

Case Study

Dow Agrosciences Grasslands Campaign ***– raising awareness and growing market share***

Introduction

Dow AgroSciences has established itself as the leading supplier of herbicides to UK grassland farmers. It wanted to re-position the price of its two main products - Doxstar and Pastor - to grow volumes and market share even further.

In PR terms, while the products and supporting messages were not new, continued awareness by the target audience of Dow AgroSciences' expertise on grassland management issues, and weed control in particular, was seen as key to the success of the campaign.

Objective

- Improve target audiences' understanding of the benefits of effective grassland weed management
- Establish grass as a crop in farmers' minds, rather than simply a resource
- Establish Dow AgroSciences as the grassland expert
- Establish Dow AgroSciences' products as the products to use
- Communicate Dow AgroSciences' portfolio as better value for money.

Strategy

A key challenge was the diminishing editorial space available to convey product messages during the peak season (this was exacerbated by the outbreak of foot and mouth and the subsequent further reduction in editorial space). The integrated plan therefore included a number of other activities alongside a concentrated media relations campaign.

Activities included:

- Media relations (using press releases and testimonials) and advertorials
- Direct communications
- Strategic use of trial packs and high profile print advertising.

Other proposals, such as open days and handing out leaflets at livestock markets, were cancelled due to the foot and mouth outbreak.

Results

The communication campaign generated interest from farmers at distributor level. The integrated activities as part of the wider marketing campaign assisted in increasing the awareness of the products, resulting in significantly increased sales in what was a difficult market (due to foot and mouth). Intuitive use of alternative communications methods, coupled with topical and in-depth press coverage, helped to raise awareness of product benefits. As a result, sales targets were met and/or exceeded.

