

Weed Resistance

Growers Learn Management Techniques At Belleville Field Day

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Herbicide resistance is still a hot topic at meetings, and got much attention at the Belleville Field Day. Dr. Bryan Young, Southern Illinois University weed scientist, discussed the subject.

"The reason I brought this presentation to this group is this is a more grower-based attendance than some of the typical winter meetings," he said. "Those include more certified crop advisors, retailers, the consultants. I really want the growers to know how significant the herbicide resistance problem is in the state of Illinois as well as throughout the Midwest and the United States."

Young said it's not just glyphosate resistance. There also are weeds resistant to all major corn and soybean herbicides available today with the exception of the HPPD-inhibiting herbicides and glufosinate.

"We're going to have to rely on some of those other chemistries if we have more problems with glyphosate not managing our current weed problems," Young said. "I've gotten an awful lot of calls the last few weeks on glyphosate non-performance. I'm not saying it's all resistance, but to write it all off as environmental or a fluke is a little bit naive. We know that glyphosate resistant waterhemp and glyphosate resistant marestail (aka horseweed) exists in the state, it's just a matter of growers finding it in their own fields."

Many of his calls focused on managing or not being able to kill waterhemp with glyphosate. The problem has persisted for two years now with growers unable to control their marestail or horseweed.

"The horseweed or marestail issue is significant and fairly widespread and I think we are starting to learn how big and widespread the waterhemp problem is this year," he continued. "Some of the lack of control can be attributed to late planting. Not being able to spray timely certainly is part of the problem, but there are some that did make some timely applications with a high rate and even with that we're just not managing it very well."

Young said that glyphosate is still a great tool. It certainly allows for a lot of flexibility.

"Still, growers have to seriously think about what tank mix partners or what residual herbicides to integrate into the Roundup Ready system, whether it be corn or beans," Young said. "Growers have been listening, but they haven't implemented near as fast because they haven't experienced it on their farm. So part of my message is to emphasize that the year they find it on their own farm it will require a significant cost for them to control it."

Beyond the cost of the product, farmers could lose \$180 per acre or more due to yield reductions as well as extra passes of applications through the field and herbicides associated with that.

"They cannot afford that," he said. "It's all about risk management and I don't know of any company that will guarantee control of a resistant weed. I tell growers 'I'll do my best to try to help you out, but if it's resistant that's Mother Nature. That's an act of God so you're on your own and nobody has insurance.' We have insurance for flood, rain and deferred planting, but nobody has insurance in terms of

weed control. You can't buy that. It's crop loss due to weed control failure and I've never heard of that one. Maybe someone should sell that."

Young looked ahead to the next five years and said there's a phase of new herbicide introduction underway.

"There are some different active ingredients with a mix of old and recent herbicide chemistry that are considered alternative modes of



Dr. Bryan Young, Southern Illinois University Weed Scientist, recently discussed herbicide resistance.

Photo by John LaRose, Jr.

action from glyphosate," he predicted. "They may come in different packages in terms of what they're mixed with, or maybe it's a new herbicide resistant crop."

He mentioned the Optimum GAT from DuPont, dicamba tolerant soybeans from Monsanto, Dow's DHT technology, 2,4-D resistance in corn and beans.

"I have a colleague who said that shuffling around herbicide active ingredients and ratios in different products was confusing, so the seed trait version of that will be available in the near future," Young said. "Farmers have to make these weed management decisions that are driven by seed selection early on in the fall."

"I know that growers are going to focus on yield first," he said. "So the ability to control weeds is going to be dictated by how well something yields. That to me is a little bit scary because, in the past 10 years, the question was 'will I be Roundup Ready or not Roundup Ready?' So that's only one active ingredient that they considered. Now, you get all these other traits involved, crop selection, seed selection and a lot of other options that you'll be either including or excluding from what you can use to kill your weeds."

"Growers need to educate themselves quick and think about weed control options and herbicide programs when they make their seed selection," he concluded. △