

Fall Herbicide Application A Good Management Practice

TIPTON, Ind. — Applying herbicides *now* to fields that will be planted to soybeans in the spring can be a beneficial management practice for soybean growers, said experts at Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.

One early application before cold weather sets in can help eliminate winter annuals — host to soybean cyst nematode (SCN), one of the most devastating of all soybean pests. Fall herbicide application also provides many more benefits at spring planting.

"Winter annuals such as

purple deadnettle, henbit, field pennycress, and shepherds-purse provide a place for cyst nematode to reproduce and overwinter," said Danny Greene, Pioneer technical information manager. "Over the last few years, however, research at a number of institutions throughout the United States has shown that eliminating winter annuals with a fall herbicide program is one step that can help the cyst nematode life-cycle."

While managing SCN is, perhaps, the biggest plus of a fall

herbicide program, Greene says growers will appreciate the many other benefits as well:

- **Enhanced management** — A fall application provides excellent burndown and residual control, reducing the need for a burndown in the spring and allowing you to get a head start on planting and spring chores.

- **Wider window of opportunity** — Fields that are prepared for planting offer a wider window in which to complete planting. This can be especially helpful during a cold, rainy spring that causes unplanned

planting delays.

- **Cleaner fields** — Fields without early weed pressure are drier and warmer. A dry field allows earlier planting, while reducing the potential for soil pathogens such as phytophthora and pythium. A warmer field gives plants a better chance of early germination.

- **Broadleaf control** — Tough broadleaf weeds such as dandelions, marehail, smartweed, and chickweed are controlled more easily.

- **Insect control** — Removing winter annuals removes early spring habitat for insects such as white grub, seed corn maggots, and wireworms.

According to Greene, the best time to apply fall chemicals to

fields for next season's no-till or conservation-till soybeans is anytime after fall harvest, but prior to soybean emergence in the spring. Application of herbicides with residual activity should be made before the soil freezes. Herbicides without residual activity should be applied before cool temperatures limit their activity.

"Applying fall herbicides offers many benefits and expands management choices," said Greene. "We encourage growers to meet with their Pioneer sales professionals to decide if it's the right option for their farms. Our reps can offer management suggestions, discuss programs and put them in touch with the right contacts."

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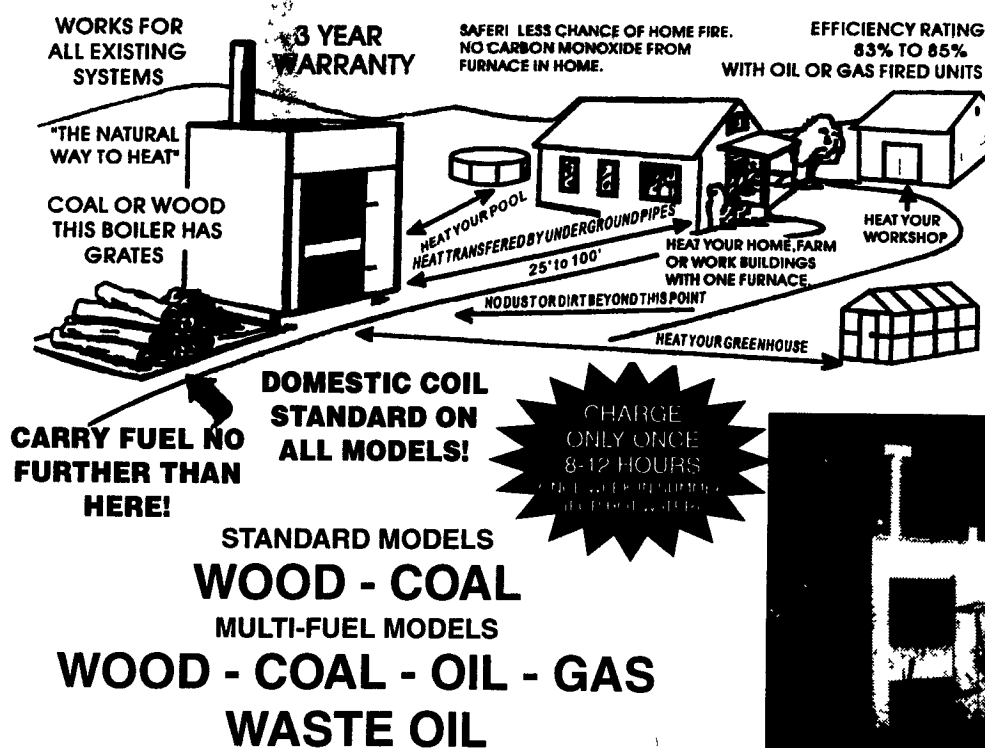


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