

June 30, 2019 Dicamba Cut-Off Date – IFCA Statement May 7, 2019



In February 2019, IFCA staff and board leaders were part of two meetings hosted by the Illinois Department of Agriculture to discuss the management and regulation of dicamba use on soybean.

Participating in these meetings were Acting IDA Director John Sullivan, Deputy Director Warren Goetsch, the management team of the IDA Bureau of Environmental Programs, representatives from IFCA, Illinois Farm Bureau, Soybean Association, Corn Growers, UI Weed Science Extension and the registrants of dicamba products labeled for use on soybean: Bayer, BASF, Corteva and Syngenta.

As a result of those discussions, there was consensus for IDA to implement a 24(c) Special Local Needs Label to require additional protective measures regarding dicamba use, the most notable being an application cut-off date of June 30, 2019.

There has been concern raised about the late planting season and whether this cut-off date should be extended. IFCA does not support an extension of the cut-off date for the following reasons:

- 1. The reason for the cut-off date is to protect sensitive crops (orchards, specialty crops) and sensitive areas (trees, residential areas and other natural areas).** Application of these products in the summer months, as temperatures increase, can increase the volatility of even low-volatile formulations of dicamba. The fact that many specialty crops, trees and other sensitive plants have reached mature vegetation and/or reproductive stages by July poses a more pronounced risk to those plants and areas from any off-target movement of dicamba. The industry group that met in February acknowledged that the June 30 cut-off would preclude the use of dicamba on double crop soybean, but believed this decision to be appropriate given that sensitive areas, trees and specialty crops such as orchards and vineyards are also prevalent in the Southern Illinois landscape.
- 2. The possibility of late soybean planting was discussed at the IDA-Industry meetings.** However, establishing a cut-off date would still, even in a year when soybean is planted late, enable the use of dicamba in soybean in early growth stages in the majority of instances where a dicamba application is desired. Soybean planted prior to May 15 must already abide by 45 day after planting restriction for dicamba application, which in those instances will occur prior to June 30. On May 6, 2019 the UI published a Bulletin on weed management in soybean that provides guidance taking into consideration the June 30 cut-off and other label restrictions: <http://bulletin.ipm.illinois.edu/?p=4589>
- 3. The long-term use of dicamba in soybean and corn is paramount.** In supporting the cut-off date, the Illinois ag industry looked at what can be gained, vs what can be lost, in terms of herbicide needs for both soybean and corn. If complaints to IDA from both farmers and the non-farming public do not decrease in 2019, the future use of dicamba in all crops is in serious jeopardy. As explained in the UI Bulletin, there are methods available to successfully manage weeds, using dicamba as a tool, but not as the singular product choice. The impact of dicamba on trees and sensitive areas is a major concern of the non-farming public; if we cannot reduce complaints and off-target symptoms, there is a high probability that the Illinois legislature may take up the issue of dicamba use, and other pesticide uses, resulting in potential restrictions that would be far more onerous than a reasonable cut-off date for dicamba use.

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