

# Villa Adjuvant Tip of the Month



## ADJUVANTS SHOULD NOT BE USED TO FIX POOR APPLICATIONS

Adjuvants are efficacy-restoring products and they should be used when recommended on crop protection product (CPP) labels. This will increase and stabilise control over a wide range of conditions. However, sometimes adjuvants are used as an emergency measure to increase efficacy or to reduce phytotoxicity when all other guidelines have been disregarded. The use of adjuvants was never meant to fix poor recommendations and applications! In the ensuing discussion, the pitfalls of using or removing adjuvants as a last resort will be discussed.

### Phytotoxicity

The desired outcome of any application is to have adequate efficacy without causing any crop damage. This is normally the outcome with the overwhelming number of applications. However, in some cases, incorrect applications with a potential for crop damage are made. This normally entails the mixture of multiple components in the spray mixture, with a host of possible reactions that could occur. As a precaution, the adjuvant is then removed as a crop damage-limiting strategy. The omission of an adjuvant as a phytotoxicity-limiting measure is unwise, as the same mixture without the adjuvant will probably still cause crop damage, especially under certain environmental conditions. Rather keep in mind that the particular mixture probably has the potential to cause crop damage, regardless of whether an adjuvant is used or not.

### Efficacy

The efficacy of an application determines the eventual pest or weed control. In certain cases, when potentially

antagonistic tank mixtures are applied, non-recommended adjuvants are sometimes used as a last resort to ensure efficacy. This is not a sound practice as adjuvants are not meant to restore the efficacy of highly antagonistic tank mixtures. The antagonism will probably persist to an extent, whether an adjuvant is used or not! In rare cases, where tank mixtures are not extremely antagonistic, adjuvants may be of assistance. However, when tank mixture components are very antagonistic, no adjuvant will be good enough to restore efficacy. It is therefore important to use adjuvants as efficacy-restoring products and not as silver bullets that will solve the disadvantages of poor applications.

### Villa's stance

Villa has always tried to ensure that we recommend the most effective adjuvant for a particular CPP or tank-mixture situation. However, adjuvants were never meant to address poor applications. Adjuvants are not designed to overcome highly antagonistic tank mixtures. Their omission from potentially phytotoxic tank mixtures should also not be a strategy to reduce crop damage. Adjuvants should therefore only be used as per instruction when recommended on CPP labels. Ineffective or potentially phytotoxic spray mixtures have the potential to fail, with or without adjuvants. Only if adjuvants are used for their intended purpose, will they do their correct job as efficacy restoring products. Stick to CPP label recommendations in this regard.

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