

# Media Release



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## Hundreds Take Part in Roundup Ready® Canola Field Days

Even though Roundup Ready® canola will only comprise about one percent of the country's commercial production in 2008, this figure is set to increase next year, if reaction by attendees at recent winter field days across Nufarm's five R&D Technology Demonstration Sites is anything to go by.

"There have been more than 500 growers, agronomists and distributors who've visited one of our five demonstration sites since early August and we expect this figure to more than double by the end of October," said Andrew Wells, Nufarm's R&D Manager.

"We could not have expected any better response from the agricultural community who are all commenting not only on the various Roundup Ready canola varieties good vigour, but on the great weed control capability of this herbicide-tolerant technology," Andrew added.

The Technology Demonstration Sites have been designed to show growers various over-the-top Roundup Ready herbicide applications, alternative chemistry systems and control options for Roundup Ready canola volunteers and alternative knockdown options. The sites also give visitors the chance to compare Roundup Ready against conventional, CLEARFIELD® and Triazine-Tolerant (TT) canola varieties.

About 110 growers in Victoria and New South Wales planted an average of 80-90 hectares of Roundup Ready canola during May with one of four Roundup Ready varieties supplied by either Nuseed, Pacific Seeds or Pioneer Hi-Bred.

Prior to sowing, these growers and over 20 distributors across the two states took part in a rigorous accreditation and stewardship program organised by Monsanto Australia, the owner of the Roundup Ready technology trait.

"The field days have been extremely positive and given everyone a chance to become more familiar with the stewardship and regulatory requirements," explained Tony May, Canola Business Lead for Monsanto.

"Our stewardship program has been established to ensure that everyone gains the maximum benefit from the new technology while minimising the risk of glyphosate resistance developing in weed populations," he said.



The accreditation process takes into account many critical components, including agronomic and stewardship information.

A key component of this program involves the Paddock Risk Assessment Management Option Guide (PRAMOG), which is a tool to be completed by each participating grower that identifies existing risk potential for glyphosate resistance development and suggests additional management options to minimise this risk in the years following growing Roundup Ready canola.

Tony added that this structured approach is an integral part of the Roundup Ready production package. "In Canada, for instance, more than 30,000 canola growers sign Technology User Agreements (TUAs) each year as a condition for growing herbicide-tolerant GM varieties."

Victorian farmer, Jason Ritchie, is growing 309 hectares of Roundup Ready canola in Western Victoria. Some of his paddocks surround environmentally sensitive areas and waterways, leading him to choose to grow a GM canola variety.

"Roundup Ready is a safer alternative to residual herbicides such as triazine, which take longer to break down in the local environment," he says.

To date, Jason is pleased with the performance of his Roundup Ready canola. Although still eight weeks away from harvest, he expects the Roundup Ready crop to provide a higher yield than his TT canola with lower input requirements.

Robert Wilson, Canola Research Manager for Pioneer Hi-Bred, said customer feedback had been extremely favourable to his company's hybrid canola variety. "Our customers are all commenting on the variety's great vigour and are extremely happy with its performance compared to TT and other canola varieties.

"It's also worth noting that as a result of the moratoria against growing GM varieties until recently, we haven't built up the level of information we normally gather on newer varieties. As promising and exciting as the current GM canola varieties on offer are, I'm sure that growers will soon see even more significant improvements in varieties offered by ourselves, Pacific Seeds and Nuseed," Robert said.

**ENDS**

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