



## **SOUTHWEST NEW YORK FIELD CROP CHRONICLE**

Compiled by Josh Putman - Field Crops Specialist, SWNY Dairy, Livestock, Field Crops Program

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### **Avoid Soil Compaction This Fall**

With fall harvest well underway in Western NY, rain and snow events have left fields soft and ruts from heavy machinery and grain carts are beginning to show up. The ruts you see may be damaging the soil and severe compaction below them may result. Compaction is the loss of pore space between soil particles and occurs when that space is squeezed out of the soil and reappears somewhere else, such as in the form of a rut. This can impact the crop's root structure next season and even increase runoff because of reduced water infiltration.

**Here are 10 tips to try and avoid compaction on wet soil this fall:** (Tips adapted from [University of Nebraska-Lincoln](#))

- ◆ Wait until the soil dries enough to support the combine.
- ◆ Don't use grain bin extensions or fill the combine as full.
- ◆ Use wide tires with lower inflation pressures.
- ◆ Keep trucks out of the field. Consider unloading at the ends of the field, not on the go.
- ◆ Grain cart should track the same rows as the combine when returning to the truck at the edge of the field.
- ◆ Don't turn around in the middle of the field.
- ◆ Don't fill the grain cart as full, unload more often.
- ◆ Establish a grain cart path and stay on it.
- ◆ Don't till wet soils as they are easily compacted.
- ◆ Use cover crops to help build soil structure.

**Wet area of soybean field showing ruts**  
(Source: Josh Putman)



### **Farm Equipment on the Road This Fall**

During this time of year, farm machinery travels on our roadways. Tractors, combines, and semi-trailers are large and heavy, making it hard for the operator to speed up, slow down, and stop. This equipment may be wider than one lane of the road, or in some cases, wider than the entire road. Because of this, they tend to make wide turns and can have several blind spots while traveling down the road. For more tips on sharing the road safely, view this article by the [National Ag Safety Database](#).

#### **Safety tips for producers:**

- ◆ Have a visible slow moving vehicle sign (SMV).
- ◆ Turn on your lights and flashers.
- ◆ Use pilot vehicles if traveling long distances one in the front and one in the back.
- ◆ Make sure your equipment has mirrors so you can stay aware of motorists around you.
- ◆ Do not text and operate machinery.
- ◆ Get over and off to the side if a vehicle is coming towards you.

**Combine hauling grain head**  
(Source: Paul Gross, Michigan State University)



**Grain cart entering roadway**  
(Source: Josh Putman)



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### **EPA Approves New Five-Year Registration of Dicamba Products**

On Tuesday, October 27, 2020, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced that EPA is approving new five-year registrations for two dicamba products and extending the registration of an additional dicamba product. All three registrations include new control measures to ensure these products can be used effectively while protecting the environment, including non-target plants, animals, and other crops not tolerant to dicamba.

“With today’s decision, farmers now have the certainty they need to make plans for their 2021 growing season,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “After reviewing substantial amounts of new information, conducting scientific assessments based on the best available science, and carefully considering input from stakeholders we have reached a resolution that is good for our farmers and our environment.”

Through today’s action, EPA approved new registrations for two “over-the-top” (OTT) dicamba products—XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology and Engenia Herbicide—and extended the registration for an additional OTT dicamba product, Tavium Plus VaporGrip Technology. These registrations are only for use on dicamba-tolerant (DT) cotton and soybeans and will expire in 2025, providing certainty to American agriculture for the upcoming growing season and beyond.

**To manage off-site movement of dicamba, EPA’s 2020 registration features important control measures, including:**

- ◆ Requiring an approved pH-buffering agent (also called a Volatility Reduction Agent or VRA) be tank mixed with OTT dicamba products prior to all applications to control volatility.
- ◆ Requiring a downwind buffer of 240 feet and 310 feet in areas where listed species are located.
- ◆ Prohibiting OTT application of dicamba on soybeans after June 30 and cotton after July 30.
- ◆ Simplifying the label and use directions so that growers can more easily determine when and how to properly apply dicamba.

This action was informed by input from state regulators, grower groups, academic researchers, pesticide manufacturers, and others. EPA reviewed substantial amounts of new information and conducted assessments based on the best available science, including making Effect Determinations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). **With this information and input, EPA has concluded that these registration actions meet Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) registration standards.** EPA believes that these new analyses address the concerns expressed in regard to EPA’s 2018 dicamba registrations in the June 2020 U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Further, EPA concluded that with the control measures now required on labels, these actions either do not affect or are not likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species.

The United States is the world’s leading soybean producer and second-leading soybean exporter and also serves as the world’s third-largest cotton producer and the leading cotton exporter. Today, there are limited cost-effective options to control herbicide-resistant weeds affecting these commodities. In 2018, approximately 41 percent of U.S. soybean acreage was planted with dicamba-tolerant (DT) seed and almost 70 percent of U.S. cotton acreage was planted with DT seed in 2019. Relative to alternative herbicide programs, postemergence dicamba may reduce weed control costs for some growers, possibly by as much as \$10 per acre, or over five percent of net operating revenue, not accounting for all measures growers will have to take to control off-field movement of dicamba. [Article provided by the U.S. EPA.](#)



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