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ROUNDUP TANK MIXES STILL POPULAR

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We continue to get questions about tank mixes on Roundup Ready soybeans. The story remains the same: Although morningglories and velvetleaf don't burst into flames when you spray Roundup, our control in a sequential program with full rates of Roundup has been extremely adequate. Please forgive the fence-straddling, but "extremely adequate" is the way it is. Sometimes there are failures, but 90% of the time we get excellent results in our test plots. When we get phone calls about tank mixtures, they're rarely about failures, instead, the grower is trying to decide for himself if a tank mix is worthwhile.

While few traditional herbicides can match the reliability of glyphosate, there is nothing wrong with tank mixtures. Mixes with ALS chemistry such as Classic, Synchrony, Scepter, FirstRate and Frontrow, have always looked good. Very often, we see better morningglory control in early season. However, later, when our second Roundup applications have gone out, all treatments look good. If you worked for Monsanto- you'd tell growers that you don't need a tank mix and if you worked for the tank mix company, you'd say you did need a tank mix.

Tank mixes with "Blazer" chemistry have tended to be antagonistic. In fact, non-Roundup beans, sprayed with Roundup plus Storm will actually survive (Do not try this at home- yes they survive, but the damage is severe). Our results with Cobra have been mixed. We have seen some residual benefits from full rates of Reflex and Flexstar in tank mixes; however, our short-term control from low rates has been variable. Resource and Aim may help with velvetleaf, but we did not see morningglory benefits when we tank mixed them with quart-equivalent glyphosate rates.

One good reason to consider a tank mix is resistance prevention. It is best not to overuse herbicides and with no till, Roundup beans, Roundup cotton and Roundup corn, we are using a lot of glyphosate. But be careful, just because you are mixing two products, doesn't mean you are preventing resistance. Most of these tank mix partners are broadleaf herbicides, consequently the grass in the field is "seeing" only one mode of action when you spray. The resistance prevention value doesn't really include grasses and the first cases of glyphosate resistance have been in grass species..

When we look over several years of tests, single tank mix applications are better than single applications of glyphosate. Two applications of glyphosate were much better. However, two tank mix applications are usually equal to two applications of glyphosate alone. We actually see bigger benefits when we use a broadleaf preemergence herbicide (Canopy XL, FirstRate, Scepter or Sencor)

You are the best person to determine whether preemergence herbicides or tank mixes should be used. If you've had trouble controlling morningglory or velvetleaf, try a tank mix. If things tend to get too hectic and you can't spray on time, a good broadleaf preemerge might help. If

glyphosate alone is working fine, stay the course. If you are happy with your weed control- tank mix or not- don't change because someone said you should. If you have some doubts, try some experimentation- split fields in half, or try making a round with glyphosate alone before you throw in your mix partner. This will show if there are any benefits to tank mixes for your situation.