

EPA Announces New Tool for Soybean Growers

Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the registration of the use of isoxaflutole on genetically engineered soybeans, providing soybean farmers with a new tool they can use to control weeds that have become resistant to many other herbicides.

“We’ve heard from farmers across the country about the importance of having new means available to combat economically-damaging weeds,” **said EPA Assistant Administrator for the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention Alexandra Dapolito Dunn.** “We listened and believe this action balances the need to provide growers with the products necessary to continue to provide Americans with a safe and abundant food supply while ensuring our country’s endangered species are protected.”

“Safe and effective weed management is a constant challenge that farmers face,” **said American Soybean Association President and soybean grower from Worthington, Minnesota, Bill Gordon.** “EPA’s registration of Isoxaflutole will provide soybean growers with an important new tool to combat damaging weeds and help better control emerging herbicide-resistance issues. The American Soybean Association appreciates the diligence by EPA to provide farmers access to this new tool with the necessary guidance for using it safely to protect people, our wildlife, and the environment.”

EPA reviewed relevant data and conducted detailed human health and ecological assessments in deciding to register the use of isoxaflutole on soybeans genetically engineered to resist the herbicidal effects of isoxaflutole. In addition to the risk assessments, EPA also requested public comment on the proposed registration decision. Based on this analysis and careful consideration of public input, EPA concluded that the application of isoxaflutole on genetically engineered soybeans with certain use conditions could be done in an environmentally-protective manner in certain parts of the country.

Isoxaflutole is already registered by EPA for use on corn in 33 states. Like this existing use, the new registered use of isoxaflutole on genetically engineered soybeans is classified as a restricted-use pesticide, meaning that applicators must receive special training in order to use it. The training will emphasize ways applicators will protect ground and surface water and non-target plants.

The new use on genetically engineered soybeans would be limited to specific counties in 25 states. EPA is limiting use to these specific counties to protect endangered or threatened species from exposure. EPA is also including additional use restrictions, such as not allowing aerial and irrigation system applications.

The registration is limited to five years during which EPA will evaluate any potential weed resistance issues that may result. As part of the terms and conditions of the registration, the registrant must provide an herbicide-resistance management plan and submit annual reports to EPA.

More information, including the final registration decision, can be found on: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=EPA-HQ-OPP-2019-0398>.