

Dicamba Labels 2021

By Andy Luke, Field Specialist in Agronomy

Soybean growers will again have the option to spray dicamba products over dicamba-tolerant soybeans in 2021 with recent registrations announced by the EPA. The registration labels for XtendiMax and Engenia include several control measures to limit the off-target movement of dicamba and are valid through 2025.

The first requirement is that every dicamba application must include an approved pH Buffering Adjuvant. These additives are also known as Volatility Reducing Agents. Recent research has shown that tank mixes with a pH below 5 are much more susceptible to off-target movement through volatility. The addition of glyphosate (Roundup) into the spray tank has lowered the tank mix pH 1 to 2.1 pH units in University of Tennessee studies. The same researchers found that the addition of a Buffering Adjuvant raised the pH above 5 and reduced the volatilization of dicamba by about 70% in the first 36 hours after application. A list of approved buffering adjuvants will be available on the herbicide labels.

Applicators must also pass a mandatory annual training course before making applications. The University of Missouri will not be offering dicamba applicator training like in year's past. Most of the registrants offer classes both in-person and online to meet these requirements.

A downwind buffer of 240 feet is also mandated on the current labels. If susceptible crops or areas are located downwind, the application should not be made. As part of the record keeping requirements, applicators must document that they have checked an applicable sensitive/specialty crop registry and that they surveyed all adjacent fields for any sensitive areas.

Several label requirements also state how the applications must be made. The biggest change from past years is that applications are not allowed on soybeans after June 30. A minimum of 15 gallons of spray solution per acre are required and ground speed should not exceed 15 mph. Additionally, application requirements are different in areas with endangered species present. As of this writing, no such areas exist in North Missouri, but current bulletins can be found on the EPA's website.

These label requirements are intended to provide applicators with simple guidelines to limit off-target movement of dicamba while at the same time giving soybean growers another effective tool to battle tough-to-control weeds.

For more information on this and other pesticide label requirements, contact Andy Luke, field specialist in agronomy, at 660-425-6434 or email lukea@missouri.edu.