

New Corn-Based Products In Marketplace

Greg Roth

Two new corn-based products have appeared on the shelves of major retailers this summer.

The first is the new biodegradable corn pens called "The Green Pen." The body of the

pens is made from a corn-based plastic that the manufacturer claims will biodegrade in 365 days. The pens are distributed by A&W Products Co., Inc., Port Jervis, New York. Locally, we found them in a Walmart.

The second product is a non-

toxic ethanol windshield washer. This is the first windshield washer product to contain ethanol. It is being produced by the Aquinas Technology Group of St. Louis, Mo.

Because the ethanol used in windshield washer is mixed with water, it does not require

the relatively pure ethanol needed for most other applications. As a result, this product provides a market for ethanol from side-stream or aborted ethanol runs from ethanol manufacturers.

NCGA is working with the manufacturer to locate ethanol sources. NCGA will also

receive a royalty from the product. The product is being marketed through some national retailers such as K-Mart, Target and Autozone, Inc.

This product offers another market for ethanol, which increases the markets for agricultural products and further farm employment.

Voluntary Programs, Funding Keys To Clean Water

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — From time to time newspaper headlines report that traces of pesticides have been detected in waters that provide the drinking supply for municipalities.

Understandably, people who live in those communities become concerned if not alarmed. Do these reports mean that drinking supplies are unsafe and that there is a health risk from pesticides washing into lakes and streams?

These detections do not necessarily represent a public health or ecological threat, but they do pose a stewardship challenge for agriculture.

Corn growers are committed to protecting and improving water quality. But government nonpoint source pollution programs should allow for management measures that are technically and economically viable on the farm, said Pete Wenstrand, an Essex, Iowa, corn grower and vice president of National Corn Growers Association (NCGA).

Wenstrand recently testified before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation as it met to consider rewriting the current Clean Water Act. Wenstrand testified on behalf of NCGA, the National Cotton Council, the National Associa-

tion of Wheat Growers and the American Soybean Association, the National Barley Growers Association and the U.S. Rice Producers Group.

Farmers favor adequate protection for our nation's water quality," Wenstrand said. "We can improve water quality — without burdensome regulation or taxation of inputs — through reasonably funded programs that encourage farmers to carry on a legacy of stewardship while maintaining their economic ability to produce food and fiber for a world market."

Wenstrand encouraged the committee not to cash aside Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, which gives states authority to set up federally-funded nonpoint source pollution programs, in favor of a cumbersome regulatory approach.

The Iowa corn grower then suggested ways Congress could strengthen their water quality initiatives. "First among our core principles is that the federal government should allocate additional resources to states to assist them in better identifying water quality problems and activating effective management strategies," he said.

"Second," Wenstrand noted, "greater financial commitment should be directed to research,

monitoring and assessment programs to enable effective and cost-efficient responses to water quality problems.

"And, finally, where problems are identified, landowners should be encouraged to adopt voluntary, site-specific water quality best-management practices (BMP) through cooperative programs which provide education, technical assistance and incentives," he said.

Wenstrand emphasized state and local authorities need flexible programs that can be adapted to specific situations. And he stressed farmers prefer programs that rely on voluntary compliance.

Referring to the current \$50 million in funding for Section 319, Wenstrand said, "It should come as little surprise that some states have been less than enthusiastic about enacting vigorous nonpoint source programs when, on average, they can expect to receive less than \$1 million per year to carry them out."

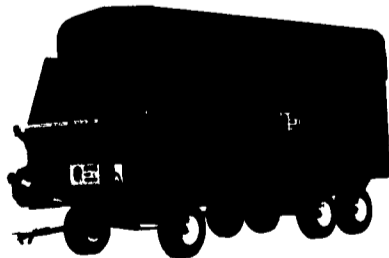
While farmers applaud the

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Two new corn-based products on the marketplace are the biodegradable green pens and the ethanol-based bug remover.

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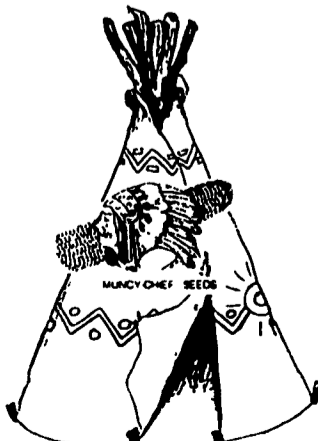
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