

# BASF/ADAS Sclerotinia Monitoring

23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009



Sclerotinia germination underway at all sites except N. Yorks and increasing rapidly where soils are moist. Many crops are at early to mid-flowering and sclerotinia infection could start when the next rain arrives. Urgent to apply fungicide treatments now.

## Weather conditions and osr growth stages

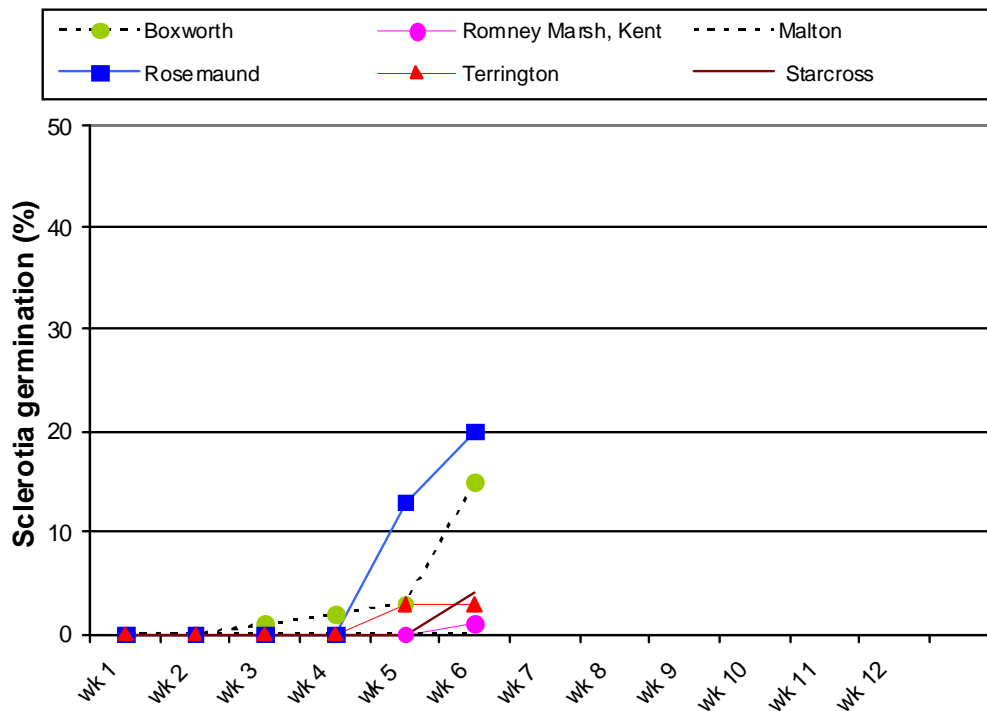
Overview: Crops are mainly between early and mid-flowering with pods starting to develop in the more forward crops. There is considerable variation within crops as some plants are at mid-flowering whilst others are just starting to flower. Pigeon and rabbit damaged areas are still green. Late crops, particularly in the north, are still short and barely at the yellow bud stage. Where there are distinct yellow and green areas within fields, consider using different fungicide timings. Plant height is variable, mostly in the range 70-120 cm tall. Mean soil temperatures are starting to exceed 10°C in southern and central regions and sclerotial germination is now underway at 5 of the 6 depot sites. Minimum temperatures are above 7°C on some days so conditions are more favourable for sclerotinia infection than at the same stage last year. Rain is forecast in some areas in the next few days and this could give some sclerotinia infection where petal fall is underway. It is now important to ensure flowering crops are protected before the next rain. Where pgr treatments have been made, the sclerotinia fungicide should be applied 2-3 weeks later.

- SE and East Anglia – Crops are moving quickly through flowering and many crops are at mid-flowering on the main raceme. There are considerable areas where pigeons and rabbits have damaged the crop that are struggling to flower. Soil temperatures are now reaching 10°C and sclerotial germination is active at some sites, notably at Boxworth where germination has increased from 3% to 15% this week. There was the first record at the Romney Marsh this week, apparently delayed by dry conditions. Note that relatively high petal infection has been detected at the Kent site so there is clearly a risk of sclerotinia in the area. As night temperatures are sometimes above 7°C, there is likely to be a risk of sclerotinia infection when petals start to fall. Fungicide protection should now be in place as there is an infection risk with rain forecast for 25/26 April.
- SW and West – Most crops are moving from the early to mid-flowering stage, but a few crops are already beyond the mid-flowering stage. The first germination (4%) in the Starcross, Devon depot has been recorded this week. At the Hereford site germination has increased from 13% to 20%, which is the highest to date in the depot network. It is now urgent to ensure fungicides are applied to protect crops from the early flowering stage.
- Lincs, and E Midlands – Crops are generally at the early flowering stage, with some crops at mid-flowering. There was no new germination at Terrington, S. Lincs this week so the total remains at 3%. Some areas in the region are very dry, but there is still likely to be some risk of sclerotinia. The situation can change quickly once rain arrives. Soil temperatures are now favourable for sclerotial germination and night

temperatures above 7°C could allow infection to occur earlier than last season. Fungicide treatments should be considered for flowering crops now.

- N England - Most crops at the early to mid-flowering stage though there are some still at the yellow bud stage. There is no germination at the northern depot but there could still be risk of sclerotinia already, particularly in areas where soil temperatures have reached 10°C. Sclerotial germination at High Mowthorpe has been much later than at other sites in recent years. However, the new depot is at lower altitude so may show earlier activity this season.

### **Sclerotia Germination (refer to website map for exact locations)**



#### **Key points**

*Germination is now increasing significantly as soil temperatures have reached 10°C.*

#### **Petal infection results**

The % petals infected with Sclerotinia spores are being measured at 6 sites at 3 different times - first flower and then for two more weeks. This supplements the sclerotial germination to show the degree of spore production and survival. Note these are **not** selected to be high risk sites.

ADAS site	Start of flowering		Early flower		Mid flowering	
	Date	% infection	Date	% infection	Date	% infection
Boxworth	13 April	0				
Exeter						
Kent	13 April	45				
Rosemaund	14 April	10				
Terrington	17 April	10				
Malton						

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**Key points:** The first petals tests are underway and the preliminary results shown above may change as final counts are still to be completed after 10-14 days. The Kent site is well above the 25% petal infection threshold for economic damage from sclerotinia despite little germination in the depot. Do not rely on dry weather to control your sclerotinia!

### **Actions**

This is now the key stage to have fungicide protection in place as rain is forecast and temperatures are becoming more favourable for germination and infection. There are some dry areas but the lessons of 2007 have been learnt – even 6 weeks without rain will not prevent sclerotinia infection.