

EPA Extends Dicamba Registration

Friday, November 2, 2018

By Mary Jane Buerkle

The Environmental Protection Agency announced earlier this week that they are extending the registration of dicamba for two years for 'over-the-top' use to control weeds in dicamba-tolerant cotton and soybeans.

The decision came after a public comment period and collaboration between the EPA and various stakeholders, and the extended registration does include label changes designed to help address concerns about the product and its usage.

"We are pleased with the EPA's decision to extend the registration for dicamba, and appreciate their willingness to gather significant input," PCG President Stacy Smith said. "We will work to review and gather additional information and clarification on various details within the new label restrictions, but this technology is a critical tool for many cotton producers, and we must continue to do everything we can to be good stewards."

According to a news release from the EPA, the following label changes were made to ensure that these products can continue to be used effectively while addressing potential concerns to surrounding crops and plants:

- Two-year registration (until December 20, 2020)
- Only certified applicators may apply dicamba over the top (those working under the supervision of a certified applicator may no longer make applications)
- Prohibit over-the-top application of dicamba on soybeans 45 days after planting and cotton 60 days after planting
- For cotton, limit the number of over-the-top applications from 4 to 2 (soybeans remain at 2 OTT applications)
- Applications will be allowed only from 1 hour after sunrise to 2 hours before sunset
- In counties where endangered species may exist, the downwind buffer will remain at 110 feet and there will be a new 57-foot buffer around the other sides of the field (the 110-foot downwind buffer applies to all applications, not just in counties where endangered species may exist)
- Clarify training period for 2019 and beyond, ensuring consistency across all three products
- Enhanced tank clean out instructions for the entire system
- Enhanced label to improve applicator awareness on the impact of low pH's on the potential volatility of dicamba
- Label clean up and consistency to improve compliance and enforceability

USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue issued a statement on Thursday regarding the EPA's decision.

"It is important that the EPA has decided to renew the registration of over-the-top use of this important weed control technology on dicamba-resistant cotton and soybeans, because it presents farmers with options," Perdue said. "This represents the conclusion of a very thorough scientific review, in conjunction with stakeholders, involving site visits and careful consideration of facts. Producers who use this weed control method should

review the label, understand why changes have been made, and ensure that all requirements of the label are met when the 2019 use season begins."

Shawn Holladay, chairman of the National Cotton Council's American Cotton Producers and past president of PCG, said in a news release from the NCC, "Cotton producers across the cotton belt appreciate the EPA's two-year re-registration of this important crop protection tool. However, we understand this label will include new and stricter application and use restrictions, and we need clarification on some details before a final determination of the complete implications for use of the product."

Signup Deadline for Seed Cotton Program

December 7

Don't Wait!

Contact your FSA Office Today!

AgriLife Extension Offers Multiple Online Agriculture CEU Courses

Monday, October 29, 2018 By Kay Ledbetter, AgriLife TODAY

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service ecosystem science and management unit is offering Texas Department of Agriculture continuing education units, or CEUs, for private applicators online in November instead of the monthly webinar.

Private applicators need 15 CEUs every five years, and a maximum of 10 can be from recorded online courses and/or correspondence courses, said Pete Flores, AgriLife Extension webinar coordinator in Corpus Christi.

Five CEUs must come from a live class or webinar in order to meet the TDA requirements to recertify, which they typically offer every other month, Flores said.

Of the 15 CEUs, a minimum of two must be laws and regulations, and two must be integrated pest management. These are based on a five-year cycle, according to TDA regulations.

The courses, CEU category and presenters will be:

- Improved Pasture Weed and Brush Management, one integrated pest management, James Jackson, AgriLife Extension range specialist, Stephenville.
- Pesticide Laws and Regulations, one laws and regulations, Greg Baker, TDA inspector, Bay City.
- Mesquite and Mixed Brush Herbicide Treatments, one general, Dr. Bob Lyons, AgriLife Extension range specialist, Uvalde.
- King Ranch and Kleberg Bluestem Management, one integrated pest management, Dr. Megan Clayton, AgriLife Extension range specialist, Corpus Christi.
- Spray Equipment Setup: Reduce Drift and Save Money, one drift minimization, Dr. Josh McGinty, AgriLife Extension agronomist, Corpus Christi.

The cost is \$10 per CEU and certificates will be issued by mid-December.

These webinars and others in the series can be accessed at <https://naturalresourcewebinars.tamu.edu/archive/>.

For more information on the webinars, contact Flores at Pete.Flores@ag.tamu.edu.

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Our View: Making the Ag Vote Count

Thursday, November 1, 2018 From Farm Policy Facts

There are a few things we know for certain about American farmers.

Farmers are hardworking (4 am comes awfully early, and there are no weekends off).

Given the importance of what farmers do, they don't make enough money (especially now with commodity prices in the tank).

Farmers are optimistic and resilient (to have your heart broken by a hail storm then do it all again next year is a remarkable thing).

And, farmers vote. Farm families turn out to the polls in good times and bad, where they reward agriculture's supporters and send powerful messages to its critics.

Our friends at Agri-Pulse just released a fascinating new poll that detailed what's on farmers' minds as we head into this year's election season. And what topped the chart caught our attention.

Selling more U.S. farm product overseas is the most important issue for farmers this time around – outranking even the war on terror, deficit reduction and healthcare.

Not far behind on the list was passing the new Farm Bill, which was more important to farm voters than rural job creation, infrastructure improvements, immigration and lowering taxes.

What makes those two farm-related items so significant is that they are much more likely to be accomplished than the other issues on the list.

It takes a lot less manpower and time to open new markets for corn, rice and cotton, for example, than stopping terrorism. And finishing a Farm Bill that's already been passed by both chambers in Congress is a cake walk compared to things like passing a new tax cut and repairing the nation's roadways.

Not to mention, these farm priorities enjoy bipartisan support, which is a true rarity in today's political world. And they are relatively inexpensive.

The farm policies contained in the Farm Bill account for about one-quarter of 1% of the federal budget, and expanded trading opportunities actually creates jobs, boosts rural businesses and helps raise tax revenue.

So, when the results of the Midterm finally come into focus and legislators come back to DC, there are a handful of items we

think should be on the docket because they can be delivered quickly and will make a big impact.

- Pass the Farm Bill without delay.
- Deliver aid for those growers whose lives have been turned upside down by unjustified trade retaliation or the deadly string of hurricanes, flooding and drought.
- Make new trade deals a priority and hold our trading partners accountable for the subsidies and trade barriers that disadvantage U.S. growers.

That is a winning platform for any lawmaker running in rural America – no matter what party they represent.

Estate Planning Seminar set for Nov. 5

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office in Carson County will host an Estate Planning Workshop on Nov. 5. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at the Carson County War Memorial, 501 Main St., Panhandle.

The program will feature Tiffany Dowell Lashmet, AgriLife Extension agricultural law specialist from Amarillo.

"Making end-of-life decisions can be very difficult for grieving families, but there are some steps that people can take to plan in advance how they want matters handled when the time comes," Lashmet said.

Topics of discussion at the workshop will include:

- What happens if I die without a will?
- Key end-of-life documents everyone should have.
- Five steps to ensure successful transition of the family farm or ranch.

For more information or to RSVP, call [806-537-3882](tel:806-537-3882).

RCPP Cost-Share Funding Claimed

Friday, October 26, 2018 From High Plains Water District

Approximately \$899,988 in cost share funding was obligated to agricultural producers in the Panhandle-South Plains region through the USDA-NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program. The voluntary three-year program concluded at the end of Fiscal Year 2018 (Sept. 30).

RCPP addressed irrigation water and soil moisture management on a regional basis. There were 149 contracts awarded on 52,938 acres.

Initial high priority funding items included irrigation system monitoring equipment, soil moisture sensors, chemigation check valves, and flow meters. The program later expanded to include medium priority items, such as irrigation pipelines, center pivots, and subsurface drip irrigation.

High Plains Underground Water Conservation District served as the lead agency for the program. Supporting partners included Hemphill County UWCD in Canadian, Llano Estacado UWCD at Seminole, Mesa UWCD at Lamesa, North Plains GCD at Dumas, Sandy Land UWCD at Plains, and South Plains UWCD at Brownfield.

"We want to thank the RCPP participants for their efforts to improve irrigation application efficiencies through use of irrigation and soil moisture monitoring equipment," said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman. "This can help achieve additional water and energy savings for our region."

Editor's Note:

"Cotton News", a weekly service of Plains Cotton Growers to the cotton industry and news media in the 41-county High Plains area, is mailed from Lubbock each Friday. Its contents are confined to news items and comments pertaining to the High Plains cotton industry which is so vital to U.S. all. Anyone interested in making comments about the contents of this column can call 806-792-4904 or Email PCG at: editor@plainscotton.org