

Wet Fall Causes Weed Control Challenges

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The delay in fall harvest due to wet weather will likely result in some weed control challenges as we progress through this fall and into next spring.

It is likely the number of wheat acres will be down and growers who plant wheat will be in a rush and not have time to do preplant tillage or apply a burndown herbicide treatment. Fortunately there are postemergence herbicide options that will control many of the weeds we encounter in wheat. Common chickweed and ryegrass are examples of weeds that compete with wheat and should be controlled within about 4 weeks after planting, especially if the field was not tilled or sprayed with a burndown treatment.

The decline in temperature as we progress into the fall will slow the response of weeds to postemergence treatments. Also, cool wet conditions prior to or soon after application will likely enhance wheat injury from Harmony Extra or similar ALS inhibitor herbicides. Although labels of some products recommend including 2,4-D ester as a means of limiting injury from the ALS inhibitor herbicide, do NOT use 2,4-D in the fall. Crop injury from 2,4-D is a risk if the herbicide applied before wheat has completed tillering.

If we are not able to spray for ryegrass this fall, then try to be timely in the spring and be aware of the label restrictions about topdressing nitrogen near the time of spraying certain ryegrass herbicides.

The delay in corn harvest will likely increase the risk of volunteer corn for next spring. We probably will see an increase in lodging as well as increased seed losses during the rush to

complete harvesting. As soil temperature declines there is less heat to stimulate germination of corn seed this fall; consequently, seed that survive into next spring will likely evolve into volunteer plants.

After corn harvest is complete, growers should survey fields to determine the risk of



volunteer corn for next season. This will give ample time to develop a strategy for managing volunteers next year. If this past season's corn had the Roundup Ready trait, then glyphosate will not work and an alternative burndown herbicide program will be required to manage Roundup Ready volunteer plants. If the volunteer corn does not have Roundup Ready trait, then glyphosate may be an excellent option for managing volunteer corn. Δ

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