

Regulatory Update

Bollgard and Bollgard II Cotton 2005 IRM Requirements Changed by the EPA

May 11, 2005

On Monday, May 9th, the EPA approved changes to refuge requirements for Bollgard and Bollgard II cotton. These changes will allow insecticidal sprays on the 5 percent refuge in both the embedded and external 95/5 cotton refuge options for control of lepidopteron, but *only* through the pre-squaring stage of development.

These IRM changes are good news for producers and crop advisors who have been seeking options to effectively manage the increased infestations of cabbage loopers that threaten the stand in young cotton planted for refuge this year. The new IRM requirements will give cotton producers options for managing these lepidopteron populations in refuges, while continuing to maintain the effectiveness of the 5% refuge.

The timing of application of the insecticidal sprays is limited to the pre-squaring stage of development of the cotton because the plant is not considered to be a significant host for the cotton bollworm, tobacco budworm, or pink bollworm at this stage. Therefore, the application of the foliar spray will not impact these insect populations, thus managing the potential for resistance development as originally designed in the stewardship plan.

These changes by the EPA are supplemental to the 2005 Bollgard and Bollgard II Insect Resistance Management (IRM) Guide and Technology Use Guide (TUG). All other practices in these 2005 guides must be followed as indicated, including the guidelines for the 20% Sprayed Refuge option which remains unchanged.

Producers should consult their crop advisors for specific recommendations and implementation plans for their individual cotton operations.

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