



Early Planting of Canola

March 2009

With increasing pressure on producers to seed early, and with the advances in seeding technology, we tend to want to seed our canola earlier and earlier every year. Below are some guidelines canola producers can follow to help off-set early seeding risks.

- 1) Wait until soil is +10 C over a 24 hour period before planting canola. When the soil is too cold, +5 C for example, canola seed will not germinate at a vigorous rate. Plus, most phosphate is not available at cool temperatures.
- 2) If you must seed in cool temperatures, stick with hybrid and synthetic canola varieties. Hybrids and synthetics handle stress much better than open pollinated varieties. Open Pollinated varieties tend to struggle early when soil is cold, or when soil temperatures fluctuate.
- 3) When forced to seed early because of time and increased acres to cover, producers should try to increase their seeding rate slightly (0.5 to 1 lb/ac). By increasing seeding rate you are helping to off-set the potential for higher mortality in the stand.
- 4) When seeding early be prepared to spray twice. Early weed removal and pressure can help the stand branch out and grow. Last season in Manitoba crops that were written off by crop insurance as being too thin still yielded 30bu/ac +.
- 5) BE PATIENT!!! Re-seeding is not always the best option. Re-seeded stands tend to not do as good overall. When in doubt about early seeding canola, and it is prior to May 15th, wait 5 days!!!!

Prepared by Wayne Dobbie, Territory Manager for Western Manitoba.