



BLIGHT

There are many reports of blight in crops around the country, recent rain is likely to make blight very active again over the coming weeks. Many growers have kept their intervals tight even during the dry weeks in July. However pressure has kept building through June with big canopies contributing to the problem. Be aware of potato dumps, garden growers or groundkeepers all of which may not be under your control but will increase the pressure. Also in your own crops monitor areas in corners and around poles or anywhere less than full rates are being applied as blight will spread from these areas. Some cymoxanil should be on hand so that it can be mixed with any of the partner products where you need some knockdown of the fungus. It may be necessary to apply fungicides in shorter intervals to try to dry up the fungus, otherwise where practical it may be necessary to burn off the affected areas if they become uncontrollable. Use some of the products that are good on tuber blight to try and ensure that they are fully protected, contacts such as Cyazofamid (Ranman) or Fluazanim (Shirlan/Volley) are probably best value at this stage. Systemics are **not** needed at this stage as the

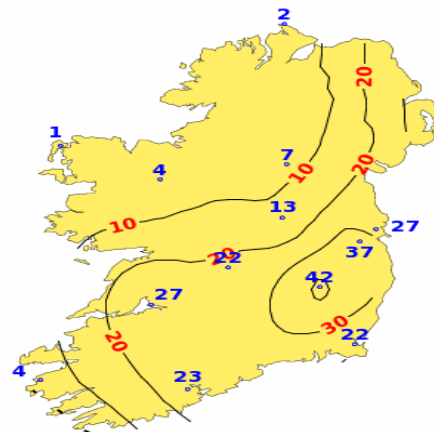
canopy is not producing any new foliage.

DESSICATION

The rainfall over the last month had almost eliminated soil moisture deficits however the deficits are starting to increase again so in crops destined for early burn off, such as seed crops or salad varieties, be very careful with rates of diquat (fig 1).

Fig 1.

Soil Moisture Deficit
(Moderately Drained Soil)
Wed 27 Jul 2016



Open up the crops with 1-2 litres of Diquat (check Label) per ha and follow this up the second application of 3-4l/ha within 7 days. Some crops will need the higher rates given the size of the canopy in many crops. Don't forget that the maximum total application is 5l/ha. With the large canopies this year there will be a lot of stem material to be knocked down



as well, in this scenario the use of carfentrazone-ethyl (Spotlight Plus) will help to break down the stems and will provide a good mix with diquat. The maximum individual of carfentrazone-ethyl is 1l/ha.

Before you make the decision to burn off crops don't forget to carry out the simple moisture test to make sure that the crop can receive the higher rates of diquat. Make sure to carry out a number of tests throughout the fields and examine the soil around the tubers. While 1l/ha is supported, even in dry conditions like we had last year, the higher rates can cause significant damage so have a look at the soil around the tubers.

If the soil makes a ball as in Fig 2, then, you can go with the higher rates. However if the soil crumbles and falls away between your fingers as in fig 3, then the maximum rate you should use is **1L/Ha**.

Fig 2



Fig 3



Having looked at a number of crops lately and reports from a number of growers would seem to indicate that tuber numbers are low, these are swelling fast and will reach desirable size quickly, therefore depending on

planting date growers should start inspecting crops in early August to assess the crops for burning off. It may well be a case that crops with lower tuber numbers may be fit to desiccate earlier than expected.

PESTS

The recent rainfall will help to encourage slugs to feed on the soil surface. It is also the only time in the year that the Keeled slug appears on the soil surface in order to mate. Make sure that a full rate of pellets is on the crop by mid-August. Product choice shouldn't make a huge difference but quantity probably will.

There have also been some reports of wireworm damage in crops. Where they are a problem or there is a significant threat plan to harvest as early as possible. As a general rule of thumb damage increases significantly once you move into September. Therefore identify these fields and plan to harvest as soon as possible.

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