

Arable Update

Cereals: Issue 236



A LIGHTER TOUCH



Triazoles (Group 3) fungicide options for T1 (GS 31 – 33)

Introduction

This can be the hardest application to get right. Ideally, it targets GS 32 (leaf 3 emergence, two leaves below the flag), but getting the timing right can be challenging if conditions are wet and/or windy. FAR has extended the T1 window to late GS 31- GS 33, which typically spans around 14 days, which provides some flexibility (Figure 1). However, timing can be tricky to judge, so walk paddocks with plenty of time to act. If in doubt and an appropriate weather window presents itself, err on the side of going earlier rather than later.

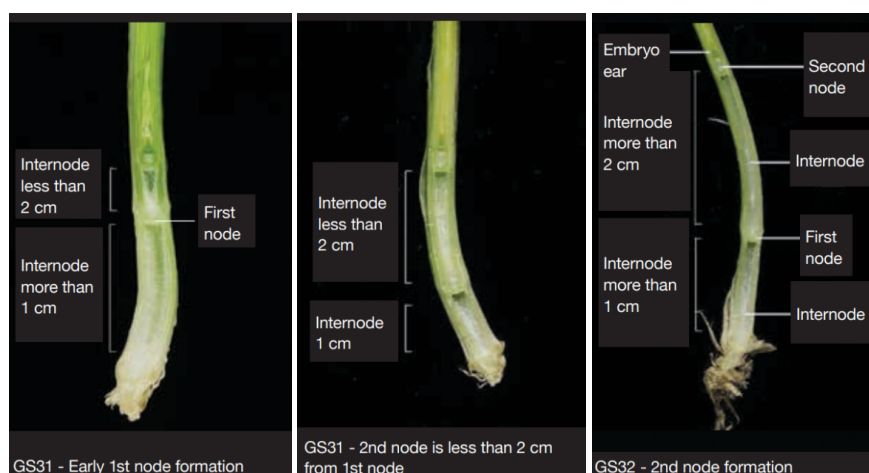


Figure 1A. Early GS 31. This crop is still at T0. B. As the second node is less than 2 cm from the first node, this crop is still at GS 31 but is approaching GS 32. If your crop looks like this, now is a good time to think about applying a T1. C. The second node is more than 2 cm from the first node. This crop is at GS 32, which is the ideal timing for a T1. If the third node is more than 2 cm away from the second node, the crop is at GS 33.

Choosing a triazole (Group 3) at T1 (GS 31-33)

Fungicide programme trials in Mid Canterbury, with irrigation and South Canterbury and Southland without irrigation showed that yield response to fungicide was greater in 2024-25 than in 2025-26. This was reflected in the margin over fungicide cost (MoC), especially in South Canterbury, demonstrating that it was possible to overspend on fungicide. In these scenarios, while it is still important to maintain a strong base programme at T1 and T2 (GS 39), rationalising the number of applications in a season can be an effective way to balance disease control with economic returns. Despite seasonal differences in disease pressure, different triazole products still largely provided comparable disease control, yields and economic returns (Figure 1A – F). Successful T1 (GS late 31 – 33) strategies included 'stacked' triazole products such as Kestrel® (a.i. prothioconazole and tebuconazole) and Bolide® (a.i. epoxiconazole and prochloraz), as well as solo products such as Proline® (a.i. prothioconazole) and Revylution® (a.i. mefentrifluconazole), applied with a mixing partner such as Phoenix® (a.i. folpet, Group M4), or Questar™ (a.i. fenpicoxamid, Group 21).

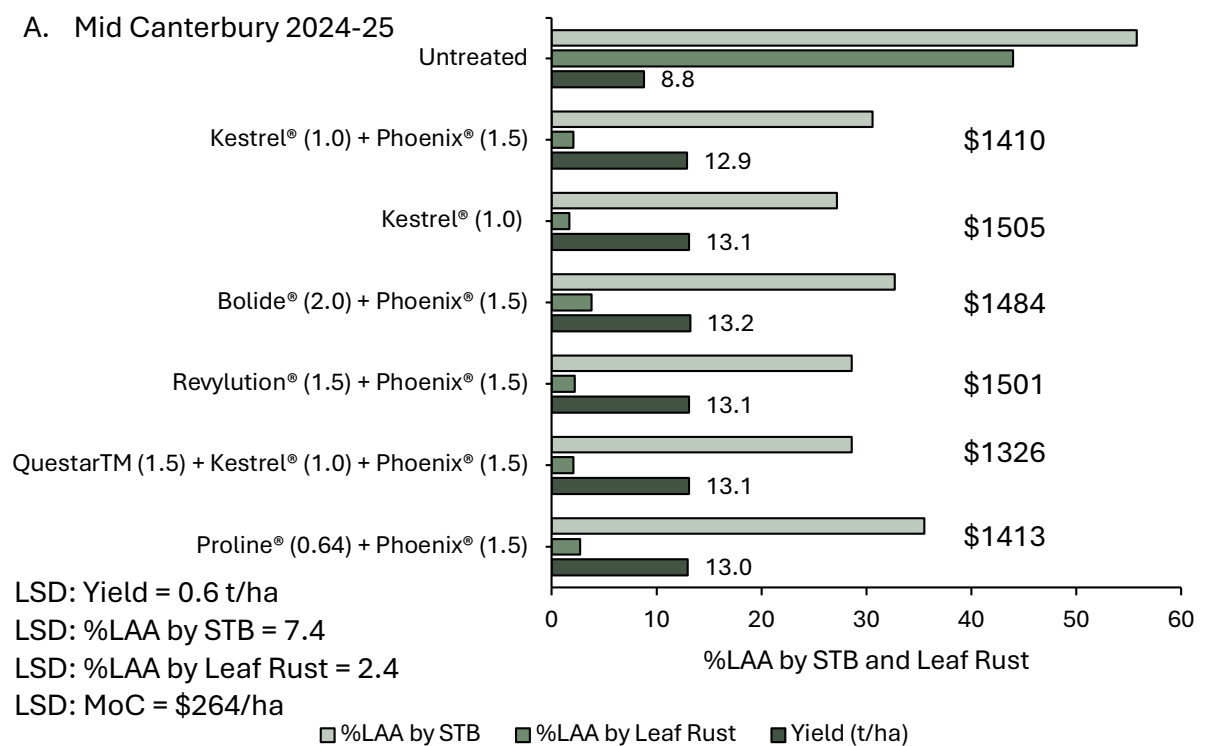
FAR supports triazole resistance management through use of mixing partners with solo triazoles, stacking triazoles with different cross resistance pathways such as prothioconazole and tebuconazole (Kestrel® and Prosaro®) or epoxiconazole and prochloraz (Bolide®) and alternating triazole active ingredients between applications.

These results show how triazole programmes deliver comparable disease control, yield and economic returns across seasons, making resistance management a practical and sustainable choice without sacrificing performance.

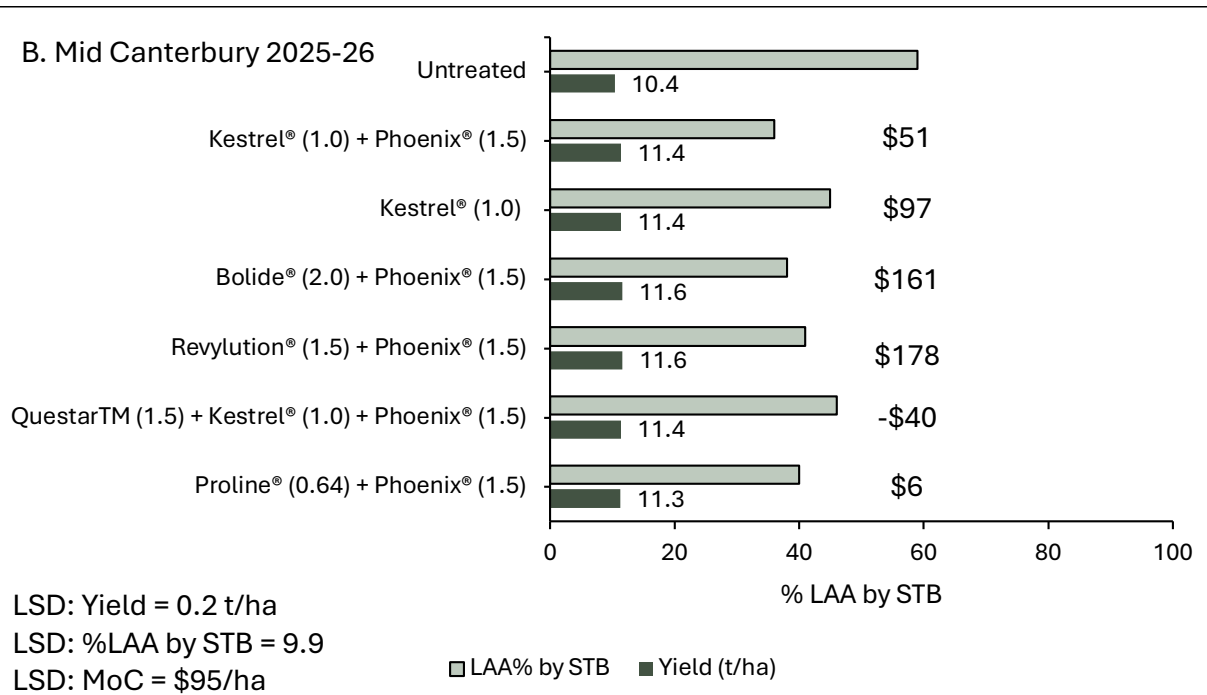
Key points

- T1 coincides with growth stage (GS) 32 and the emergence of leaf 3, the first of the economically important leaves in wheat.
- FAR has extended the T1 window to late GS 31 – GS 33 to provide additional flexibility.
- Despite seasonal differences, FAR trials showed that different triazoles largely provided comparable disease control, yields and economic returns.
- This means there are options when considering what triazole to apply at T1.
- However, lower yield response to fungicide in 2025-26 demonstrated it was possible to overspend on fungicide.
- Growers can adopt resistance management practices without compromising on performance or profitability.

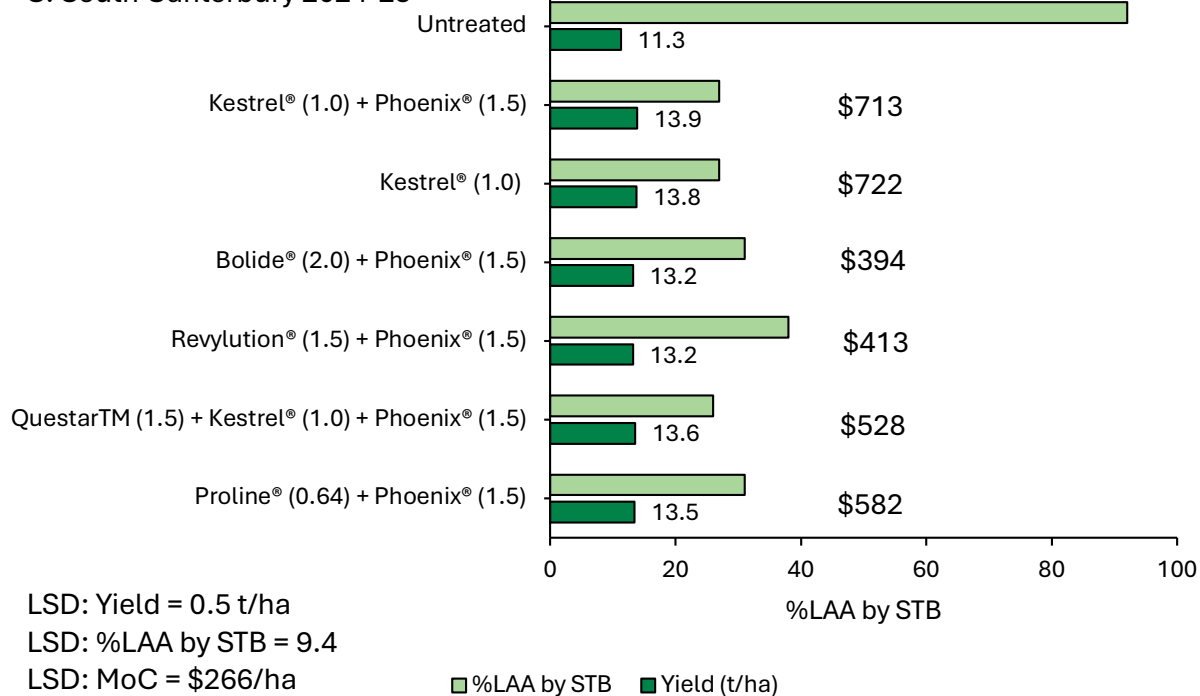
A. Mid Canterbury 2024-25



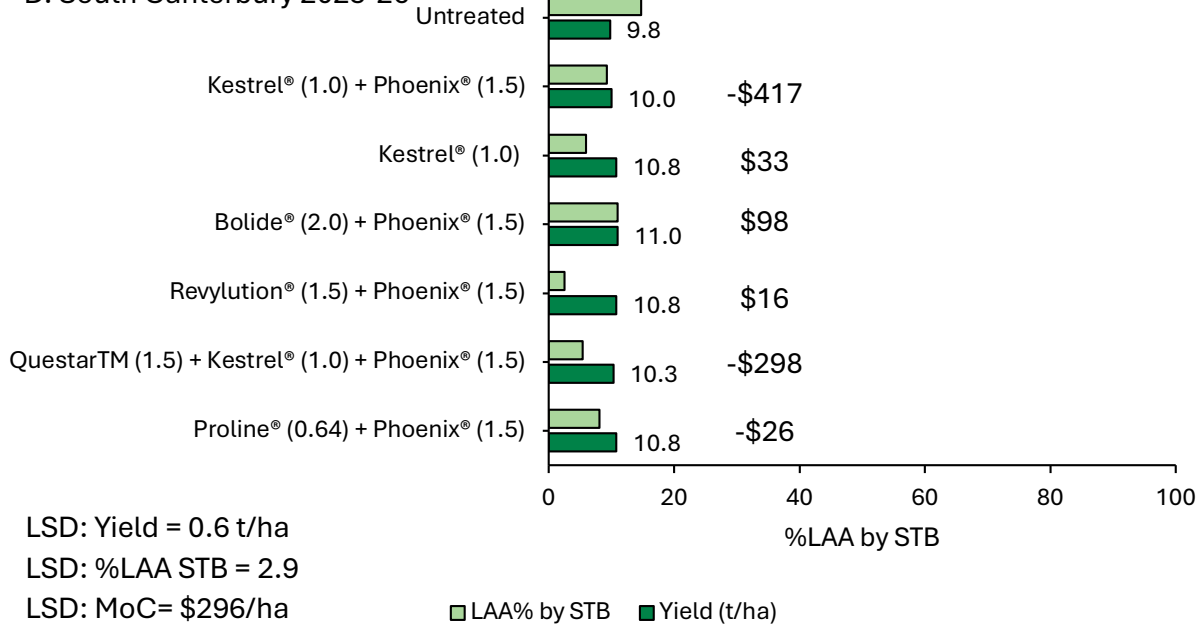
B. Mid Canterbury 2025-26



C. South Canterbury 2024-25



D. South Canterbury 2025-26



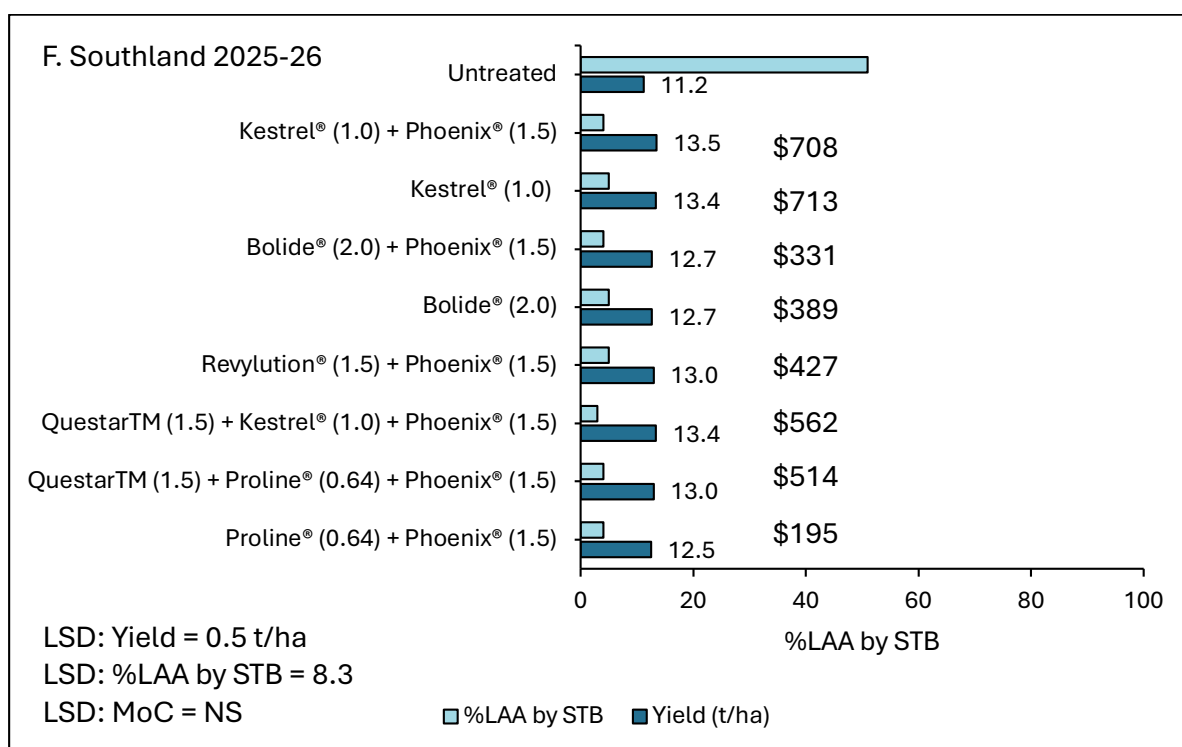
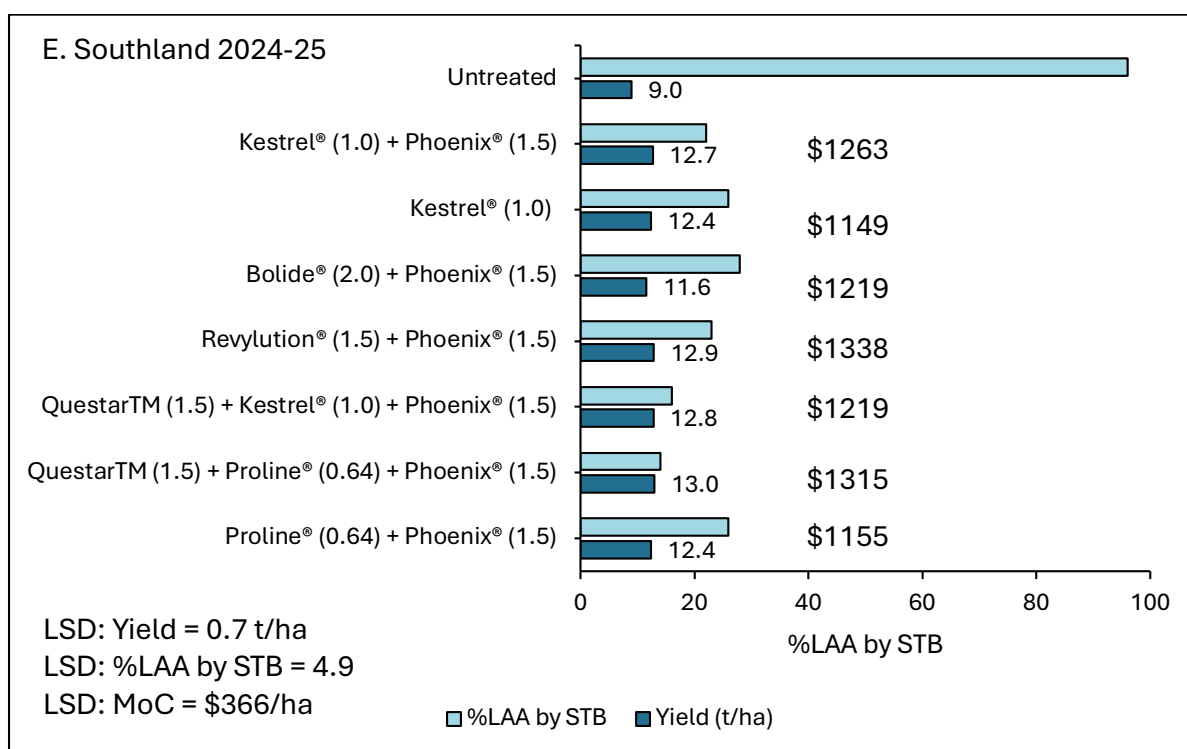


Figure 2. Mean STB and leaf rust severity (% leaf area affected) (Flag leaf - Leaf 3) and grain yield (t/ha) and margin over fungicide cost (MoC) for wheat crops following treatment with fungicide programmes that included different triazole (Group 3) formulations. The triazole products were applied at GS 32 (T1) as part of a programme that included T2 and T3 fungicides to control STB. A. Mid Canterbury in 2024-25 with irrigation; B. Mid Canterbury in 2025-26 with irrigation; C. South Canterbury in 2024-25 without irrigation; D. South Canterbury in 2025-26 without irrigation; E. Southland in 2024-25 without irrigation; F. Southland in 2025-26 without irrigation. Disease was assessed on the top three leaves at approximately GS 75 - 85. Grain price: \$450 (2024-25); \$500 (2025-26); Source (NZ Grain & Feed Insight).

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