Lurmark’s 59 years of nozzle know-how at work in Hypro

By Andy Doyle

Sprayer operators seeing Hypro nozzles in the market may well wonder where these come from and wonder if they are worth considering? The answer may well be helped by the knowledge that these are Lurmark nozzles following a take-over in recent years.

Hypro EU – established as Lurmark - has been manufacturing spray nozzles in Cambridgeshire since 1954. It is the European business of Hypro LLC, North America’s leading spray pumps producer. Hypro is also part of Pentair Water, a $3.3 billion water technology business.

Fintan Kealy, who trades under the name of SprayTEK Agri Ltd, told me about the change and his company is now marketing these nozzles in Ireland. Fintan will sell direct to farmers but he also sells through dealers. He only commenced operation with Hypro in 2012 and admits that it is a very niche and seasonal business. Fintan is a small grain producer with around 25ha of cereals and a small area of potatoes and grass. So he can assess first-hand the products that he sells.

For those who may not remember, Lurmark was the company that worked with Syngenta to produce the Amistar lo-drift nozzle. This is now called the Guardian AIR fan and Fintan reports that it is a big seller. People like the convenience and proven performance of the nozzle, coupled with the option to dramatically pull down water rates. This is an air induction nozzle and sends out its spray pattern at a 13° backwards angle.

Some growers are now looking for the GuardianAIR Twin for jobs that require high canopy penetration. It was designed for this use with two nozzles fitted into a very tidy bayonet cap sending out spray at 30° front and back to the direction of travel. This is also an air induction nozzle and it comes with a range of output capacities.

But traditional fan nozzles remain in strong demand with the Blue 03 VP (variable pressure) 110-03 being the most common. This nozzle is said to maintain its atomising integrity at a range of pressures from 1.5 to 5 bar. This range of VP nozzles are very important for use on rate controlled sprayers where computerised application controls maintain a target output through changing pressure if forward speed is varied or if a rate alteration is required.

Hypro also supply many other types of nozzle including fertilizer paddle-type, cones, flood etc. But Fintan said that there is virtually no interest in cone nozzles nowadays. The nozzle is key to making efficient use of expensive sprays. Applying spray solution uniformly and at the required rate is important for efficient production. For this reason, sprayer operators should frequently check nozzle performance, both in terms of throughput and application pattern. Once there is any sign of wear, the full set of nozzles should be replaced.

Depending on where you buy them, Fintan told me that a set of Blue 03s work out at around £1 each plus VAT. This means that a full set of nozzles for a 24m sprayer at 50cm nozzle spacing works out at around £600 - £100 for the full sprayer, including VAT. So it need not be an expensive process to keep your sprayer in top working condition. And a further £36 will buy a set of colour-coded caps for each set of standard nozzles.

Moving to more sophisticated nozzles could cost more, however. The GuardianAIR Twin, which includes two fan nozzles and the cap, costs £6.60 plus VAT per nozzle or around £450 to fit out the 24m sprayer. But this is still good value where you have a need for this type of nozzle.