

BASF/ADAS Sclerotinia Monitoring

30th April 2009



Sclerotinia germination underway at all sites except N. Yorks. Many crops are at mid-flowering and sclerotinia infection could be starting in the west. Time second sprays so that crops are protected until the end of May.

Weather conditions and osr growth stages

Overview: Crops are mainly at full flowering with few buds remaining on the main raceme. Pods are developing well though some gaps and dead flower buds have been reported. The branches are flowering strongly. Forward crops are at the mid to late flowering stage. There is considerable variation within crops due to variable establishment, pigeon and rabbit damage and lack of rain.

Sclerotial germination is now underway at 5 of the 6 depot sites but progressing slowly where sites are dry. Minimum temperatures are struggling to get above 7°C on some days so conditions have not been particularly favourable for sclerotinia infection recently. Petal tests are showing high levels of sclerotinia at high risk sites (40-50% petals infected). There has been rain in some areas this week and petal stick has occurred in some crops in the south and west. Some infection could be underway and symptoms should be evident in 2-3 weeks time. It is now important to ensure flowering crops remain protected. Where first fungicides were applied 2-3 weeks ago the second spray could be applied later next week so that it gives good protection for the rest of May.

- SE and East Anglia – Crops are moving steadily through flowering and many crops are beyond mid-flowering on the main raceme and have 50% pod set. There are considerable areas where pigeons and rabbits have damaged the crop that are struggling to flower. Sclerotial germination is active at some sites, notably at Boxworth where germination has increased from 15% to 20% this week. Little petal sticking reported as rainfall has been limited in many areas.
- There has been an increase in germination from 1% to 14% this week at the Romney Marsh site, but petal tests indicate high risks for some crops despite dry conditions. As night temperatures are sometimes above 7°C, there is likely to be a risk of sclerotinia infection when there is some rain. Fungicide protection should now be maintained to protect crops during May.
- SW and West – Most crops are at the full flowering stage, but a few crops are already at the late flowering stage. The first germination (4%) in the Starcross, Devon depot was recorded last week has not changed though more apothecia have appeared. At the Hereford site, germination has increased from 20% to 27%, which is the highest to date in the depot network. Petal tests are showing high levels of sclerotinia at high risk sites. As petals are now sticking to the foliage, some infection could now be underway. The west and south-west appear to be at higher risk than the east because of higher rainfall. It is now urgent to ensure fungicides are applied to protect untreated crops and plan second sprays at high risk sites.
- Lincs. and E Midlands – Crops are generally at the early to mid-flowering stage, Some are struggling in the dry areas.. There was no new germination at Terrington, S.

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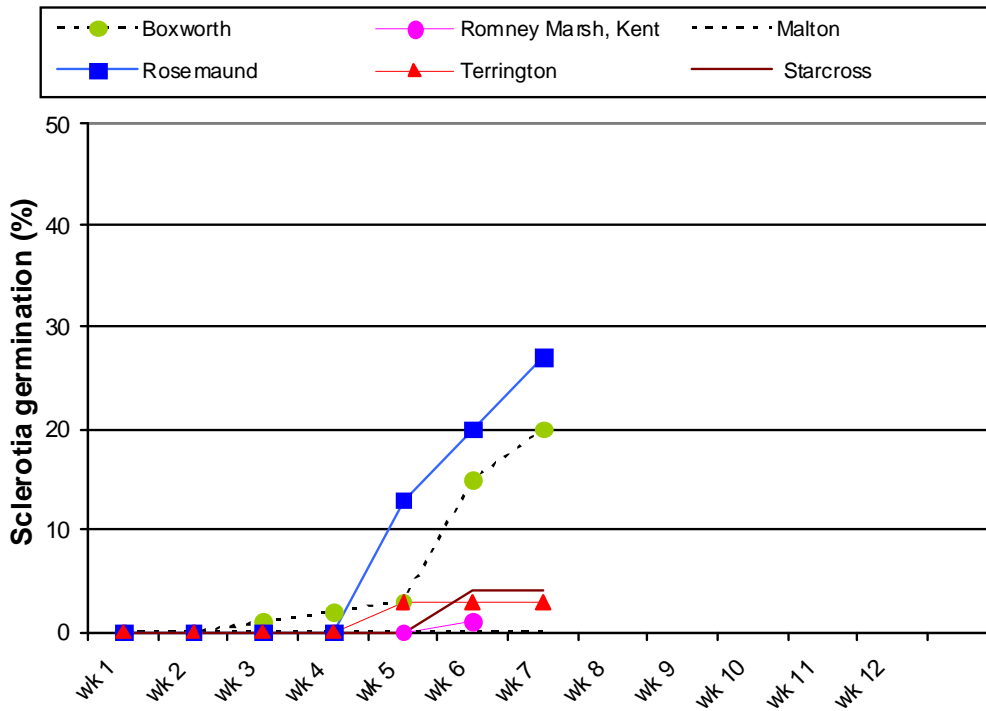
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Lincs this week and the older apothecia have disappeared. The cumulative germination remains at 3%. Petal tests indicate that sclerotinia is active and could be damaging at high risk sites. The situation can change quickly once rain arrives. Soil temperatures are now favourable for sclerotial germination and night temperatures above 7°C could allow infection to occur. Fungicide treatments should now be in place for flowering crops and second sprays may be required about mid-May.

- N England - Most crops at the early to mid-flowering stage though there are some more backward crops. There is still 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 and soils have been moist.

Sclerotia Germination (refer to website map for exact locations)



Key points

Germination is now increasing steadily where soils are moist

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	20 April	2.5		
Exeter	20 April	12.5				
Kent	13 April	45	20 April	22.5		
Rosemaund	14 April	10	22 April	35		
Terrington	17 April	25	24 April	10+		
Malton						

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Key points: Sclerotinia has been found at all sites tested so far. The second petals tests are underway and the preliminary results shown above may change as final counts are still to be completed after 10-14 days. Sclerotiinia levels have increased since the start of flowering at Rosemaund. The Kent and Rosemaund sites are well above the 25% petal infection threshold for economic damage from sclerotinia. The Kent scores are high despite little germination in the depot when petals were sampled. Do not rely on dry weather to control your sclerotinia!

Actions

As most crops have now had their first sclerotinia spray, plan the second sprays so that protection will extend up to the end of flowering. Do not be tempted to rush back very early in May as protection may not last until the end of May. There are some dry areas but the lessons of 2007 have been learnt – even 6 weeks without rain will not prevent sclerotinia infection.