

Producer Perspective on the Clearfield™ System: Imagine Wheat

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Each year most farmers have a problem child. One field that doesn't pull its own weight or measure up to all the other fields. NW -17 has been my field; poor wild oat control two years in a row and I was starting to wonder if that there may be an issue with herbicide resistance. Adding pressure is the fact that I am an Agrologist, the field is beside highway #16 four miles east of Yorkton and everybody sees it and everybody knows who farms it.

In 2002, field was seeded to wheat, dry year and terrible wild oat control from a common Group 1 wild oat herbicide. In 2003, field was seeded to Round-Up ready canola. The Glyphosate cleaned up a lot of the problem but some later flushes in low areas and a couple sprayer misses displayed a continuing problem. In 2004, barely was planted. The cool growing season and long fall allowed the wild oats to come late and still mature. If early frost hurts the germination of Malt Barley why doesn't the frost hurt the germination of wild oats?

So with high population of wild oats, suspected group 1 herbicide resistance, only one year since growing Canola, late cold fall with no chance of weed control, I consider my cropping options. Field Peas, with the group 2 Odyssey/Pursuit options, would be an obvious choice but we traditionally don't grow peas and the price outlook doesn't look good and after the frost in 2004 who has good seed. That is when the Group 2 resistant Imagine wheat and the Clearfield option entered the picture.

In the spring of 2005, we seeded our regular Cadillac wheat first, then our Round-Up Ready Canola, then some barley before doing any pre-seeding burnoff. The weather was cool and very few weeds growing so we seeded the Imagine wheat on May 15 with-out doing any pre-seed burn-off. Because of the seed cost, (\$8/bushel), we only seeded at 1.6 bu/acre but the plant stand density at emergence looked very good. The soil warmed up quickly and the wheat and the weeds all emerged 8 days after seeding. So with some wheat 1/2" high, I was only brave enough to spray the weediest one-third of the field with Glyphosate.

By June 15 the wheat had advanced to the 4th leaf stage and I was ready to spray. Adrenalin was stretched to 22 acres per case to cover the whole field and I sprayed 6 gallons per acre. About one week later the rows of wheat remained a darker color and started stretching above the weeds between the rows and that was the last I saw of any wild oats, volunteer barley or any other weeds. Except for a 15 foot triangle spray miss around a telephone pole. Because of the proximity to highway #16, the field was signed by BASF and SWP and walked many times. I could not find a wild oat plant where I sprayed and the only barley plant I found was late germinator that barely set seed. I didn't realized that the 8 oz of 2,4-D was the only group 4 broadleaf chemistry in Adrenalin. But I would rate my control of Canada Thistle and Cleavers as excellent suppression; while they weren't controlled their level of infestation did not increase.

The field was straight cut by an old Massey 850 on Sept 8 and Sept 21-22. Net yield will be about 53 bushels per acre of #2 CWRS wheat with 13.6% to 14.2% protein. I also seeded two other varieties of wheat, Cadillac and Splendor. They yielded between 53 and 55 bushels per

acre and had protein ranging from 13.8% to 14.8%. All wheat had a couple of showers and held their grade as #2. All wheat fields were located within two miles with similar weather so I consider the yields all to be equal and no variety was better or worse than the others.

The Imagine Wheat and Clearfield production system met expectation with respect to yield and weed control. But a couple of surprises showed up that were not planned; while both my other varieties had lodging problems, the Imagine variety stood up very well and did not lodge, it was maybe 6 inches shorter than the others but was very easy to straight cut. The chemical handling was also a pleasant surprise. Adrenalin SC comes in an 8 L jug of pre-mixed grassy and broadleaf chemical and no surfactants or adjuvant to worry about; 100 acres took 5 - 8 L jugs. No measuring surfactants to match spray volume or figuring whether the 2-1/2 jugs of grassy chemical gets added before or after the broadleaf component and wondering if the plastic bags have dissolved yet.

I was very pleased with the performance of the Imagine wheat Clearfield system. I managed to clear up a weed resistance problem by introducing a different chemistry group in my rotation. I plan on expanding my acres of this variety. I also feel it can be a valuable option for other producers who don't grow peas or Clearfield Canola and a way to get another chemical grouping their rotation to reduce the chance of herbicide resistance of developing on their farm.