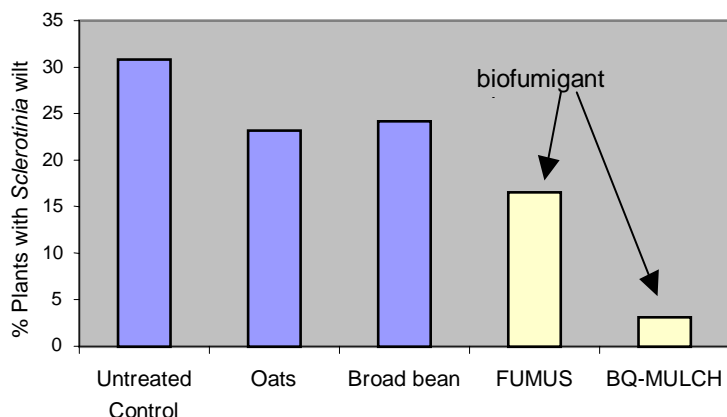
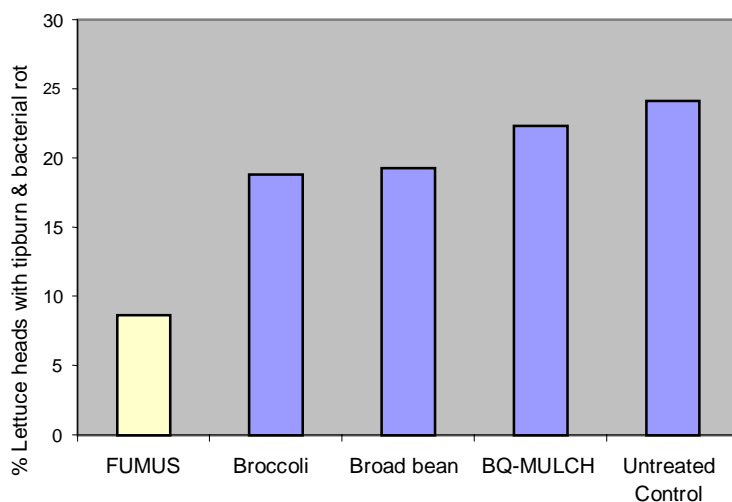


Recent field trial studies conducted by Serve-Ag Research have shown that biofumigant crops could increase marketable yields of subsequent lettuce crops by reducing tipburn, bacteria rot, and *Sclerotinia* disease. The benefits of biofumigation appear to depend on local soil conditions and the type of biofumigant crop used.

The canola (BQ-MULCH) and mustard (FUMUS) crops used in the trials were selected through conventional breeding for their high production of natural and biologically active compounds similar to metham sodium, a soil fumigant. These compounds are released into soil following crop mulching, hence biofumigating the soil. Apart from biofumigation, the crop residues also increase organic matter and nutrients, and improve soil structure.

The biofumigant crops were sown in July 2001, and mulched into the ground in October and November, and the lettuces were planted after about a month.

These trials were conducted as part of a three-year collaborative project between Serve-Ag Research and Agriculture Victoria, which is funded by Horticulture Australia Ltd (Project VG00048). Several biofumigant crop seed including BQ-Mulch are available commercially.



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