

Introduction to the Integrated Weed Management Revisited Symposium

Integrated weed management (IWM) is a science-based decision-making process that coordinates the use of environmental information, weed biology and ecology, and all available technologies to control weeds by the most economical means, while posing the least possible risk to people and the environment. The concept of IWM is not new but many advances have been made in recent years.

By subjecting weeds to an array of different management practices, growers and land managers have more options for controlling weeds, thereby reducing the possibility of escapes and weed adaptation to any single weed management tactic. However, grower acceptance of IWM has generally been low, largely because this approach focuses on longer-term management of the cropping system as a whole, in contrast with the short-term perspective of producers. Moreover, IWM requires a solid understanding of the ecology of the entire cropping system.

The symposium "Integrated Weed Management Revisited" was presented on February 7, 2007, at the Weed Science Society of America annual meeting in San Antonio, TX. In this symposium, scientists from universities, federal agencies, and industry examined the current status of IWM to identify the bottlenecks in this approach, and described successful examples of IWM adoption. Recent advances in research on the impact of weeds and/or weed management on other pest management tactics within an overall IPM system were discussed. In the discussion session, we also had an oppor-

tunity to have a local farmer outline how IWM fits (or does not fit) in his farming operation.

The symposium included the following six papers. Speakers shared their research findings, vision, and recommendations to stimulate further research in developing IWM systems. The need for interaction between weed scientists and scientists of other disciplines in developing long-term weed and pest management based on a holistic approach was examined. This symposium addressed the need to confront the appropriateness of weed control technologies because of the legitimate concerns over environmental quality and resource use. We hope that the following articles will provide an update in this area and will generate enthusiasm to develop a sustainable systems approach of weed management.

Acknowledgments

I thank all members of the Integrated Weed Management Committee, WSSA, for their constant support and suggestions in organizing this symposium. I thank my colleagues in Monsanto for their support.

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