

January 5, 2011

AGRONOMY TOPIC OF THE WEEK

Early Season Weed Control

When Roundup Ready soybeans arrived in the marketplace, soil applied herbicides left the picture for weed control. Since then, we have adjusted to the ease and convenience of spraying glyphosate. In the past, we would spray two Post-Emerge applications and have very good weed control. Now, years later, the battle of weed control has returned.

Early season weed control is a large portion of obtaining high yields in soybeans. Using a Pre-Emerge residual herbicide program, followed by a Post-Emerge application of Roundup on weeds 4" or less, is the optimum herbicide program, without yield loss. The benefits are controlling weeds before they become a problem and greater control of hard to manage weeds.

Early weeds, including Foxtails and Lambsquarter, are easier to manage with most Pre-Emerge herbicides. Early control of these weeds is imperative if the weather turns and the rain delays your Post-Emerge applications. In 2010, we had rains arrive in June which delayed our spraying programs. Several weeks later, we observed foot-tall weeds, such as Tall Waterhemp, and farmers asking how to manage them. Waterhemp is best controlled using a Pre-Emergence herbicide, followed by an early Post application of glyphosate. Well managed weed control means cleaner fields and less weed competition, which attributes to higher yield.

Most Pre-Emerge herbicides add another mode of action into our weed management program. By reducing our weeds early in the season, our glyphosate program will work better. Some weeds such as Marestalk, Giant Ragweed, and Lambsquarter have become resistant to glyphosate and can be controlled easier with a Pre/Post-Emerge program.

Visit with your Central Valley Coop Agronomist to see which program will work best on your farm.

