

## **Spraying tips to maximise productivity in the field**

Spraying plays an important role in Australian agriculture, but how do you know the perfect time to spray to achieve maximum yields? Or how to minimise drift in less-than-ideal conditions?

To help farmers prepare for this growing season, Pete McCann, a Business Manager at Case IH, shares his insights.

“Many factors contribute to the decision of when – or when not – to spray,” says McCann.

“Ideally, producers want any chemical application to take place at the right agronomic moment. That ‘right moment’ is when the chemical applied will preserve the yield potential for a particular field, providing the opportunity to maximise productivity.”

“Environmental conditions such as wind and rain significantly impact the spraying window,” he says. “Wet field conditions, for example, can cause equipment to leave ruts that will stay in the field all year long, and wind can cause off-target applications, or drift.”

As well as potentially impacting sensitive areas, this can increase the amount of chemicals needed to do the same job – increasing input costs and affecting margins.

However, it’s important not to leave it too late. Competition for nutrients and moisture between plants and weeds increases every day during the growing season. Pest infestation also takes an increasing toll on a plant’s ability to produce grain, seed, feed or fibre.

### **Avoid wasting chemicals through drift**

To minimise drift, McCann suggests producers consider:

- Tank additives to help reduce drift potential
- Automatic boom height controls to maintain proper height above the target
- Increasing droplet size with drift-reduction spray tips or air-induction tips

“Advanced spray technology can also make a difference,” he says. “For example, the AIM Command<sup>®</sup> spray system on Case IH Patriot<sup>®</sup> sprayers provides precise spraying capabilities with complete control.

“This technology combats drift in two ways: first, users can hold a constant spray pressure and application rate, both independent of speed. Second, users can preset two spray pressures and change between them on the go, so you can select a lower spray pressure when necessary.

“And getting your tank mix right, including using the right additives, enables you to maximise productivity in the field while reducing costs and better safeguarding the environment.”

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### **Smart equipment to access all conditions**

“Sprayer configuration may impact your ability to access the paddock in certain conditions,” says McCann. “Better weight distribution between the axles will result in less soil compaction and fewer ruts. Case IH Patriot sprayers have a cab-forward, rear-engine configuration, so when the tank is full and booms are extended weight is still equally distributed.”

Certain sprayer attributes, such as vehicle weight and weight distribution, along with advanced spray technology, will affect your ability to get in the field when the weather is not favourable. So keep these factors in mind to avoid adverse effects on the environment whenever applying chemicals.

“The most important factor is still the decision of the sprayer operator,” he concludes. “Regardless of what drift-reduction assistance you use, there are times when the only answer is to shut down the machine until weather conditions improve. Case IH supports best management practices like these in an effort to help our customers meet the challenges of feeding our nation while still managing input costs and environmental impacts.”

Case IH is a global leader in agricultural equipment, committed to collaborating with its customers to develop the most powerful, productive, reliable equipment that is designed to meet today’s agricultural challenges.

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**Photo Caption:** With the right information and equipment, producers can spray under less-than-ideal conditions without damaging fields or the environment. But the final decision regarding when (or when not) to spray remains with the operator.