

Weed control in soya bean: Strike early and hard

By Magunya Kalimashe



The soya bean area planted in South Africa continues to increase due to increased local demand. To meet this demand, producers need to deliver exceptional yields. Effective weed control is one of the essential components required to achieve this.

Over 90% of soya beans grown in South Africa contain the glyphosate-resistant gene, and glyphosate is the main weed treatment in this crop. The combination of these technologies has made weed control more economical.

Drastic rise in glyphosate prices

Glyphosate has been under a lot of pressure globally. Constraints in the production and supply of agrochemicals are currently hampering the industry. Production of raw materials, logistics, and the Covid-19 pandemic are some of the problems that have caused challenges in the agrochemicals industry, and glyphosate has been one of the hardest hit active ingredients.

These challenges have caused the international glyphosate prices to increase by over 90% year on year, making applications more expensive.

Fuel costs have also added to producers' input costs and it is impossible to get past this in spray operations. Glyphosate is a foliar-applied herbicide with limited or no soil activity, so weeds that emerge after the application will not be affected.

Follow-up applications are often required, thus increasing the input costs, including fuel. With the current fuel prices in South Africa reducing the number of herbicide follow-up applications, there are significant economic benefits for the producer.

A different management approach

Reducing the number of glyphosate applications helps avoid the overuse of the same active ingredient. We are seeing the consequences of the dependence or overuse of glyphosate for weed control over the years.

The evolution of glyphosate-resistant weeds is a challenge, causing great concern among producers and professionals in agriculture. Cases of glyphosate resistance have been reported in various crops in South Africa. Management practices are top of the list in the development of herbicide resistance in weeds.

A different management approach can play a significant role in delaying the development of herbicide resistance. For instance, research has shown that the elimination of pre-emergence herbicides resulting in the intense use of post-emergence glyphosate contributes to the high selective pressure of glyphosate-resistant weeds.

Fields should remain weed-free for a longer period when pre-emergence herbicides are applied, limiting the

number of post-emergence herbicide applications.

Diclosulam: A clean start

The benefits of including effective pre-emergence herbicides in your soya bean weed control programme are well-documented. At the start of the growing season, the weed seed bank in the soil will give weeds the head start over the crop; therefore weed control as early as possible is essential.

At Villa Crop Protection, we believe that using pre-emergence residual herbicides is the best solution. Our diclosulam-containing dry formulation herbicide, Zeona 840 WDG, gives you just that. It is a selective group code 2 herbicide with good crop-safety properties.

When you use Zeona 840 WDG in a registered programme at the correct dose, it gives the crop a competitive early season start with excellent residual control, providing long-lasting broadleaf weed control even later in the season. Grass weeds have low sensitivity to diclosulam. Compensate for this by using diclosulam in a tank mixture with graminicides such as S-metolachlor.

For more information, contact Villa Crop at 011 396 2233 or visit www.villacrop.co.za. Alternatively, speak to your chemical advisor or a Villa Crop marketing advisor in your area.