

January 31, 2012

Insecticide on Traited Corn

Growers throughout the Corn Belt have been planting corn with insect traits for approximately 15 years. Over that time, insects have adapted to their environments and have changed. Plant breeders have kept this in mind as they develop new trait packages leading into the future. Even with these traits present in the seed, the insect needs to take a 'bite' and digest the enzymes of that trait package to die. If insecticide is present around the root zone, it has an opportunity to control rootworm larvae before feeding begins on the Bt toxin in corn roots, potentially reducing a development of resistant rootworm biotypes.

There have been numerous cases across the corn belt of traited-corn not holding up to these severe infestations. The pressure is so high that damage done from the pest restricts the yield potential in those particular fields. Before the release of insect traits in the mid 1990's, most corn growers used a soil-applied insecticide to combat this issue. As we have moved through the years and the insects have adapted, there could be a need to start soil-applying insecticides again, this time on our traited corn.

There have been university trials across the Midwest recently showing positive yields results of 9.1 bushels/acre by treating traited corn with an insecticide. With corn prices staying strong, most farmers would realize a positive return on investment for doing this practice. Soil-applied insecticides not only provide protection against rootworm, but other yield-robbing pest such as wireworms and grubs.



CRW Trait + Insecticide

CRW Trait alone

Why and When to use an insecticide on traited corn?

Not only does it consistently improve yields, but it also provides root protection so your corn stands at harvest time. Another benefit is that insecticides provide a second mode of action for resistance management. Corn on corn situations and fields with known extended-diapause issues would be good candidates to use soil-applied insecticides on traited corn. Contact your local Central Valley agronomist to see what insecticide product fits your operation.