

6 TIPS to Build a Weed Management Program

Following a program approach to weed control can help farmers control the weeds that challenge crops this year, while preserving the effectiveness of herbicide technologies into the future. Jonathan Siebert, Ph.D., Corteva Agriscience, offers these six tips for helping customers with weed control strategies.

- 1 Know the field history.**
"It's important to reference the past when laying out a weed control program," Siebert says. "If a field harbors marehail or Palmer amaranth, you'll need to select herbicides that are effective against those species."
- 2 Start with a clean seedbed.**
"Your goal should be to have no weeds in the field at planting," Siebert says. "Most fields benefit from a burndown program that can include effective herbicides such as glyphosate and 2,4-D choline, the ingredients in Enlist Duo® herbicide."
- 3 Use herbicides with residual activity.**
"Adding residual herbicides at burndown, preemergence or both can provide additional modes of action that help control weeds in the current year and preserve the efficacy of our postemergence herbicide technologies," Siebert says.
- 4 Rotate modes of action.**
"To prevent the development of herbicide resistance, we need to rotate the modes of action available to us," Siebert says. "Weed control needs to be prescriptive: We must scout fields and, when weeds emerge, hit them with postemergence herbicides, remembering to rotate modes of action."
- 5 Keep the borders of fields clean.**
Siebert suggests farmers make sure they're controlling weeds in ditches and turn rows to prevent weed escapes. Weeds in these areas can develop resistance because they've avoided exposure to full rates of effective herbicides.
- 6 Adopt a zero-tolerance policy.**
Controlling weeds effectively throughout the growing season is essential to curbing the expansion of herbicide resistance. "The best practice is to keep the farm free of weeds," Siebert says. "A field that's clean helps protect more of the yield potential of every seed we plant."

The fate of glyphosate is a lesson agriculture can't forget. Siebert says, "Abusing and losing weed management tools costs time and money. With tight margins, farmers need to do all they can to maximize yield and profits by keeping weeds from shrinking income."

"We need to be proactive in our approach to weed control," he says. "Weed control and resistance management take a long-term commitment, just like soil fertility requires a long-term view. We have to look five or 10 years down the road. Successful weed management can help farmers achieve long-term productivity."

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