

PRINCE, JOHN W.F., British Sugar plc, Oundle Road, Peterborough, PE2 9QU, UK - Quality criteria for sugar beet seed treatment.

Increasingly the seeds used to produce root crop production are being asked to carry higher levels of agrochemicals to protect not only the emerging seedling, but the maturing plant during the mid-season growing period. Procedures have to be in place to ensure both the quality of seed and the levels of agrochemicals applied to the pellet. Risk assessments on each agrochemical have been conducted leading to tolerance levels being agreed for each. In the UK, 13% of the crop is at risk from soil pests, and following mild winters, 100% can be at risk from Virus Yellow. For growers to have confidence in the treatments applied, quality systems need to be robust and open. The registered rate for tefluthrin is 10g ai/unit for which limits of between a minimum of 9.3g ai/unit and a maximum of 10.7g ai/unit have been set for the UK. Similarly, imidacloprid has a registered rate of 90g ai/unit and limits between a minimum of 83g ai/unit and 94g ai unit. These targets are to be continuously reviewed and improved.