

Cotton, June 30, 2002

POST DIRECTED MATERIALS LOOK ALIKE

Andy Kendig

Extension Weed Specialist

Commercial Agriculture Program

MU Delta Center

It is time to make post directed applications in cotton. This is one of the most important items to a weed control program. It is also an area where there is some debate.

Bladex/Cypro used to be the clear choice. It was the best post-directed herbicide and one of the cheapest. Since Bladex is gone, things will never be quite as good as they used to. On the other hand, the replacements tend to be pretty good. There is a fair amount of sales hype as to why one directed herbicide is better than another; however, it's important to remember that most of these herbicides are fairly old and don't do anything now that they did when Bladex was king.

The primary herbicides replacing Bladex have been Direx/Diuron and Caparol (prometryn). The big advantage to these herbicides is that the price is right. Linex (linuron) has also been mentioned, but at this time there is not a federal registration for post-directed Linex. Just in the last few years, we've started testing Cotoran (fluometuron) as a later post direct/layby type herbicide and it has performed quite well. Be aware that these older herbicides are available under several different trade names.

Another major group of post-directed herbicides are the diphenyl ethers and related products. Goal and Cobra do have some fit, especially for pigweed control. Goal also has a moderate level of residual activity, and has been among our best post directed treatments. The downside to Goal; however, is that it is a little bit more expensive than the diuron/prometryn type materials. Reflex and Valor are being tested for post directed use, but do not have post-directed registrations at this time; however, they have performed very similarly to Goal.

Aim and Harvade (and Roundup) exist has post directed herbicides with no residual activity. Residual activity is 95% of the battle; however, Aim may have some fit as a tank mix partner for morningglory and pigweed, and Harvade has some activity on sicklepod.

Command, Prowl and Dual also have post directed registrations. These herbicides provide no control of existing weeds; however, in our tests, Prowl and Dual have given some very nice residual pigweed control, and all three provide residual control of annual grasses.

The herbicides DSMA and MSMA are being used much less than they used to be. Two strengths of D/MSMA are annual grasses, and cocklebur; which happen to be strong points of Roundup/glyphosate. Most folks have been choosing Roundup/glyphosate since it offers better grass control and generally broader spectrum weed control than D/MSMA. However, one of the downsides of not using D/MSMA is that we've seen a lot more nutsedge than we did in the past. If nutsedge has been increasing in your fields, you might try to sneak some D/MSMA back into your post directed application- it is still a great herbicide for the money.

Before Staple, BXN and Roundup Ready, the number one weed issue was establishing a cotton-weed height differential for post directed spraying. Things may be easier now, but a height differential is still the most critical issue. Roundup Ready cotton reverts to being "conventional" cotton after the 4-leaf stage, and a rain at the wrong time can result in a reverse height differential. Some herbicides may have a slight edge for pigweed control, but the key issue is a height differential and residual activity.