

Pioneer Sets Goal Of 40 Percent Increase In Soybean Yields

Patented Marker Technology Equals Extraordinary Yields

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Pioneer Hi-Bred, the world's largest seed brand is strategically positioned to break yield records. With seed sales at \$2 billion in 2002, \$3 billion in 2007 and \$4 billion in 2008, Pioneer Hi-Bred International supplied 30 percent of the corn and 25 percent of the soybean market in North America in 2008.

Historically the seed industry has been experiencing yield gains of 1.5 to 2 percent. In recent years Pioneer Hi-Bred International has seen yield gains of 3-4 percent. Brent Wilson, Technical Services Manager, Pioneer Hi-Bred, explained in 2008, Pioneer set a 10 year goal to increase corn and soybean yields by 40 percent. Agronomic traits, elite germplasm, AYT technology and Optimum® GAT® will keep the company on track in their efforts to make this goal a reality for global producers.



Dr. Daria Schmidt

Using Accelerated Yield Technology (AYT™), Pioneer expects to produce game-changing results in their Y series soybeans. According to Dr. Daria Schmidt, Research Director, Trait Characterization and Development for Pioneer, the genetic marker technology of AYT™ is responsible for increasing yields,

“first and foremost would definitely be our deployment of marker technology in a very targeted way. Markers have been around for awhile but you need to use them intelligently to help the breeders make good decisions.”

Currently more than 65 percent of Pioneer brand soybeans on the market were developed and driven with the AYT™ system. More farmers get their biotech traits through Pioneer elite germplasm than any other brand.

“Pioneer only yield-tests lines that are fixed for the traits our customer's needs,” Schmidt explained. Using the AYT™ system aids breeders in the selection of varieties with yield-enhancing genes.

Pioneer patented this marker technology in the 90s. Utilizing these marker associations over the past decade has given Pioneer the leading edge, “everybody else has markers available now but they don't have the leg up that we have in playing the technology. We know how to do it for all of our other traits too,” stated Schmidt.

Management by producers can accomplish extraordinary yields as proven by Kip Cullers World Record yields. “We do have the best genetics out there and certainly Kip has used our varieties and has done things with them that are remarkable. Figuring out how else we can

impact those same components, looking at them from the gene level, those are the things that we are looking to provide to producers,” said Schmidt.

Schmidt advises selection, “there are a couple of varieties that people need to just give up. Move on to the new technologies. Why would someone choose to grow a variety that was released in the early, mid 90s when it is 2009? You are missing out, is the message to give them.”

Schmidt had this advice to farmers, “start with the best genetics, the person who knows the field the best is the farmer so don't be afraid to seek specific genetics if there is a recurrence of brown stem rot in the region, be sure to ask your sales rep for varieties that have good scores for stem rot, don't put your yields at risk.”

Paul Schickler, President, Pioneer Hi-Bred said, “Y series is going to be planted on 9 million acres this year. This is the largest launch in Pioneer's history and the seed industry.”

Pioneer currently holds 30 percent market share in corn. Pioneer corn is the top seed brand in North America and has been for 35 years. “As we head to 2009 we are committed to gaining global market share,” said Schickler. According to Schickler, Pioneer's foundational concept and history is based on value, “we do not price our product based upon commodity prices. We price our products based upon the value that they deliver to the farmer, productivity, insurance, trait technology reduction in cost or value provided to the grower, we price per value and therefore we are not called out in the science of commodity prices.”

Optimum® GAT® trait technology, AYT™ and other technologies will assist DuPont in raising yield potential. The Y Series soybean varieties for 2009 have demonstrated a five percent yield advantage with some varieties yielding six to ten percent better than competitors. Pioneer is the top soybean brand in North America and has been for two decades.

Using DuPont gene shuffling technology, Optimum® GAT® provides a broader spectrum of weed control without compromising crop safety. Pioneer expects to introduce commercial soybean varieties with the Optimum® GAT® trait in 2011. Pending regulatory approvals, the company is planning to introduce its proprietary Optimum® GAT® trait in corn in 2010. Δ



Paul Schickler