AIR-ASSISTED SPRAYER

Air-assisted spraying achieved increased crop penetration and a bigger cash margin than conventional spray equipment in a series of trials on a British farm.

The trials were commissioned by KW Agriculture to check the performance of the novel Cleanacres Airtec air-assisted sprayer against a conventional hydraulic nozzle machine. They were carried out in winter wheat at Holly House Farm, Keadby, South Humberside, eastern England, with the Airtec sprayer applying chemicals at two different dose rates.

The best results were achieved when chemicals were applied at the full recommended dose rate through the Airtec sprayer. At this level the margin over chemical costs was £139/ha (£56/acre) compared with £119/ha (£48/acre) for the crop sprayed by the conventional sprayer at the full 100% dose rate.

In another section,the dose rate for the Airtec machine was reduced to 60% of the recommendation, and this produced the second best disease control result - not as good as the full dose rate from the air sprayer, but better than the conventional sprayer at the 100% application rate.

The trials provide further evidence that new sprayer designs being developed in Britain are more effective than the hydraulic nozzle machines still in use on most farms throughout the world.

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