

Stewardship is priority for 2,4-D, dicamba crops



SOOTHING THE WORRY: Dow AgroSciences' Mark Peterson addresses Southeast specialty crop growers concerned about new 2,4-D- and dicamba-tolerant crops.

By **BRAD HAIRE**

STRICT application protocols for the use of 2,4-D- and dicamba-tolerant crops must be in place before the new technologies can find a solid foothold in the Southeast farming landscape among the specialty crops that are sensitive to the herbicides. And work is being done to create and implement such plans.

Pending USDA deregulation and U.S. EPA registration of the chemistry, Monsanto plans to offer soybeans with a stacked trait tolerant to its Roundup Ready 2 Xtend, which will have glyphosate and dicamba herbicides, available to farmers for the 2014 growing season.

Dow AgroSciences plans to have available corn varieties tolerant to its Enlist Duo herbicide (2,4-D choline and glyphosate), part of its Enlist Weed Control System, ready for the 2014 growing season. Both companies plan to launch cotton, corn and soybean varieties tolerant to their respective systems by mid-decade.

The labels on both products will have strict application and equipment requirements.

Enlist Duo herbicide comes with Dow's proprietary technology called Colex-D, which makes the new 2,4-D formulation very low in volatility, minimizes physical drift, decreases odor and improves handling. Monsanto partnered with BASF to create Roundup Ready 2 Xtend herbicide with low-volatility dicamba.

Application requirements vary slightly for each product, but have a lot in common: No aerial application is allowed for either product. Growers who use the new technology will be required to keep spray heights no more than 20 inches above canopy. They can only spray when weeds

Key Points

- Dow and Monsanto to release 2,4-D- and dicamba-tolerant crops in coming years.
- Labels for each new formulation will be strict and will require specific equipment.
- Both companies will set up learning centers to showcase the technologies.

are 4 inches or less with the Roundup Ready 2 Xtend system. They will need to use low-drift nozzles, like TeeJet's AiXR nozzles, with the Enlist system. Proper wind speeds — between 3 and 10 mph — and wind direction and air temperature will be part of using it, too. Can't drive the sprayer faster than 15 mph, either. And proper tank cleanout will be essential.

Dow's Enlist Ahead program puts forth requirements and recommendations for using Enlist "that will help ensure success for growers using the technology and the benefits of the system. It is designed for the growers and applicators to ultimately be successful without causing problems for their neighbors," says Mark Peterson, the global biology team leader for Dow AgroSciences who is spearheading the Enlist system research.

Monsanto has details about its dicamba-tolerant crops and stewardship online at roundupreadyplus.com.

Current online registries for sensitive-crop locations, like www.driftwatch.org in the Midwest, can be expanded to the Southeast to help growers pinpoint sensitive crops, Peterson says, noting that most farmers now have mobile computers — their phones — readily available to do this.

Both companies will set up their own learning centers around the Southeast to showcase the technologies and to educate

applicators and distributors about the two reformulated herbicides, particularly the proper way to apply and handle them.

Even with the precautionary measures, specialty crop growers are concerned the technology will intrude on their crops and economic damage will happen.

What about including markers, maybe a dye, in the new formulations that could pinpoint if volatility or drift happens? It would be difficult to make such a marker that wouldn't itself become a problem, meaning the marker would need to disappear eventually.

What's to keep a grower from not using off-the-shelf generic and problematic 2,4-D or dicamba in these new weed systems? First, both new products will have to remain competitively priced against generic products. And both companies will require growers to agree to use only the

new, reformulated chemistries on the tolerant crops.

Both Peterson and Shannon Hauf, Monsanto's lead on Roundup Ready 2 Xtend, say neither weed program alone will be the "silver bullet" for Southeast weed control. Growers must continue to use multiple modes of herbicides, including residuals, to fight herbicide resistance.

During the 2013 growing season in Georgia, the two companies, University of Georgia Extension and the Georgia Department of Agriculture will continue to hone management strategies for the new technologies and "develop ways to maximize this technology for our agronomic growers, but I can promise we will do everything we can do to protect the specialty crop growers," says Stanley Culpepper, UGA Cooperative Extension weed specialist.

Volume 12 ■ Number 3

Contents

NewsWatch.....	1
Opinions and Letters.....	8
Crop Production.....	10
Machinery and Technology	23
Business and Land Management.....	28
Livestock	30
Forages.....	34
Marketplace/Classified	35
Southern Farm Life	39
Marketing	40

Keep up on ag news in the region. Check out www.FarmProgress.com. We feature updates on a wide range of topics, marketing data and weather information you can put to work in your operation.

Contact us

Editor: Brad Haire
229-439-0390, bhaire@farmprogress.com
P.O. Box 70264
Albany, GA 31708

Contributing Editors: Paul Burgener, Tyler Harris, Alan Newport, John Otte, J.T. Smith, Lon Tonneson and Cecil H. Yancy Jr.

Executive Editor: Dan Crummett

Farm Progress Editorial Director: Willie Vogt, 651-454-6994, wvogt@farmprogress.com

Sales: Bill Pittard, 901-758-2743

Call 800-441-1410 for subscriptions.

For more sales and company information, see last page of Marketplace section.

POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to Southern Farmer, 255 38th Avenue, Suite P, St. Charles, IL 60174-5410