marketer to understand what the marketer will accept to be used on each crop.

Gordon Cumming, Manager Chemical Regulation, Grains Research and Development Corporation advises “Various Fact Sheets have been produced on desiccants registered for use by crop type. The most recent Pre-Harvest Herbicide Use Fact Sheet can be found on the GRDC website at <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/all-publications/factsheets/2020/preharvest-herbicide-use-fact-sheet>”

All markets have strict limits for chemical residues. Marketers closely monitor market requirements and provide advice to growers on their needs. Non-compliance can lead to the rejection of shipments in export markets and create ongoing market access issues.

Chair of the National Working Party on Grain Protection, Gerard McMullen, advises that all stakeholders have a role to play to ensure the continued good reputation of the Australian grain industry in meeting export market MRLs:

- “Growers have a legal obligation to follow label directions and understand the needs of their buyers.
- Exporters have a role to play also. Grain should not be exported unless the residue status is known and complies with market requirements.”

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