



EIGHT TIPS TO EFFICIENTLY INTEGRATE A NEW PRODUCT INTO YOUR SPRAY PROGRAM

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Sometimes, growers are reluctant to change to new products because it takes time and effort to research each chemical, conduct trials and design an effective spray program.

However, spray programs should be reviewed regularly to remove old chemistries that may not be performing well or to add new products.

Here are eight tips growers should follow when including a new product into a spray program.

EXPERT TIPS

➔ TIP#1 Know your crops



The first thing to consider is the crops you are growing, because if the crop changes, so too should the program. Researching the most common issues and the most prevalent pests on crops at certain times of the year is a foundational step for designing a spray program.

➔ TIP#2 Know the pest and pathogens



It is essential to know the pest life cycle to determine the best timing to apply chemicals that target the right development stage.

➔ TIP#3 Know the control's mode of action



Knowing the mode of action is important for determining proper chemical rotation and mitigating chemical resistance. It also helps determine the time the chemical takes to start working, and if an additional application is necessary. Applying more chemicals too early or too late can be wasteful and ineffective.

➔ TIP#4 Know the compatibility of the products



Both physical and chemical compatibilities should be taken into consideration. There are three simple tests to determine whether products are compatible or not:

A jar test: A jar test helps identify if products are physically able to be mixed without causing unexpected separation or settling. This test also helps identify if products are performing more or less efficiently than they do when applied separately.

Phytotoxicity test: Apply the mix to the plant to check whether it will cause burns.

Efficacy test: Monitor the efficacy by tracking the order of the application. Track the consequences when products are applied before or after one another. Record if there is any interaction that prevents the product from working or if there is any adverse effect on the plant.

➔ TIP#5 Read the labels



Read products' labels carefully. Labels provide guidance on the pest life stage. Because not all chemicals work in all life stages, applying them during an incorrect life stage is a waste of time and effort. Labels also provide information about the application techniques and schedules.

➔ TIP#6 Include a new product into the program



Ultimately, once the compatibility issue is addressed and the right mode of action is selected for particular pests and life stages, new products can be added to the spray program. If you plan to sell your plants soon, the product used needs to be safe, fast-acting and have a short Restricted Entry Interval (REI). However, if you are at the beginning of the growing season, when pests are at their lowest, biopesticides and biological control methods can be easily started and maintained.

➔ TIP#7 Implement a spray rotation



Proper chemical rotation is key in reducing the chance of pest resistance and achieving successful pest control.

➔ TIP#8 Monitor



Careful monitoring over time is key to determine if a new product included in the spray program is helpful or not. Be aware that one application does not show how useful the product is. Multiple applications will be needed to see the full benefits of a product.