Lupin Logic Number 56

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Lupins in aquaculture

Rebekah Gilby

Aquaculture is the production of aquatic organisms such as algae, fin fish, mussels, oysters, pearls and prawns.

The protein source currently used in aquaculture feeds is high grade fish meal. This product is very expensive, and a declining resource. An alternative protein source such as lupin seed meal could be incorporated into aquaculture feeds to reduce the cost.

At the Western Australian Fishing and Aquaculture Centre (WAFAC), incorporation of lupin seed meal into fin fish feeds is currently being investigated. Preliminary trials using a diet which incorporated lupin seed meal at a rate of 28 per cent did not have any adverse effects to the fish in terms of growth rates and food conversion ratios when compared to widely used formulations.

An aquaculture feed based on lupin seed meal, may well be suited to a variety of aquaculture species. At WAFAC the research has been conducted using pink snapper as the trial species. A lupin-based diet may be a practical alternative for omnivorous fish species such as milkfish and tilapias. Worldwide aquaculture of these species in 1989 was 2.2 million tonnes and is expected to rise to 3.7 million tonnes by the year 2000. Eighty per cent of this production was in the Asian Pacific region where Australia is ideally located to take advantage of the market.

At WAFAC a lupin-based feed is being formulated for snapper. Another potential use for a lupin-based diet is yabbies. For further information contact WAFAC on (09) 430 6233.

Manganese seed testing

Marcia Vistisen in the seed testing laboratory has received enquiries about testing lupin seed for manganese levels (see Lupin Logic Number 54). Marcia advises that seed can be tested at:

- CSBP Soil and Plant Analysis Service
  Lot 2 Railway Parade
  Bayswater 6053

- Chemistry Centre (WA)
  Agricultural Laboratory
  125 Hay Street
  East Perth 6004

Costs: Approximately $15 per sample.

Residual nitrogen

So you want to know how much nitrogen your lupin crop left in the paddock last season; or better still how much nitrogen you need to apply to this year’s wheat crop.

Dr Bill Bowden, principal research officer with the Department of Agriculture has been working on this problem for the last 12 months and now has the answers.

Bill says that for crops which last year grew 3 t/ha biomass and from which you harvested a tonne of grain per
Seed testing - Completed?
Soil testing - Fertiliser decisions made?
Spray rig - Ready to go?
Inoculant - Ordered?

Summer weeds: Following thunderstorms and cyclone Bobby, many paddocks will now have a germination of summer weeds. If these weeds are not killed, they will use soil moisture and nutrients, possibly leave toxic residues for germinating crops and interfere with tined seeding machinery. Now is the time for action.

Reminders

Most growers wanting their lupin seed tested have sent in their samples and have their results. The final date for sending in samples has been 28 February - this allows for results to be available well before sowing and also helps in the running of the laboratory. However, growers are being reminded of the value of testing at grower meetings being held during March. Now is the time for action.

Lupin seed quality testing – extension

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