



Australian Pecan Growers' Association Summer 2015-16 Newsletter



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...

Hi all. I hope the summer is treating you kindly wherever you are located, and are starting to get a glimpse of what is in store for harvest this season. This is my first newsletter as editor, so I just wanted to take this chance to thank Dave for his contribution to this role over the past couple of years. Also that photos, contributions and article suggestions are welcomed and can be passed onto me using the contact details at the end of the newsletter. Happy growing!

WEED CONTROL AROUND NON-BEARING PECAN TREES

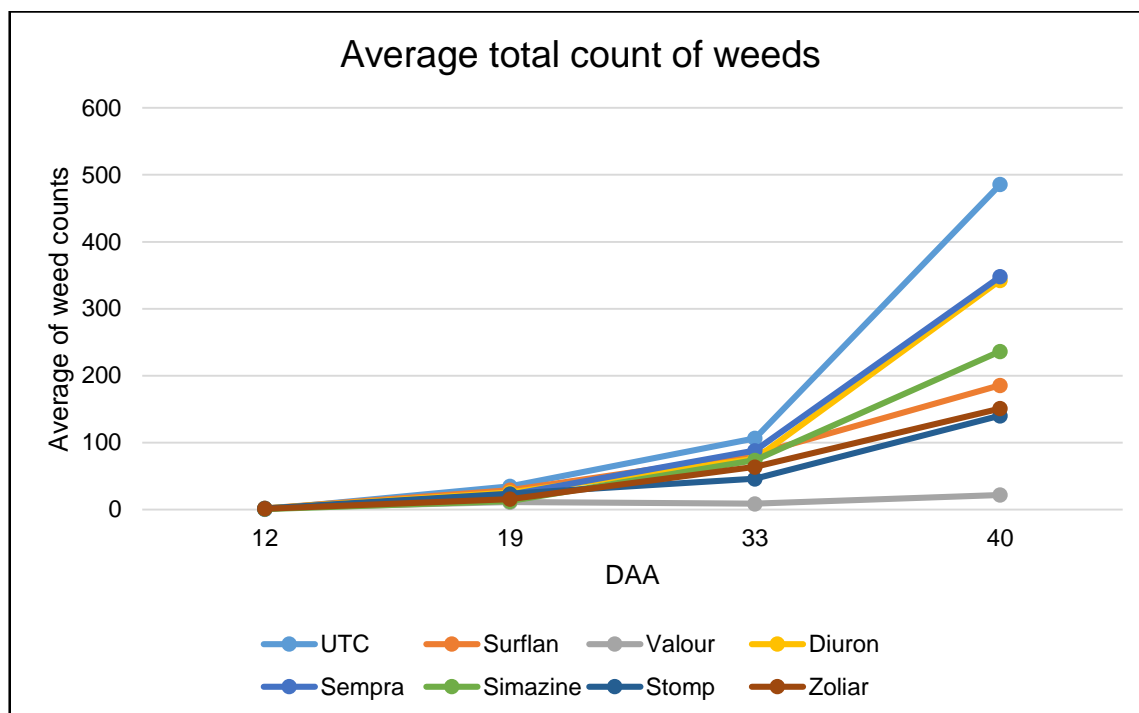
This project is part of the young tree project jointly funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia (HIA) and Stahmann Farms.

Weed control is highly important around small pecan trees to reduce competition for sunlight, irrigation and nutrition to allow them to establish and grow into maturity as soon as possible. Many practices can achieve a weed free zone around the trees, and one of those is the use of pre-emergent herbicides.

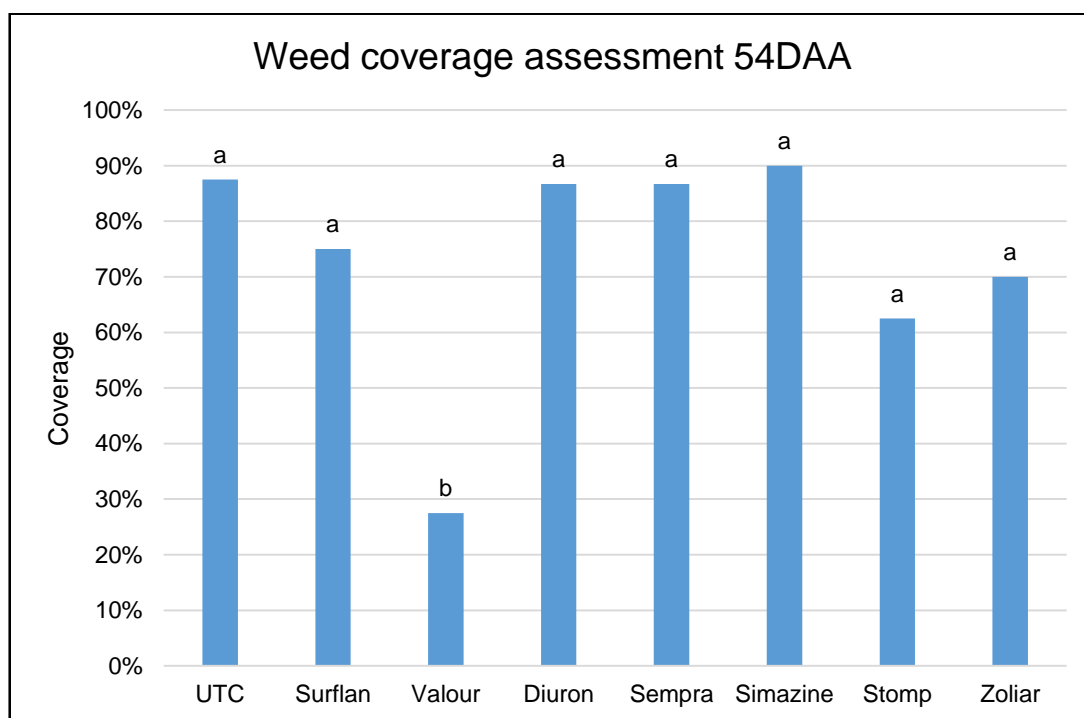
In October 2015, a pre-emergent trial was sprayed at "Redbank" to evaluate seven herbicides against an untreated plot. Weed emergence in an untreated control (UTC) plot was compared to emergence in plots treated with Diuron 900 WDG, Semptra, Simazine, Stomp 440, Surflan 500, Valour 500 WG and Zoliar 800 DF. Weed control was monitored five times over 54 days following the application by recording germination occurrences, species, timing, and overall coverage. Tree health was also examined for any symptoms of toxicity from the pre-emergent herbicide treatments.

The regularly occurring weeds observed were catheads (*Tribulus terrestris*), grasses (varying species), paddymelons (*Citrullus lanatus*) and nutgrass (*Cyperus rotundus*), catheads being the most dominant weed across the trial. All weeds found within the treatment area were counted and added together to observe the control of each herbicide. The chart below shows that five herbicides recorded a significantly lower count of

weeds compared to the UTC; Simazine, Stomp, Surflan, Valour, and Zoliar. Valour in particular reduced the weed count 96% compared to the UTC. When the weed count was separated into broadleaf and grass species, all herbicides exhibited some reduction of broadleaf weed counts but no herbicide significantly reduced the count of grasses.



At 54 days after application, rainfall had resulted in the germination of weeds across the trial area and many treatments had worn off. Coverage for each treatment was compared to evaluate the longevity of weed control by estimating the total area covered as a percentage. In the graph below, you can see that Valour was the stand out herbicide with a coverage rating of only 28% compared to the 88% rating observed in the UTC.



This photo shows the striking difference between a particular Valour treatment plot in the foreground, to an untreated plot directly behind. A green carpet of weeds stops at the division line marking the change of treatments showing that the weed control is attributed to the herbicide.



Further investigation is underway to evaluate weed control over larger areas, and continue to determine whether there are any negative impacts to tree health from this chemical. At the conclusion of this trial, no toxicity symptoms have been observed on trees from any of the herbicides.

Neither the APGA nor Stahmann Farms are in the business of providing specific advice to growers, this simply the communication of results from experiments undertaken in good faith.

Where these products are not registered for use on pecans, trials have been undertaken on a “permit” basis only and none of the information listed above represents any warranty performance. Growers should only use chemicals in accordance with the product label and advice from their local consultant.



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ITEMS FOR SALE

Savage 420 Pecan Harvester

\$4,500

Good condition, working quite well.

Contact Tony Heeson: wallaby@nor.com.au



Research update:

AUSTRALIA

Fast facts learnt so far in the 2015-16 growing season:

- Soil applied zinc chelate can keep the leaf zinc content close to ideal levels without any supplementary foliar sprays and major deficiency symptoms, in neutral to alkaline soils.
- Excessive applications of nitrogen and potassium have thus far not made a significant difference to leaf content. Growth and vigour have not been evaluated.
- The pre-emergent “Valour” significantly reduced weed germination, with no damage to Pecan trees observed thus far.

From the young tree project funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia (HIA) and Stahmann Farms.

INTERNATIONAL

Extracts of abstracts from recently published articles:

- Stem canker caused by *Lasiodiplodia subglobosa* found on Pecan trees in southern Brazil
- Biochars produced from pecan shells may be used for the removal of heavy metals from solutions.
- An aqueous extract from pecan shells might be a potential candidate for medical purposes as a complementary treatment of diabetes and hypercholesterolemia.

IN THE NEWS

Health benefits of pecans

An article published online in December outlines seven benefits of eating pecan nuts for your health; heart support, fights inflammation, fights cancer (?), anti-aging, weight-loss, reducing cholesterol, and assisting blood pressure management.

<http://www.globalhealingcenter.com/natural-health/health-benefits-of-pecans/>

Pecan truffles

A pound of truffles grown in Georgia USA can sell for US\$200-300, but the limiting factor on growth is the lack of consistent availability.

<http://southeastfarmpress.com/orchard-crops/pecan-truffles-sell-300-pound-if-you-can-find-them>

DID YOU KNOW?

The first pecan planting in America was in 1772, when William Prince planted 30 nuts and raised 10 trees, eight of which he sold in England.

- from “A Pecan History” by George Ray McEachern

What kind of tree fits in your hand?

- a palm tree

Why didn't the tree want to play checkers?

- because he was a chestnut

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A 7 nut cluster from a farm on the north coast

Alternate row mowing for GVB control at Moree

