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HERBICIDE RESISTANCE BAND WAGON

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There are hints that glyphosate resistant weeds might be coming. On a world-wide basis, that's true. Glyphosate resistant ryegrass came first in Australia, and then California. There is glyphosate resistance in goosegrass in South America. Several Midwest states have some strange waterhemp. It's been debated whether it's resistant or not, but for whatever reason, the stuff doesn't burst into flames when you spray glyphosate on it. Now, there is glyphosate-resistant horseweed is right across the river in Tennessee.

Glyphosate is catching all the attention, but isn't the only herbicide with some resistance issues. Apparently, there are now scattered sites of waterhemp that is resistant to the "PPO" type herbicides which would include Blazer, Cobra, Reflex, and Aim-based products. Other recent resistance discoveries include Facet-resistant barnyardgrass, and hints that Clearfield easily outcrosses to red rice.

The other big outbreak is herbicide adds hinting that you better rotate and give glyphosate a rest. While we support rotation, we also urge caution when the message comes along with "buy our product".

Glyphosate or not- herbicide rotation and crop rotation are essential. Most growers are aware that overuse of any single pesticide on any single pest (this includes bug spray on insects!) is a resistance- prone use pattern. Unfortunately, growers cannot afford to rotate (or tank mix) herbicides simply because it's a good idea. Worse yet rotating to something else or tank mixing doesn't necessarily derail resistance. We still have some different herbicides that have the same effect on the plants chemistry. Plus, even if the mode of action differs, you still need two active ingredients working on the weeds. Glyphosate + Aim might be a good choice to prevent the development of resistant pigweed, but that mix doesn't do much for resistance management in grasses.

Some of our pesticides are more prone to develop resistance than others. A few pesticides are resistance free. However, "Murphy's law" and "never say never" have been proven accurate time and time again. If you are using a lot of glyphosate, work with your consultant, retail agronomist, or extension agent to select good herbicide rotations and tank mixes. With tough economic times, any effort to rotate is good, but on the other hand, you can miss the mark too.

Awareness is also key. Just because a herbicide fails, does not mean it's resistance. Usually it isn't. Problems with application, weather and weeds cause the majority of herbicide failures. But if you've done everything right and find healthy survivors growing next to dead weeds of the same species (same size, same age, same coverage is important too), then take note. Also, if you noted a patch of weeds last year, and it's back this year and spreading, let someone know. Again, most suspected resistance turns out to be some other problem, but if you are seeing these

failures, give someone a call. It doesn't matter who, but get someone to review your herbicide history, the present weeds and then tweak your program.

The bad thing is that after you develop a significant population of resistant weeds, they will probably stay around for a long time. In most cases, there is no reason for a resistant population to "want to" change back to being a non-resistant population. The cliché's are heavy- "Never say never" and "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". Rotate herbicides and crops as best as you can, keep your eyes open and speak up if something looks fishy.