



## The Cost of Feeding Weeds

Sunday we hosted Easter Dinner at our house. Not a large gathering, 10 of us around the table, but still it amounted to a fair amount of extra work and expense to set out a spread for more people than we are used to feeding.

Your fields are similar. In a season which has been forecast as being tight economically, it means a significant extra cost to feed even a few weeds in your fields in addition to the crop you are intending to grow and harvest. Soil nutrients that are made unavailable to the crop by weeds looking for a place at your table may just mean the difference this year between turning a profit and experiencing a loss.

Weeds start using soil nutrients earlier than you think; and controlling weeds before they emerge will stop them from tying up the nutrients at all. Though these nutrients aren't removed from the field as with grain crops, they are unavailable for the intended crop, and won't be available to feed increased yield if favorable conditions prevail into the coming growing season.

There has been considerable discussion concerning weed resistance (or tolerance) to glyphosate and other herbicides. Whether your fields have resistant weeds or not, the fact is that total post weed control plans don't work as effectively as they have in the past. Add to this the fact that many growers have gone back to 30 inch rows for soybeans, and the seeding rates used in wider rows is being reduced as well, and your fields aren't getting nearly as much weed suppression from crop canopy in soybeans as they did in drilled and narrower rowed beans. Weeds that have always been tougher to control: waterhemp, giant ragweed, lambsquarters; have become even more so in recent years. Now you also face the added threat of the presence of Palmer Amaranth in your weed spectrum, and you have a real recipe for disaster if you don't plan on using a quality pre-emergence herbicide in both corn and beans.

We used to talk about "Set up" rates of pre-emergence herbicides as a way to plan for weed control, but these tougher weeds and reduced crop competition call for full label rates to be used to ensure that weed control will be as effective as possible. Full label rate pre-emergence herbicides in your weed control program will maximize your weed control effectiveness in the following ways:

- The weeds are controlled before they emerge. They won't get a chance to start using your expensive soil nutrients for themselves and making them unavailable for the intended crop
- Pre-emergence residual control reduces or eliminates reliance on crop canopy for extended weed suppression.
- Appropriate pre-emergence products are better suited to controlling hard to kill weeds than many post-emergent products.

It is very important to make sure the modes of action and sites of action of the products you choose in both corn and soybeans are as diverse as possible to delay or avoid additional herbicide resistance in weeds. Keeping these products straight in your mind and in your herbicide records can be a difficult task from year to year. Let your NPC Account Manager help you make sure you are using products that will do the job you expect. Call today to finalize your pre-emergent products and rates.

