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Rain for Grain

As grain growers cautiously watch the skies, the 2009 winter crop in southern NSW is looking good at present but still needs good spring rain to realize its potential.

Despite the local area receiving only 50 percent of the total rainfall for the year, some rains have come during the winter growing season.

Residing in a 560-575mm rainfall belt, Anthony Male of "Calare" Henty said his crops looked good despite a dry winter in which he had only received 222mm for the entire year. He said of this, 142 mm has been received since the crop was planted in late April.

"If we can get another 100mm we should have fair crops," Anthony said when the Eastern Riverina Chronicle visited him on Thursday last week.

Mr Male was busy spreading urea in anticipation of a rainfall event and said he was being very cautious with the use of nitrogen given the season was "on a knife

edge". He has been spreading 50 - 60 kg/ha on his grazing cereal crops and paddocks lower in nitrogen.

Mr Male has been spraying crops for late broadleaf control and has sprayed fungicide on a few crops for stripe rust control.

"I found stripe rust in Abacus Triticale two weeks ago and sprayed it immediately", he said.

He has been monitoring his grazing wheat crops for rust also.

The Male family has 700 hectares of wheat sown this season, along with 180 hectares of oats, 120 hectares of Triticale, 65 hectares of Lupins, 110 hectares of Canola and 40 hectares of Monola.

The polyunsaturated Monola oil is a healthier option for foods cooked in oils such as palm oil which can be high in saturated and trans fats.

"Prices for wheat and other cereal grain have been coming down over the past few weeks, but canola has been holding", Mr Male said.



■ Receiving 8-10mm of rain at the weekend, grain growers like Anthony Male of 'Calare' Henty, hope the tap doesn't turn off before spring rains result in a good harvest during mid November. Mr Male is inspecting a crop of Monola at Fairleigh, Pleasant Hills.