

All Crops, March 1, 2001

2,4-D TIME

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The most common burndown error for no-till/stale seedbed cotton is NOT making a March 2,4-D application. The price is right and the primrose control is practically perfect. Other tough weeds like curly dock, vetch and smartweed also respond well to 2,4-D. Our research indicates that 2,4-D will break down in 4-weeks and allow safe planting of cotton. Anything shorter than 3 weeks risks cotton damage. That basically gives us the month of March- although some cotton is usually planted in late April.

Harmony Extra and Goal also deserve mention. Last year was a big henbit and curly dock year and an early Harmony Extra application (plus Roundup) could have helped. The hitch is the 45 day preplant interval on Harmony Extra. Goal is useful for residual smartweed control on gumbo-type soils. Read the label for it's preplant interval, rainfall and bed-shaving requirements.

Clarity (a newer version of Banvel) was labeled a few years ago for preplant burndown. It has a 3-week preplant interval with some tricky rainfall restrictions. It does many of the same things 2,4-D does; however, it is somewhat more expensive and isn't quite as good on cutleaf eveningprimrose.

Not sure you want to plant cotton?- 2,4-D can benefit almost any crop. In soybeans (outside of cotton areas), ester versions are often used two to three weeks ahead of planting. Rice folks use it occasionally too; however, just like cotton, rice needs a full 30 days for crop safety.

In any case, a general burndown treatment will be needed closer to planting. We like any and all of the Roundup/Touchdown/glyphosate-type products. Try to spray them ABOUT two weeks ahead of planting- that time gives you the best flexibility. The Official Milan-Tennessee-No-Till recommendation also includes Gramoxone right behind the planter. Our research in recent years has indicated that you might not need the second general burndown, but by all means use common sense- if your first burndown didn't work OR is going stale fast- by all means retreat. For now- do what you can to get some 2,4-D sprayed before April 1.