

Taking aim on effective spraying

Spraying systems like Case IH's AIM Command, which maintains constant droplet size and pressure regardless of speed, are the way of the future, according to agricultural spraying consultant Bill Gordon.

Bill has a background in research on application technology and worked as an agronomist and in product development before starting his consultancy in 2002. He recently completed a series of workshops in Western Australia, where he helped about 180 farmers get a better understanding of the chemical spray application process.

"The workshops were about helping people get a better understanding of the process so they could make informed decisions. Farmers are concerned with minimising drift and getting the right amount of product onto the target crops. We talked about how differing conditions affect the behaviour and survival of droplets, and the way various products interact with their targets."

Bill says understanding the basics is the key to good application.

"Over the past 10 years there has been a big transition to automatic rate control, and this has taken some thought out of the process, with a tendency to treat it as

a cure-all, which it is not. Changing speed can considerably change the droplet size. Using automatic rate control, over an eight km speed range, pressure can vary by up to two bar, which may lead to between 10 and 40 per cent product loss due to the production of fine droplets."

Case IH's AIM Command uses cutting edge pulse width modulation technology to allow operators to control spray pressure independently of ground speed and application rates.

"AIM Command has great potential. Because it maintains constant pressure at the nozzle regardless of speed, it overcomes a lot of the problems of other systems. It's still vital to get the basics right, but AIM Command makes that easier to do," Bill says.

The AIM Command system is fitted to the range of Case IH SPX4410 sprayers.

Spraying consultant Bill Gordon thinks systems like Case IH's AIM Command are the way of the future.

