

Soybean yields may be boosted by incorporation of herbicides

NEWARK, Del. — Last year some soybean farmers ran into serious weed problems when their pre-emergence herbicides failed to take effect because of dry weather.

Although pre-emergence weed materials are convenient to use, University of Delaware Extension agronomist Dr. William H. Mitchell cautions growers

that these materials won't work unless there is water to activate them. In the absence of sufficient moisture within the first two weeks after application, the chemicals decompose as a result of ultraviolet light and microbial activity. This can happen even when there is pretty good moisture at planting time, if more does not follow within 10-14 days.

When pre-emergence herbicides fail because of lack of water, the only solution is to go into the field with a rotary hoe or go to early cultivation to keep down the weeds. It is sometimes hard to get back to fields to check on herbicide control in time to do this, especially if you are farming large acreage.

Because of the uncertainty of rainfall after planting time the agronomist recommends that farmers consider using pre-plant incorporated herbicides—the kind that are mixed with the soil—as opposed to the pre-emergence types which are sprayed on the surface of the ground following planting of soybeans. This is especially important on loamy sands which dry out rapidly and where frequently there isn't enough moisture to activate surface-applied herbicides.

“Switching to incorporated herbicides may result in a 25 per cent yield increase in soybeans,” says Mitchell, “and even this can be improved upon by combining cultivation and mixture of herbicides.” He bases this prediction on findings from a four-year herbicide study at the

University of Delaware's Georgetown Substation. The tests showed that combining Sencor or Lexone with one of several dinitroaniline herbicides (such as: Treflan, Tolban, Cobex, Basalin or Amex) has raised soybean yields another six inches.

According to the agronomist, an early shallow cultivation in combination with incorporated herbicides has been the most consistent treatment tested. “The herbicides weaken the weed root system and cultivation finishes the job,” he explains.

Sencor and Lexone are very good broadleaved weed killers but are known to cause soybean damage under some conditions. When mixed with Treflan and similar herbicides, safety is increased and weed control is very much improved. The dinitroanilines provide a certain safeness action because they prune the roots of the soybean a

little, thus preventing it from taking up as much of the Sencor or Lexone as they usually would.

As with the use of all herbicides, Mitchell cautions growers to follow directions given on the label.

Buttermilk information published by NDC

ROSEMONT, Ill.—An attractively designed publication providing information about the tangy dairy favorite, buttermilk, has been released by National Dairy Council. The education piece contains shopping pointers, storage recommendations, serving tips, nutrition profile, and other information.

The new NDC entry, ‘Buttermilk...Contemporary Version of an Oldtime Food,’ is the fourth in the new family of information sheets. Yogurt, sour cream, and milk have already been completed. New cottage cheese and ice cream information sheet will follow.

NDC's information sheets are aimed at junior and senior high school pupils, college students, and adults. All are prepared in an 8 1/4 by-11-inch format and are illustrated with photographs of paper sculptures of dairy foods and dishes made from them. Two buttermilk products, pancakes and biscuits, are depicted on the new sheet.

The pamphlet is available through affiliated Dairy Council units across the country, or directly through National Dairy Council, 6300 North River Road, Rosemont, Ill. 60018.

Conception studied

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — At Penn State University's recently held Dairy Day, Dr. George L. Hargrove, associate professor of dairy science, reported on a 10-year study of conception rates, fertility levels, and milk production of progeny by comparing young bulls and older, proven bulls.

“Studies so far show that proven sires have a higher conception rate and milk production is slightly higher in progeny of proven bulls,” he said. “However, there appears to be little difference in fertility rates between young and older bulls.”

The 400 persons attending the Dairy Day also took an in-depth look at studies being conducted at the Penn State Dairy Production Center, Dairy Breeding Research Center, Milk Testing Laboratory, Forage Testing Laboratory, and Calf Research Farms.

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