

Savings on herbicides may be lost at harvest

CHICAGO — When farmers examine ways to cut production expenses, herbicide costs come under close scrutiny. Farmers may be tempted to reduce rates or to use the most inexpensive herbicide treatment available.

However, weed scientists, crop consultants and herbicide applicators warn that money saved on herbicides may be lost at harvest because of poor weed control and crop injury.

Poor weed control has short and long-term repercussions on productivity. Many farmers acknowledge, for instance, that weed pressure can be more severe in conservation tillage, and effective herbicide programs are necessary to reap the benefits of reduced and no-till systems.

"It doesn't take much extra yield to pay for weed control," remarks Galen Lowman, general manager, Cargill Inc., Algona, Iowa. "Just a couple of bushels of corn per acre lost to weeds will pay for the cost of herbicides, and one bushel pays for the application."

Lowman points out that it doesn't take many of the weeds found in his area — buttonweed (velvetleaf), smartweed, sunflowers — to reduce yields enough to justify the cost of herbicide treatment.

Other experts share Lowman's assessment of the importance of weed control in corn. Dr. Robert Wilson, University of Nebraska professor of agronomy, says poor weed control has short and long-

term repercussions on farmers' productivity.

"All things considered, weed control in corn may be very economical," Wilson explains. He recommends that farmers control weeds in corn before rotating to another crop, such as soybeans.

"If a farmer uses herbicides for a cocklebur problem in corn, he might spend around \$5 an acre. But if he tries to control cocklebur while the field is in soybeans, he'll probably spend \$30 an acre on herbicides," he says.

According to Wilson, all herbicides have strengths and weaknesses. When choosing herbicides, factors such as types of weeds, soil conditions and cropping practices, as well as price, should be considered.

In order for a herbicide to deliver a high return on investment by not allowing weeds to reduce yields, it must consistently perform well and not injure the crop. Wilson says that research at the University of Nebraska shows that most early postemergence treatments with translocating herbicides provide good broadleaf weed control without harming corn.

Since its introduction in 1947, 2, 4-D has been a popular postemergence herbicide. However, it does have some limitations. George Hoffmann, Velsicol Product Development field representative, Urbana, Ill., says, "2, 4-D applied to control the early weeds doesn't have any residual activity for the late

weeds, like velvetleaf. Yet it's likely to stress corn if it's applied late. It causes brittleness in corn, which makes the plant susceptible to breakage from heavy winds or cultivation."

In contrast, 1 pint per acre of Banvel herbicide applied when corn is spike to 5 inches tall provides residual control through canopy. This means full-season control of yield-robbing broadleaf weeds without corn stress, Hoffmann explains.

In addition, Banvel provides better suppression of perennial broadleaves, such as Canada thistle and bindweed. "Banvel is absorbed into the root and stem tissue of perennial weeds. It will control not only perennial seedlings but will also suppress existing perennials and weed growth from roots," says Richard Pierce, Velsicol Product Development field representative, Bloomington, Ind.

Many weed scientists agree that one pint of Banvel applied early post provides consistent perennial suppression. "For Canada thistle and bindweed control in corn, I recommend Banvel at the maximum labeled rate," Dr. Wilson says.

Pierce points out that because of its residual activity, translocating ability and water solubility, Banvel early post treatments deliver consistent control in reduced and no-till systems without having to increase rates because of surface residue.

He adds that farmers should look at the big picture when planning a weed control program. Crop safety, broad spectrum weed control, perennial suppression, residual activity and performance in various tillage systems are important ingredients in getting a high return on herbicide investments.

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The Model 509 mower conditioner available from New Idea Farm Equipment Division.

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YORK — Seedway, Inc. announces that Queen Anne Grain Co., Inc. of Queen Anne, Maryland, will continue to serve as a Regional

Warehouse and Dealer for Seedway on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Gene Hohl, Marketing Manager of Seedway's York, Pennsylvania

Division, which supplies Queen Anne, reports that trial distribution last year worked very well to serve farmers on the Delmarva Peninsula.

Kirby Metz, III and his staff at Queen Anne Grain very capably handled in excess of 80,000 pounds of seed last year and anticipate

increased volume in spring 1986. Queen Anne will serve farmers directly as well as the network of Seedway Dealers in the Delmarva area.

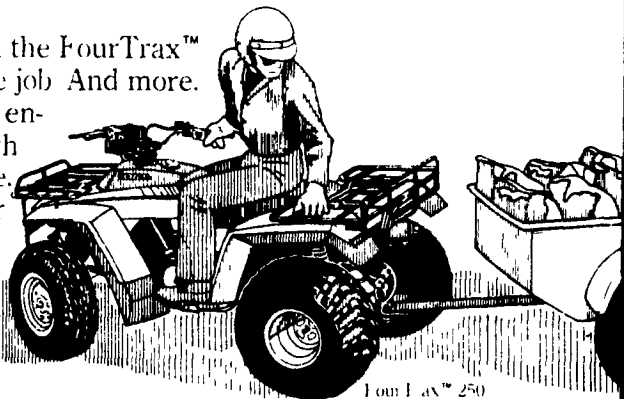
Seedway and Queen Anne Grain market Asgrow-O's Gold and Todd hybrid field corn, as well as a complete line of field and lawn seed.



Kirby Metz III, Queen Anne Grain Co. and Seedway fieldmen John Rencher and Rawlings Nelson pause to reflect on Queen Anne's successful trial year as a Seedway distributor.

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