

## EDITORIAL

# MELPAT BORDEUAX FUNGICIDE

## “It sticks like...”

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*“You can get more vats out in a day”*

One of the more unpleasant and time consuming tasks for growers/orchardists is mixing (making) their own “Bordeaux”.

This mixture of copper sulphate and lime has been the backbone of disease control in vines for centuries.

In more recent times, the number of crops relying on this product has increased despite its relatively old technology and active ingredients. It has remained one of THE MOST RELIABLE tools for disease control.

Copper-based products have an added benefit over other protectant fungicides in that they are active against bacteria. Bacterial (*Pseudomonas* & *Zanthomonas*) diseases have become a major disease in many fruit and vegetable growing areas. Control of these diseases start with winter application of copper. Bordeaux is registered in a wide range of crops including stone fruit, mangoes, vines, tomatoes, etc.

Orchardists and farmers these days are “time poor”. With the high cost of labour there are more and more demands on growers.

Melpat has recently released an “Easy-to-Use” Granular Formulation of Bordeaux, which contains Tribasic Copper Sulphate and Lime (Calcium Carbonate). Growers can therefore get “more vats out in a day” now that this time consuming mixing operation is no longer necessary.

Being a co-formulated granule, there is no need to concern yourself with drums. No need to shake drums, just pour the granules into the spray vat whilst the agitator is running and filling.

The improved formulation of Bordeaux contains Tribasic Copper Sulphate as opposed to straight Copper Sulphate. Copper Sulphate is soluble in water, which has inherent problems with sticking on plant tissue surfaces.

We operate in a winter rainfall part of the country. It is therefore essential that sprays applied over the winter months “stick” and are not washed off the plant surfaces.

The addition of calcium hydroxide assists with the sticking (tenacity) properties and this can be seen by the blue covering of the trees after spraying.



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## Differences between Copper Sulphate and Tribasic Copper Sulphate:

Copper Sulphate is soluble in water whereas Tribasic Copper Sulphate is not soluble in water.

Solubility of Copper Sulphate is water temperature related. The colder the water, the more difficult the solubility, as can be seen in the following table:

### Copper Sulphate Solubility:

<u>Temperature</u>	<u>Reading</u>
0 °C	148 g/kg
25 °C	230 g/kg
50 °C	335 g/kg

The other factor, which influences the solubility, is crystal size. Melpat Copper Sulphate has been milled to an ultra fine crystal size, which improves solubility significantly and even in coldwater conditions.

Melpat Bordeaux contains Tribasic Copper Sulphate. Being insoluble in water, results in improved residual activity and this is important as winter sprays are less frequent than spring applied sprays and grower expectation is that the copper is expected to last even in wet, rainy conditions.

There are limited stocks of Melpat Bordeaux, so the suggestion is for you to register your interest with your local supplier.

Make it easier on yourself – give it a go – stand back and see the difference.

