

August 27, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

The recent Ninth Circuit Court ruling vacating the registrations of three dicamba products cast great uncertainty on the U.S. agricultural community. Never has the continued use of such a widely applied product been thrown into doubt overnight at the height of a growing season. Compounding this anxiety, many farmers place seed and input orders in late summer or early fall and are unsure if these tools will be available for the 2021 growing season, and if so, under what conditions. To grant growers as much certainty as possible, we urge EPA to quickly publish – no later than early September – a new, longer-term conditional registration for dicamba allowing over-the-top, post-emergent use on dicamba-tolerant soybeans. This registration should also be accompanied by robust applicator training; a meaningful, easy to follow label to minimize off-target risks; and be longer than two years to grant growers increased certainty as to whether the product will be available as a critical component of their integrated weed management strategies for future growing seasons.

Many growers now combat yield-robbing weeds resistant to other chemistries and in many cases have few, if any, post-emergent weed control options beyond dicamba. While we acknowledge over the top dicamba has had a complicated history the last several years, we believe many of these challenges have been significantly reduced with label improvements and greater applicator training. Additionally, not having this product available for the 2021 growing season or beyond could cost U.S. growers hundreds of millions or billions of dollars in reduced yields and increased operating costs as they scramble to find alternatives.

As the end of summer approaches, growers are beginning to make planting and agronomic input decisions for the 2021 growing season, including placing orders for seed, fertilizer and crop protection inputs. These supply chains are complex and can require preorder months in advance to ensure needed products are available. Growers working to diversify and integrate their weed management strategies, especially those facing weed resistance challenges need visibility very soon as to whether over the top dicamba will be available in 2021 and beyond. While other crop protection chemistries may potentially be less effective for some growers due to emerging weed resistance, prompt awareness as to whether over the top dicamba will be available next growing season would at least allow growers sufficient time if they need to seek out potential alternatives and make necessary investments.

We appreciate EPA's continued work regarding a new conditional registration for dicamba and urge publication of a decision that allows for over the top, post-emergent use no later than early September. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

