



Accu-Spread for Liquid Fertilizer Application

As agronomists, we are primarily concerned about determining the right product, at the right rate, time and place. We use these principles in recommendations provided to clients to achieve the desired crop response while minimising any offsite impacts. In addition to these decisions, the other critical part is the physical application of the product.

Some farmers choose to use the services of a professional contractor. Agronomists can often be involved in influencing customer decisions around which contractor to use. In assisting your clients choose contractors, you should give consideration to Accu-Spread certified operators. A list of Accu-Spread certified equipment can be found on the Fertcare website at http://www.fifa.asn.au/default.asp?V_DOC_ID=1131

In the case of broadcast solids, the Accu-Spread logo provides farmer customers with peace of mind; knowing the correct rate of fertilizer is being applied by competent operators exactly where they want it. The Accu-Spread program assesses and certifies the spreading width and uniformity of fertilizer spreading machinery, providing assurance the coefficient of variation of the spread pattern is $\leq 15\%$.

As many of you would be aware, liquid fertilizer use has increased significantly over the past 10 years in a number of crop segments. A significant proportion of these liquids are applied via boom application. An industry accepted standard is now in place under the Accu-Spread program for boom spray application of liquid fertilizers.

The Accu-Spread standards for boom spray application of liquid fertilizer are based on the widely accepted European Standard EN 13790-1 : "Agricultural machinery – Sprayers - Inspection of sprayer in use – Part 1: Field sprayers" and include:

1. The deviation of the flow rate of each nozzle of the same type across a boom shall not exceed $\pm 10\%$ of the nominal flow rate indicated by the manufacturer.
2. The pressure drop between the measuring point for pressure on the sprayer and the end of each boom section width shall not exceed 10% of the pressure shown on the pressure gauge.
3. When measured at the inlet of the boom sections, the pressure shall not vary more than 10%, when the sections are closed one by one.
4. Other measuring devices, especially flow meters (used for controlling the volume / hectare rate) shall measure within a maximum error of 5% of the real data.
5. Frequency of inspection be no longer than 3 years from the previous assessment for the equipment to remain certified.

Agronomists who work with professional boom spray operators may wish to bring the new Accu-Spread liquids standards to their attention and ask them to give consideration to participating in the Accu-Spread certification program particularly in sensitive areas where the environmental risks associated with fertilizer use are high such as in North Queensland.

For more information on Accu-Spread, please contact Jeff Kraak E; jeff.kraak@fifa.asn.au or M: 0407 663535.