



AGRONOMY UPDATE

THINKING ABOUT HERBICIDE RESISTANCE

There has been abundant talk the last several years about impending development of weed resistance to herbicides and how that will effect crop production. You may feel this topic has been kicked around and kicked around, and you don't see how it has any relevance in your operation. I'm here to tell you that whether you know it or not, your bottom line is being impacted by herbicide resistant weeds. Note I said is. Not will be. **IS**.

Most producers in the NPC area have had a taste of weed resistance, or know someone who has. Whether it has been marehail, giant ragweed, or one of the pigweed family, there have been more instances of escapes over the past several seasons. These are the first indications that weeds have developed resistance to the current herbicide program.

In 2015, the abundance of rainfall early in the growing season may have delayed and in some cases prevented full implementation of a planned weed control program, or the drowned out areas of fields allowed weeds to flourish unimpeded for much of the growing season. The seed production from these weeds are a tremendous deposit into your fields' seed bank. You are going to be dealing with the implications of just this one factor in weed control for several years to come.

This isn't the only factor you will need to be aware of, though. Brock Pinter, NPC Precision Ag Specialist, recently attended a meeting that featured Dr. Ford Baldwin as a speaker. Dr. Baldwin served as University of Arkansas' Extension Weed Specialist for 25 years, and now is a private consultant in weed science. Dr. Baldwin stated that Palmer Amaranth will "fix" the other weed problems we have been struggling with. When you get Palmer, it becomes dominant, and the only weed that matters. There hasn't been any confirmed populations of Palmer Amaranth in NPC customer's fields, but there are significant populations within short driving distance away. It is both naïve and foolish to believe that there isn't Palmer in some of the fields we deal with.

Dr. Baldwin says that farmers need to stop being re-active in relation to their weeds and pro-actively prevent weeds with herbicide resistance from becoming dominant. The best way to do this, according to Baldwin, is to combine herbicide modes of action in a planned, multi-application weed control management approach.

What about new products being developed? That's a fair question. There aren't any. The investment needed to discover, develop, test, and register new chemistries has become prohibitively expensive. The major chemical companies have no new modes of action on the way to add to the selection. As Dr. Baldwin puts it: "farmers have to stop looking for the miracle product for the future. There isn't any miracle."

Here's another important thing to realize when talking about this type of weed control: it's not going to be cheap. Multiple passes with residual products and multiple active ingredients are not going to cost comparable to the costs associated with a two-pass glyphosate program. It is going to cost more to manage herbicide resistant weeds.

Your Northern Partners Agronomy Account Manager can help you to put together a herbicide management plan that will control the weeds you have now as well as address herbicide resistance issues. Start planning your weed management in a systems approach and work with your Account Manager to maximize your dollars.

I have included a link to an article by Dr. Ford Baldwin from the Delta Farm Press. There is also a link to the Take Action On Your Weeds website. It has excellent info on herbicide site of action and planning diversity.

<http://deltafarmpress.com/management/four-challenges-herbicide-resistant-weeds>

<http://takeactiononweeds.com/>

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