

Neonicotinoid Treated Seed (NTS) BMP Framework

Prior Considerations

AIB supported local research at UVM comparing neonicotinoid treated corn seeds and fungicide-only treated corn seeds for yield, pest damage, and off-target movement of neonicotinoids. This two year UVM study is currently in its first year. There is potential opportunity to fund a future additional study with objective to understand dust drift potential when planting NTS.

Steps to be taken – how to implement – who is responsible for suggested changes – how to improve adoption – what is the estimated cost

1. Mitigation of potential adverse non-target drift during planting

- a. Reduce dust during planting as a source of exposure
 - i. Regulate (with a phase out period and education campaign) the use of talc and graphite as seed lubricant with neonic treated seed
 1. Possible example wording:
 - a. “When using a seed flow lubricant for planting corn and soybean seed treated with neonicotinoid insecticides (containing the active ingredients clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam):
 - i. Use a dust-reducing fluency agent (recommendations by UVM)
 - ii. Minimize or eliminate talc and graphite addition to planting operations
 - ii. Support research about effectiveness, unknown limitations, and market availability of seed lubricant alternatives to talc and graphite
- b. Reduce pollinator activity/exposure around fields being planted
 - i. Recommendation to eliminate flowering plants (pollinator attractive habitat) on border of field during planting
 - ii. Notify beekeepers on property of planting 48 hours in advance
 1. Farmer notifies beekeepers located on their property and within 2 miles 48 hours in advance of planting activities
 2. AAFM annual press release (similar to manure spreading) about corn/soy planting timing with specific notification to beekeepers
 - a. Leverage UVM Extension to create factsheet citing Corn Dust Research Consortium research about beekeeper options during this time so can be referred to in the press release
- c. Educate growers as to seed label language provisions and how to follow these instructions

2. Preservation of pest management flexibility

- a. provide mechanism for choice of insecticide treatment for growers – growers decide if they need NTS or prefer non-NTS
 - i. promote “IPM” option for seed end user (not to be included in BMPs, but facilitated by State)

1. encourage seed dealers to provide non-NTS seed in any variety/planting characteristic sold in Vermont
 - b. Support development of payment program for non-NTS crop loss
 - i. provide crop insurance/cost payments to farmers who plant non-NTS and then experience crop loss.
 - ii. require that crop loss would be due to pest pressure that would have been controlled by NTS.
 - c. Support development of seed reimbursement program that provides incentive payment for seeds purchased that are non-NTS
 - d. develop IPM guideline package for growers – cooperative approach with UVM
 - i. develop regional pest monitoring reports for corn and soybean similar to mosquito monitoring
 - ii. provide pest control recommendations from UVM
3. **Ecosystem support**
- a. encourage development of pesticide free pollinator habitat (not in BMPs but maybe part of proposal to Legislature as a way to address the problem)
 - i. leverage/promote NRCS programs
 - ii. pollinator habitat in non-ag areas
 - iii. support development of program to encourage pollinator refuges on state or private land – for managed and non-managed pollinators – seed/pesticide company support? Donation per bag of seed?
 - b. pollinator monitoring similar to mosquito monitoring (not included in BMPs) in order to determine if BMPs are making an impact on pollinator populations
4. **Training/education**
- a. Develop guidance for Vermont growers on reducing impact
 - b. develop IPM guideline package for growers – cooperative approach with UVM
 - i. provide guidance on scouting methods/threshold levels
 - ii. provide latest information on pest management through cultural practices (planting date, residue management, manure management)