New Fungicides for Cereal Disease Management

Several new fungicides are being tested for use in cereal disease management. Triadimefon (Bayleton), a systemic sterol inhibitor providing wide-spectrum protective and curative activity primarily against powdery mildews and rusts, was recently registered on wheat and barley for powdery mildew and leaf, stem, and stripe rusts. Another new sterol inhibitor tested extensively on wheat was propiconazole (Titil), a broad-spectrum fungicide with activity against certain ascomycetes, basidiomycetes, and deutero-myces but little or no activity against phycomycetes. The experimental triazole RH-5781F, evaluated in many of the same trials as triadimefon and propiconazole, is also a sterol inhibitor. This broad-spectrum, ambimobile systemic fungicide has protective and curative activity similar to that of propiconazole.

In the southeastern states, triadimefon, propiconazole, and RH-5781F generally provided good to adequate protection against infection by the leaf rust, powdery mildew, and Septoria fungi. In two studies in Arkansas, triadimefon gave the best control of leaf rust, leaf blotch, and glume blotch but was not as effective as propiconazole against scab or powdery mildew. A mancozeb-triadimefon tank mix showed better broad-spectrum activity than a mancozeb-benomyl mix for controlling scab, leaf rust, Septoria leaf blotch, and powdery mildew. In Mississippi, mancozeb alone or tank-mixed with triadimefon or benomyl effectively controlled leaf rust, Septoria leaf and glume blotches, and powdery mildew. In Tennessee, tank mixes of mancozeb with benomyl or with RH-5781F were the most effective treatments against Puccinia recondita f. sp. tritici.

Another tank mix that effectively controlled leaf rust, powdery mildew, and Septoria glume blotch was mancozeb with anilazine (Dyrene).

Other fungicides tested on wheat in the Southeast were chlorothalonil (Bravo 500), butralin (Indar), and thiophanate-methyl (Topsin-M). Butralin is specific for P. recondita f. sp. tritici and shows no activity against other wheat pathogens. Chlorothalonil gave some control of leaf rust, Septoria leaf and glume blotches, powdery mildew, and scab, but its performance varied from test to test and in general it was not as effective as triadimefon or propiconazole. In experiments in Mississippi and Tennessee, thiophanate-methyl did not control leaf rust or Septoria leaf and glume blotches, but in Tennessee it provided good control of powdery mildew and fair control of Septoria glume blotch.

The three new sterol-inhibiting fungicides tested in the Southeast appear to be equally effective at controlling leaf rust and powdery mildew, but propiconazole seems to have better activity against Septoria sp., causing leaf and glume blotches. Timing of the application may be a factor. A Tennessee study showed that propiconazole gave better control of glume blotch, leaf rust, and powdery mildew when applied to wheat at growth stage 8 and again at stage 10.1 (Fekes Large Scale) than when applied only at stage 8. The same study showed that RH-5781F with a spreader-sticker also was highly effective against these foliar diseases when applied at boot stage and again in 10 days.

Cereal grain fungicide reports from South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia were limited to control of powdery mildew. In each of these states, triadimefon protected flag leaves from infection by Erysiphe graminis f. sp. tritici. Plots treated with benomyl or RH-5781F also showed significantly less powdery mildew than an untreated plot in a North Carolina test, but control was not correlated with higher yields. Plots treated with a triadimefon-mancozeb tank mix or triadimefon alone significantly outyielded untreated plots in one Virginia test. In another, two applications of propiconazole or triadimefon held powdery mildew severity to zero, although overall mildew severity was light and apparently had no effect on plot yields.

In the northern and central Great Plains, researchers tested several registered and experimental fungicides against a variety of foliar pathogens. In the Dakotas, effectiveness of propiconazole in controlling tan spot on spring wheats varied. In North Dakota, control of tan spot, leaf rust, and Septoria leaf blotch and residual activity against the two leaf-spotting fungi were better with propiconazole than with mancozeb. Researchers in South Dakota, however, found a tank mix of mancozeb and RH-5781F to be the most effective treatment for tan spot. RH-5781F, mancozeb, triadimefon, and fenpropimorph (Corbel) gave fair to poor control and chlorothalonil and benomyl were not effective in protecting plants from infection by Pyrenochaeta arthrospora. None of the treatments in the South Dakota test controlled scab under epidemic conditions.

Studies in Minnesota and Nebraska were conducted under intense foliar disease pressure. Triadimefon and propiconazole generally provided good control of leaf rust, but in Nebraska, both treatments gave marginal control of Septoria leaf blotch. In Missouri, a tank mix of benomyl-chlorothalonil or benomyl-propiconazole provided some control of scab. In Nebraska, a tank mix of RH-5781F and mancozeb gave the best protection against P. recondita f. sp. tritici and S. tritici. This treatment was not as effective in Missouri, however.

Researchers in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky reported triadimefon and propiconazole to be effective against P. recondita f. sp. tritici, S. tritici, S. nodorum, and E. graminis f. sp. tritici. Researchers in Ohio reported that seed treatment with carboxin (Carat) alone or tank-mixed with etaconazole (Vanguard) or triadimefon had no significant effect on severity of either powdery mildew or leaf rust. In Kentucky, plots treated with a tank mix of triadimefon and thioanate-methyl had the highest yield and the lowest leaf rust rating. In another test, three applications of mancozeb gave better control of leaf rust than of powdery mildew or Septoria leaf blotch.

In Pennsylvania, triadimefon suppressed powdery mildew and partially controlled Septoria leaf and glume blotches. Adding anilazine, chlorothalonil, benomyl, or mancozeb to triadimefon in a tank mix improved activity against Septoria leaf and glume blotches. A tank mix of RH-5781F and mancozeb gave better control of leaf rust and Septoria leaf and glume blotches than either used alone. Pennsylvania researchers also reported that propiconazole controlled leaf rust, powdery mildew, and Septoria leaf and glume blotches and that two applications were more effective than one.

In Washington and Oregon, two applications of triadimefon or propiconazole gave good control of stripe rust. Chlorothalonil showed activity against Puccinia striiformis in Oregon, but neither it nor fenpropimorph was effective in Washington.

In Texas, triphenyltin hydroxide (Super Tin) controlled Rhizoctonia sheath blight of rice. Propiconazole also controlled Rhizoctonia sheath blight and was the only treatment effective against brown leaf spot.

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