

Step 3: Decision Making

At this stage growers/agronomists have discovered a potential problem. The decision to act should be based on the level of risk based on previous steps along with consideration for the wider impacts on pest management as a whole.

A number of tools are available to assist growers/agronomists in reaching a decision. These include threshold guidelines which are available for certain pests. These guidelines help to inform decision making in conjunction with previous history, and evidence gathered during monitoring.

If intervention is required non-chemical methods need to be considered in the first instance. If this does not provide sufficient control and there is adequate justification a chemical approach may be used. But care should be taken by growers in considering the wider impacts in terms of the farming system by choosing a chemical solution.

Chemicals products vary in their efficacy and suitability in given situations. It is important that growers seek professional independent advice from a registered pesticide advisor a list of whom is available at:

<http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/media/pesticides/content/sud/advisors/ListApprovedPesticideAdvisors260218.xlsx>

All those involved in applying pesticides need to be properly trained in line with SUD requirements and be in possession of a Professional User (PU) number from the DAFM. More information available at: <http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/sud/professionaluserssprayeroperators/>

All products being used must be registered with the Pesticide Control Service (PCS) division in DAFM and must be approved for the use intended. Restrictions on use may apply depending on crop being grown and label instructions must always be followed.

A list of registered products is available at:

<http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/plantprotectionproducts/>

Sprayer operators should have adequate knowledge of chemicals and be prepared to adjust in the field if required or if situations change. Weather conditions are particularly important and the forecast should be considered prior, during and after application.

To avoid further development of pesticide resistance and to protect remaining chemistry, growers should follow appropriate anti-resistance management strategies. Information is provided on product labels, but professional independent advice should also be sought.