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We welcome your story suggestions and comments about Thrive.
Please send them to thrive@syngenta.com or to pam.caraway@syngenta.com. For more information, visit the Syngenta U.S. website at syngenta-us.com, or call Pam Caraway at 1-336-897-4843.

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Duane McAllister, agronomy sales manager with Houff Corporation in Weyers Cave, Virginia, knows from experience that branded products usually perform better in the field than generic products do.
Photo: Ryan Donnell

THIS PAGE
Healthy corn and soybeans flourish when growers implement a multipartned, agronomically focused crop management plan.
Photo: Syngenta
We are hearing people say they feel as though the world is starting to move again as they crawl out of their homes to rediscover this post-pandemic world. These sentiments sometimes surprise those of us in agriculture because, well, we never stopped moving. Regardless of what’s going on globally, insects keep flying and crawling, diseases pressure our yields, and good land and livestock stewards implement practices that make the world a better place to live.

It’s what you do. It’s what U.S. agriculture does. Every day.

To support your efforts to provide food, fiber and fuel for the world, Thrive aims to provide information to help you think through the challenges to your goal of economic and environmental sustainability. Toward that end, in this issue we review planning for corn-on-corn production, considerations when choosing the crop protection product that provides the performance you need and updates on state involvement in national pesticide regulatory conversations. As we mark the 20th anniversary of AgriEdge®, our whole-farm management program, we look at the advantages and efficiencies digital technology delivers.

We also invite you to take a few minutes to focus on your health. You are the horsepower in the agricultural engine and the leaders for your communities. Please take care of yourselves.

Syngenta is here to help provide solutions to agronomic challenges so retailers, consultants and growers can achieve more on-farm wins.

“Regardless of what’s going on globally, insects keep flying and crawling, diseases pressure our yields, and good land and livestock stewards implement practices that make the world a better place to live.”

LISA MORICLE
Head of Fungicides and Insecticides
Product Marketing
Syngenta, North America
What’s in Store

Find out about the new Vayantis fungicide seed treatment and Acuron GT herbicide, product updates, online tools, and the #RootedinAg Contest.

PRODUCT UPDATES

Enogen Corn Boosts Feed Efficiency Gains

Beef producers can achieve a potential 5% increase in feed efficiency while also helping to improve their environmental footprint by using Enogen® corn for feed.¹ That’s the takeaway from a new life cycle assessment released by Syngenta Seeds and the University of Arkansas Resiliency Center.

Enogen helps cattle convert starch to sugars more efficiently, resulting in more readily available energy for livestock. In research studies at leading universities, Enogen has shown potential to increase feed efficiency by 5%,² which can help cattle producers improve profit potential for their operations. The assessment shows that this nutritional boost helps improve efficiency in the farming, backgrounding and feedlot operations involved in livestock production. As a result, for every 1,000 head of finishing beef cattle, producers can potentially achieve the following environmental benefits:

²|thrive 2Q 2021
Miravis Ace fungicide gives wheat growers a head start on head scab so they can produce a healthier crop with higher yield potential, like this wheat growing in Manitoba, Canada.

- Reduction of greenhouse gases equivalent to removing 35 passenger cars from the road for one year.³
- Decreased land use for growing crops to feed the animals, equivalent to 50 American football fields.³
- 6 million fewer gallons of water, enough to fill nine Olympic-size swimming pools.³
- Enough energy saved to power 22 average homes for a year.³

To put the impact of these benefits into perspective, about 15 million head of beef cattle are on feed at any given time in the U.S., and the industry processes approximately 35 million head of beef cattle each year.⁴

“The potential environmental benefits of feeding Enogen corn to finishing beef cattle could be very significant as the technology becomes more widely adopted,” says Duane Martin, head of Enogen marketing at Syngenta.

Go to enogenfeed.com for more information on Enogen corn.


Getting a Head Start on Head Scab
Wheat growers are all too familiar with the stress of managing Fusarium head blight or head scab. Narrow application windows, booked applicators and unpredictable weather delays can make it challenging to effectively protect wheat from this disease.

The key to easing that stress is extended residual control. With Miravis® Ace fungicide, growers can now treat head scab earlier — as early as 50% head emergence up to flowering¹ — and see the benefit longer.

Averaging 12 bushels per acre more yield over untreated,² Miravis Ace delivers extended residual control and superior head scab protection. Plus, trials show that Miravis Ace helps reduce the incidence of deoxynivalenol (DON), a mycotoxin that can negatively impact grain quality at harvest.

To learn more, contact your local Syngenta sales representative or visit sprayearlier.com.

1. The optimal timing for maximum yield and DON level reduction is still full-head emergence to full flowering.
**NEW PRODUCTS**

**Vayantis Fungicide Seed Treatment Receives Registration to Protect Corn From *Pythium***

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently granted federal registration to Vayantis® fungicide seed treatment. The new registration gives corn growers access to the new systemic fungicide seed treatment picarbutrazox, the most intrinsically active compound ever developed to protect corn from *Pythium* — the No. 1 seedling disease threat in corn.

With a completely new mode of action, Vayantis will be available in select areas for the 2021 growing season and is expected nationally for the 2022 planting.

To learn more about the performance expected from Vayantis, talk with your local Syngenta sales representative or visit syngentaus.com/vayantis.

**Introducing Acuron GT Post-Emergence Herbicide**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently registered Acuron® GT herbicide for post-emergence use in glyphosate-tolerant corn, subject to state approvals. Acuron GT combines the proven performance of Halex® GT herbicide with the unique active ingredient bicyclopyrone, which helps Acuron GT provide longer-lasting residual activity and enhanced post-emergence control of yield-robbing weeds. That combination of four active ingredients and three sites of action helps growers manage difficult weeds further into the season, protect yield potential and minimize the weed seed bank.

Across 16 field trials, the enhanced control and longer-lasting residual of Acuron GT resulted in more bushels per acre than any other post-emergence-plus-residual corn herbicide.* For optimum yield, Syngenta recommends using Acuron GT early post-emergence in a planned two-pass

(Above:) Young corn plants growing in this 2020 Syngenta trial in Absaraka, North Dakota, show that an effective two-pass program with Acuron GT herbicide post-emergence can help keep corn clean, which reduces the weed seed bank for next year’s crop and, ultimately, helps growers maximize yield potential.
program following preemergence applications of Lumax® EZ, Lexar® EZ, Bicep II Magnum®, Bicep Lite II Magnum® or Dual II Magnum® herbicides.
For more information, visit syngentaus.com/acurongt.

* Syngenta and external trials (HBI007A-2020US): CO, IN, KS, MI, NE, SD, TX, VA, WI, MO-1, MO-2, OH-1, OH-2, AR-2, IL-2, MN-2; 2020.

**NEWS AND EVENTS**

**Online Planning Tool Matches Soybean Herbicides to Traits**

With the 2021 planting season underway, soybean growers face the challenge of selecting herbicides that best protect their seeds’ full genetic yield potential. The online Syngenta soybean herbicide program planning tool gives growers, retailers and consultants a simple, straightforward way to find the solution.

“In recent years, new traits have come to market that provide growers even more options for rotating their herbicides to new effective sites of action,” says Pete Eure, technical product lead for Syngenta. “Our new planning tool makes choosing the right herbicide — from burndown through post-emergence — easier, regardless of the trait system.”

For more information about finding the right herbicide for your trait, view the soybean herbicide program planning tool at syngenta-us.com/herbicides/resistance-fighter#flexibility.

**Make Data-Driven Decisions With Online Fungicide Resources**

Corn growers now have a new decision-making tool for choosing the right fungicide for their operations: the Trivapro® fungicide yield calculator. With the yield calculator, growers can make data-driven decisions by comparing the yield potential of Trivapro with competitive fungicides and untreated acres.

Also, corn and soybean growers, retailers, and consultants will soon be able to explore an online hub to review data from local trials that include Miravis® Neo and Miravis Top fungicides. With this tool, visitors to the site will be able to evaluate data from local fungicide trials with a customized search by crop and state.

To calculate potential savings with Trivapro, visit notafraidtowork.com. For more information about the Syngenta fungicide portfolio, go to syngenta-us.com/crop-protection/fungicides or talk to your local Syngenta sales representative.

**Annual #RootedinAg Contest NOW Accepting Entries**

Parent, sibling, teacher or friend? Which hat does your ag mentor wear? Syngenta wants to hear your story about who most inspired you to be #RootedinAg.

Three of the stories submitted will be featured in Thrive. Each finalist also receives a mini touch-screen tablet with a case and wireless earphones. The grand prizewinner receives a $500 gift card, plus a professional photo shoot with his or her ag mentor. In addition, Syngenta will give the winner a chance to pay it forward by donating $1,000 to a local charity or civic organization of his or her choice.

Growers and other ag professionals can enter now.

**HERE’S HOW:**

• Go to syngentathrive.com/contest to review eligibility and fill out the brief #RootedinAg entry form.
• Write a paragraph or two (about 200 words) describing the person who most encouraged your agricultural aspirations, and submit a photograph that supports your written entry.

Hannah Borg, the 2020 Thrive #RootedinAg Contest winner, credits her grandmother with inspiring her love of agriculture.

The deadline for entering is June 30, 2021. Shortly after this date, a panel of judges will choose three finalists. Syngenta will then post all finalists’ entries on the Thrive website and ask visitors to vote for their favorite. These votes along with the judges’ scores will determine the grand prizewinner. Online voting ends Sept. 15, 2021, and Syngenta will announce the grand prizewinner in October.

Manufacturers of prizes are not affiliated with Sponsor and are not sponsors of this Contest. Reference herein to any trademark, proprietary product, organization or company name is intended for explicit description only and does not constitute or imply endorsement.
Keep Your Edge With AgriEdge

On the 20th anniversary of the Syngenta whole-farm management program, participating growers take stock of the time and money they saved through using AgriEdge.

(Below): Jeremy Goyings, who has been using the AgriEdge whole-farm management program for more than six years, appreciates how it allows him to check field inputs and monitor cost per acre on the Goyings’ 4,600-acre generational farm in Paulding, Ohio.

Most growers agree that the value they receive from digital technology on their farms increases each season. Just ask Gregg Johnson, who grows corn, soybeans and cotton in Louisiana. When he first saw the online mapping feature of AgriEdge® — the Syngenta whole-farm management program — nearly 20 years ago, he immediately recognized its potential and became a customer. Today, Johnson looks forward to using the mobile version of the AgriEdge app when his family runs four 12-row planters in two parishes.

“We don’t have a staff who keeps records for us,” Johnson explains. “With the mobile version of AgriEdge, I can pull up the field we’re in and enter the seed type as well as the chemicals and rates we’re using while we plant, instead of entering it into the computer later on. It’s made our operations so much easier. I can get home, connect to Wi-Fi and update our records instantly.”
After first introducing what would become AgriEdge to Southern growers in 2001, Syngenta expanded the program nationwide in 2012. That’s about the time Kentucky-based grower Gary Cecil signed on. Today, Cecil considers AgriEdge an indispensable tool for food-safety audits on his watermelon and tobacco farm.

“When I can pinpoint my cost every day and not have to dig through handwritten records, it really takes the pressure off during audits,” Cecil says. “AgriEdge keeps track of the pounds, ounces and pesticides we use and a lot more. It’s hard to put a price on the time we’ve saved over the years with this program.”

**Digital Advances**

AgriEdge has a long history of being a great tool for automating data entry, giving growers an accurate cost analysis of their inputs. But the whole-farm management solution didn’t build up its 20-year history — covering 25 million acres of farmland that 8,000 growers manage — by standing still. New features will be added soon.

Brent Lackey, head of crop protection marketing-to-settlement at Syngenta, was part of the team that originally brought AgriEdge to market. He cites a cost-sharing model as one of the most unique features that drove early adoption.

“The goal was to incorporate capabilities for sharing costs with growers to offset the risk in producing a crop,” Lackey says. “Users were able to trigger new price points and calculations in a way that incentivized them to try something new, which brought even more value to growers.”

Upgrades are underway to increase speed and adaptability, says Trevor Cook, AgriEdge lead for the western commercial unit at Syngenta.

“We’re about a year and a half into a massive rebuild that will increase speed and make the digital products of AgriEdge consistent across all platforms,” he explains.

Recognizing that data privacy is important to customers, Syngenta makes security a top priority. “We put a lot of emphasis on helping growers manage and share data how and with whom they desire. We put a lot of thought into our privacy policy, too,” Cook says. “We make sure our AgriEdge growers know they own their data.”

As with any technology, advancements are only productive when they meet customer needs. AgriEdge enhancements are chosen after listening to growers who use the system.

“Being able to move growers into the 21st century with a system that enabled them to better manage their farms was a step change,” Lackey says. “With AgriEdge, we never stop working to provide a holistic solution for growers who use the system.”

“AgriEdge keeps track of the pounds, ounces and pesticides we use and a lot more. It’s hard to put a price on the time we’ve saved over the years with this program.”

—GARY CECIL
Grower
Owensboro, Kentucky

**SOWING THE SEEDS OF INNOVATION**

At the Farm of the Future near Ottawa, Illinois, Syngenta researchers are moving seed selection into the digital realm so that grower recommendations are more accurate and personalized.

Bill McDonnell, digital solutions lead at Syngenta, is one of those researchers. He works on improving the quality and amount of data fed to seed selection algorithms so growers can ultimately reap the benefits on their individual farms. By creating small plots of land in testing fields called “range-finder blocks,” McDonnell finds ways to refine the process.

“Range-finder blocks include a wider range of seed varieties than we normally recommend to the average grower,” McDonnell explains. “We can then run heavily controlled trials to determine which varieties work best and gather the largest data set possible.”

Once McDonnell finishes a successful trial, he debriefs Justin Welch, digital product manager, U.S. Seeds Marketing, on what worked and what didn’t. Welch then proceeds to run commercial trials with local agronomists on full-size fields.

“The main premise here is delivering insights to growers,” Welch says. “Once we learn how to give the most accurate recommendations possible, we can work with growers to build next-generation R&D onto their farms.”

PHOTOS: (LEFT TO RIGHT) KAITY LLOYD, SUZANNE CECIL

Read articles online at sygentathrive.com/farmproduction.
The New Rules of Dicamba

Recent herbicide registrations spurred unusually active state responses to pesticide registrations.

Registration of over-the-top dicamba products recently spurred yearslong national debate and prompted more states to higher levels of involvement in pesticide label requirements. The result is a trend toward increased state and national conversation prior to registration of more complex regulatory approvals and increased opportunity for state-specific pesticide guidelines to recognize local needs.

With states becoming generally more involved and more actively engaged in product registrations, their perspective now will be included earlier in the process. However, this additional step could potentially slow down what is already a long, arduous process for bringing new technologies to market, says John Abbott, head of regulatory & stewardship for Syngenta, North America.

States have expressed an interest in having greater and earlier input on dicamba herbicide. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) section 24(c) has also given the states the ability to request local label changes for pesticide use.

While the EPA used to allow states to move cutoff deadlines either up or back through a 24(c), recent decisions have indicated that states should follow another process for more-restrictive uses, and the allowance for less-restrictive labels is currently under review.

“The process for providing special local needs for dicamba products appears to be changing,” says Carroll Moseley, Ph.D., head of state regulatory affairs for Syngenta, North America. For instance, he says, some cotton-growing states recently sought an extension of the application window in soybeans so the window of application in cotton and soybeans would close on the same day. The EPA turned down those recent dicamba 24(c) requests. “In the past,” Moseley notes, “24(c)s were used, in some states, to make application windows more restrictive.”

More Rules With Recent Registrations

In 2020, the EPA reissued registrations for two over-the-top dicamba products and extended the registration for Tavium® Plus VaporGrip® Technology herbicide, the Syngenta dicamba premix. These registrations are only for use on dicamba-tolerant cotton and soybeans and are scheduled to expire in 2025. Tavium, which can be used preplant, at planting and early post-emergence, provides a combination of the contact control of dicamba and the residual control of S-metolachlor. The herbicide is designed to manage key ALS-, PPO- and glyphosate-resistant grass and broadleaf weeds.

The 2020 registrations included some changes for users of the products to help mitigate the potential risk of herbicides drifting from the application site onto neighboring crops. On the previous label, the downwind buffer was 110 feet; it is now 240 feet. The downwind buffer if endangered species are present used to be 110 feet — now it’s 310 feet. An omnidirectional buffer of 57 feet remains as is.

“Products like Tavium provide growers with valuable tools to control weeds that threaten farm profitability as well as the long-term sustainability of their operations.”

—PETE EURE
Technical Product Lead
Syngenta
Other changes include national cutoff dates for its use on soybeans — June 30 — and on cotton — July 30. Stanley Culpepper, Ph.D., extension weed specialist at the University of Georgia, disagrees with those cutoff dates. “The theory that a one-size-fits-all application cutoff date will improve on-target pesticide applications is simply not supported by extension surveys or data generated in Georgia,” he says. “What this date will likely do is reduce a farmer’s ability to use the tool effectively in a sound weed management program.”

Additionally, all over-the-top soybean and cotton herbicide applications now must include a buffering agent. “It just means that we must continue to be vigilant about how we apply this product and make sure that we apply it properly,” Moseley says.

Because training is mandatory for those who apply dicamba products, Syngenta offers qualified webinars and an online dicamba applicator training module.

All trainings include the latest state-specific guidelines, says Pete Eure, technical product lead for Syngenta. “Some states have additional guidelines, including application date changes that may be different from the federal label. We have these state-specific guidelines in our live webinars as well as our online training modules.”

**Valuable Tool for Resistance**

Cost-effective options to control herbicide-resistant weeds affecting soybean and cotton crops are limited, making dicamba an important tool. In recent years, the adoption of dicamba increased dramatically. In 2018, approximately 41% of U.S. soybean acreage was planted with dicamba-tolerant (DT) seed. In cotton, DT seed commanded almost 70% of the U.S. acreage.

Jay Behn, a grower and retailer in Hampton, Iowa, relies on dicamba. “Tavium Plus VaporGrip Technology herbicide pretty much controls everything,” he says. “The stuff we’ve used in the past burnt the tops off the weeds and allowed them to come back two weeks later.” With Tavium, he doesn’t have that problem.

Eure knows dicamba is highly valuable to growers. “Palmer amaranth and waterhemp have developed resistance to other herbicides; and when these are left uncontrolled, they can cause yield loss and produce seed that will germinate and compete with next year’s crop,” he says. “It’s important that we control those weeds with tools like dicamba.”

What will continue to show the way forward for weed management and product registrations is a science-based approach — and Syngenta supports that.

“Products like Tavium provide growers with valuable tools to control weeds that threaten farm profitability as well as the long-term sustainability of their operations,” Eure says. “We want to continue to offer tools using that science-based approach so that we ensure future farm generations have clean, productive fields.”

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**FORMULATED FOR THIS VERY MOMENT.**

At hull-split timing, nothing else protects your almonds from navel orangeworm and peach twig borer like Besiege insecticide from Syngenta. By combining two powerful and complementary modes of action, it gives you fast knockdown and long-lasting residual control. Plus, it comes in a convenient premix formulation, which makes it easier to protect your crop and your bottom line. To learn more about Besiege, visit [SyngentaUS.com/Besiege](http://SyngentaUS.com/Besiege).

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Digital Evolution

Beginning with the emergence of precision agriculture in the 1980s, the ag industry has been undergoing a profound transformation as a result of digital technologies. As farms and farm equipment become increasingly connected, these technologies, along with the data they generate, are providing more and more insights that may reduce risk and increase yield potential.

1991
- The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences develops a camera drone that can be used for crop trial observations.

1992
- IBM invents the first smartphone.

1994
- Growers begin using GPS receivers in equipment.
- Engineers at the Silsoe Research Institute near London develop the picture-analysis system used to guide a small driverless tractor in vegetable and root crops.

2001
- Growers in the South have access to a new cost-share opportunity through the newly launched AgriEdge® whole-farm management program from Syngenta.

2002
- Essential record-keeping software adds and increases efficiency for growers who participate in the Syngenta AgriEdge program.

2010
- Growers gain access to Field to Market®: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture algorithms in AgriEdge software for easier environmental benchmarking, paving the way for growers to report sustainability improvements to downstream partners.
AgriEdge turns 20, and growers celebrate two decades of using the whole-farm management program to help improve their farming operations.

Growers nationwide have access to premier agronomics, service, stewardship, economics and technology as Syngenta expands AgriEdge.

Quicker scouting times and field insights aid operations when Syngenta adds a remote-imagery platform to its digital ag lineup. Syngenta also acquires Strider to expand potential for digital management solutions.

Growers can communicate field-level sustainability to the supply chain with the Cool Farm Alliance’s Cool Farm Tool’s integration into the AgriEdge software.

Syngenta acquires The Cropio Group, providing opportunities for bringing additional features and tools into the U.S. market in coming years.

The Syngenta Digital brand launches in the U.S., giving growers across the country the company’s full commitment to digital in the ag landscape.

AgriEdge turns 20, and growers celebrate two decades of using the whole-farm management program to help improve their farming operations.

Read article online at syngentathrive.com/farmproduction.
Safe Farms Aren’t Created by Accident

Two medical experts provide timely tips that can help keep growers and workers healthy and safe this season.

Q. What are some of the most typical health challenges or injuries on a farm in the spring?
A. David Merrell, M.D., occupational health physician, Syngenta: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Ag Safety Database, and the Association of American Medical Colleges, agriculture workers in combination with workers in forestry and fishing have the highest fatal injury rate at 23.4 deaths per 100,000 compared with 3.5 deaths per 100,000 for all other U.S. industries.* The most common injuries on a farm stem from machinery maintenance activities, with the most fatal injuries involving tractors overturning or running over the individual. Regardless of the type of injury or illness, one of the greatest health challenges confronting American farmers today is having access to affordable and convenient health care. This challenge results from distance to a health care provider’s office, lack of accepted medical coverage, as well as lost time and wages incurred from traveling for care. Studies show a steady decline in the number of medical offices serving rural communities. This trend leads to fewer office visits and a decline in mental health outcomes. Generally, rural communities carry higher rates of death from heart disease, cancer, unintentional injury, chronic lower respiratory disease and stroke.

A. Knesia Rose-Davison, public health program director, AgriSafe Network: In the spring, some of the most typical health challenges on a farm are injuries and illnesses that stem from working with livestock and calving. These include infectious diseases transmitted from animals to humans as well as injuries that result from needle sticks and working with large animals. Spring is also the time that growers are emptying grain bins, so maintaining respiratory health and avoiding grain bin accidents that could lead to suffocation are top priorities. Additionally, warmer weather can bring more stress to farmers as they start planting their crops, so maintaining good mental health is important.

Q. What can growers do to safeguard themselves and others against these conditions?
A. Merrell: Education and perspective are key. Knowing how to safely operate and maintain a piece of equipment is critical to one’s safety. Growers can accomplish this goal by making sure they regularly review operating and maintenance manuals and follow safety guidelines. Injuries most often occur when farm workers use machinery outside of normal operating procedures in an effort to “get a job done.” Remembering the potential cost of an injury — life, limb, lost time working — can help prevent the urge to work outside of what is considered safe and can reduce the potential for harm.

A. Rose-Davison: Growers can safeguard themselves, their workers and their families by assessing the potential risks and hazards associated with upcoming tasks and work sites prior to busier times. For example, farm owners can schedule safety talks with their workers about protocols to follow to avoid injury. A part of this is making sure all workers have ready access to the personal protective equipment they may need, such as respirators approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, eye protection, Tyvek® suits or coveralls, and gloves — all sized correctly and stored properly. To reduce stress, it’s important for growers to get enough sleep, have a healthy diet and stay safely connected to their social networks. They can expand their safety and health knowledge by visiting agrisafe.org and participating in one of our free training webinars.
Q. What role can mobile or telehealth medicine play in meeting the medical needs of today’s farm family?

A. Merrell: Routine medical examination can prevent many of the leading causes of death and disability — heart disease, cancer, unintentional injury, chronic lower respiratory disease and stroke — among rural communities. Mobile medical clinics can serve a broad rural community with regular exams and screening labs to help detect and prevent these ailments. Due to the high potential cost of visiting a physician at a faraway location, telehealth can provide a good option for triaging a medical issue to determine whether a more significant intervention is needed. Telehealth saves both time and money for those in rural communities. Limited access to the internet due to inadequate broadband service is an issue in many rural communities. Many farm groups and companies, including Syngenta, are advocating for increased government investment in this critical technology.

A. Rose-Davison: The COVID-19 pandemic created opportunity, decreased hesitancy and improved reimbursement for telehealth faster than we ever imagined. While not every medical visit is telehealth appropriate, when it is, there are obvious benefits for farm families. Telehealth decreases travel time, time lost from work and school, and lag times for diagnosis and treatment, which can improve outcomes and decrease stress. For behavioral health treatment and counseling, eliminating travel creates opportunities for more frequent follow-ups, which are key to assessing safety and behavioral changes. Video and audio telehealth improve access to medical specialists often not available to farm families in their communities. Some of these specialty fields include behavioral health, chronic disease management, post-surgical services, cancer treatment counseling and health education.

To read about what growers should include in “The Ideal Farm First-Aid Kit,” go to syngentathrive.com/community.

INTERVIEWS BY SUSAN FISHER

“For people living in rural areas, telehealth is an important technology that can connect them with doctors who aren’t in their local communities.”

—KNESHA ROSE-DAVISON
Public Health Program Director
AgriSafe Network

“Telehealth decreases travel time, time lost from work and school, and lag times for diagnosis and treatment, which can improve outcomes and decrease stress.”

—KNESHA ROSE-DAVISON
Public Health Program Director
AgriSafe Network
Growers need to evaluate product performance when selecting crop inputs.

By Darcy Maulsby

IS your farming operation more complex today than it was 10 years ago? Is it important that you stay on the leading edge of innovation to stay competitive?

“If you answered yes to both questions, whom you hitch your wagon to is crucial, especially for profitable crop production,” says Mike Twining, vice president of sales and marketing with Willard Agri-Service of Frederick, Inc., which serves farmers in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

Twining knows farmers must keep an eye on their budgets but sees the bottom line as the key indicator. Realizing a strong bottom line, he says, requires evaluating which inputs deliver the most value.

“What growers are truly purchasing is a result,” Twining says. “That’s why I’m going to go with branded products.”

Duane McAllister, agronomy sales manager with Houff Corporation in Weyers Cave, Virginia, starts conversations by listening to farmers’ concerns about weed control and other challenges. He’s not annoyed when farmers who bought generic products complain that their herbicide container cracked and leaked. He takes it in stride when frustrated farmers demand to know how to get the last 20% out of a jug where the generic product has turned to sludge.

“In my early retail years, I might have gotten defensive in these situations,” McAllister says. “Now, I use this as a teaching tool to show why we recommend branded products.”
Duane McAllister, agronomy sales manager at Houff Corporation in Weyers Cave, Virginia; Keith Sheets, grower; and Jamie Roberson, a Syngenta representative, collaborate to ensure that Sheets has the best products for his fields.
It starts with empathy. “I tell these farmers I understand their problem, because I’ve been in their shoes,” McAllister says. “I note that these are exactly the reasons why I choose Syngenta products, which are tested for specific formulations and consistent results.”

Consider the sludge in the jug, which can only be removed with elbow grease, McAllister adds. “I explain that if the Houff Corporation used generics like that, we’d never get to your field on time, because we’d be digging the product out of the jug, plus you wouldn’t get all the product you paid for. With branded products, you’re buying a solution you can count on.”

Keith Sheets gets it. “I don’t have time to learn everything about the chemistry of every product, so the Houff team is a valuable consultant for me,” says Sheets, who raises corn, soybeans and livestock near McGaheysville, Virginia.

With more than 35 years in business, Sheets still carefully analyzes spreadsheet data to determine return on investment. He values the Houff team’s expertise. “They aren’t going to sell me things I don’t need or that don’t work,” he says. “They also know my goals, with my No. 1 goal being making a profit.”

Success Takes More Than Active Ingredients
Finding out what matters to farmers is a top goal for Syngenta. “We send our chemists into the field to find out what our customers’ crop protection needs are, compared with what we think they are,” says Matthew Cottle, Ph.D., group leader for herbicide formulation development at Syngenta.

When he was a formulation chemist, Cottle was concerned about bloom (particles dispersing in solution). “When I visited with a North Carolina farmer, he said he used an induction bowl that sucked everything in, so he wasn’t worried about bloom,” Cottle says. “Nothing beats directly interacting with clients. They’ll set you straight about what they like and what we can do better.”

Sometimes growers learn the hard way what “better” really means. Cottle thinks back to a retailer meeting in Rake, Iowa, that was interrupted by an angry farmer. “The farmer had used generic products to try to make his own Flexstar® GT 3.5 herbicide, but it crystallized. Just knowing the active ingredients isn’t enough to create a successful product.”

A Strong Formulation Maximizes Efficacy
Many factors go into producing high-quality crop protection products, including:

- Correct ratios of active ingredients and other key components. “That’s where the science comes in,” Cottle says. If the formula isn’t correct, for example, the product...
While selecting the right crop protection products is a key to profitable production, so is using the right tools and techniques to apply each product. Syngenta researchers fine-tune formulations to meet these challenges. This might mean adding a nonionic surfactant to change the surface tension of a liquid so droplets don’t bounce off the plant and hit the soil.

For instance, coverage is essential when the goal is weed control. "If you're spraying small, upright, grass-like weeds, our formations will stick to the target," says Mark Ledson, Ph.D., group leader of the lead application technology group in formulation development at Syngenta. Syngenta works closely with equipment manufacturers to optimize spray nozzles’ effectiveness. "While there haven’t been a lot of new active ingredients coming along, there's a lot of research going on with nozzles," Ledson says.

Among the successes over the last 25-plus years of working with equipment manufacturers, Syngenta helped develop the Hypro GuardianAIR with a 10-degree angle for increased spray coverage. The success of the GuardianAIR spurred the creation of the 3D nozzle, whose 40-degree angle outperforms flat-fan nozzles for preemerge weed control. "Our goal is to ensure that Syngenta chemistry is applied in the most effective way to maximize efficacy, which leads to higher yield potential and profit potential for growers,” Ledson says.

Service After the Sale Drives Performance
None of this comes quickly or cheaply. The average time it takes to bring a new crop protection product to market can exceed 11 years and cost more than $265 million. Syngenta invests $1.3 billion in research and development each year, with 5,000 Syngenta scientists around the globe working on new and improved technologies.

McAllister finds field trials to be a particularly valuable test of the products, helping to ensure reliable results and crop safety. "When you explain to customers these differences between branded products and generic products, including service and support, the customers sell themselves on Syngenta products," he says.

Service after the sale impresses Adam Dexter, a certified crop specialist with West Central FS in Williamsfield, Illinois. When some local growers had an issue with a corn herbicide last year, he recalls, "Syngenta had boots on the ground here within 24 hours."

This support drives loyalty for West Central customer Grant Strom. "Price definitely factors into our choices, but service is important, too," says Strom, who raises corn, soybeans, hay and beef cattle near Dahinda, Illinois. "I really like having the assurance of performance guarantees that come along with branded products versus generics."

Strom continues to add more Syngenta products each year. In 2021, these include Bicep II Magnum® and Lexar® EZ corn herbicides, and Miravis® Neo fungicide on some corn and soybean acres. "Our salesman does an excellent job of supporting the products he sells," Strom says. "He also deals with any issues of underperformance for us."

Key for Willard Agri-Service is that the products they recommend deliver results for their customers. "As a retailer, we have to provide results," Twining says. "We’ve vetted Syngenta products against the competition, and we know they’ll work consistently for our customers. We win when our customers win."
A multipronged approach to corn rootworm management reduces risk and adds yield and quality opportunities. | By Jack Miller-Im

My plants stayed upright during last year’s wind event. I use crop rotation, insecticide treatments and a seed trait package to combat corn rootworm.”

—KYLE VAN BOGAERT, GROWER, BELMONT, WISCONSIN
lattened and lodged corn plants were strewn across the Midwest in 2020 following various wind events, including a devastating derecho in Iowa. Growers who had intense management programs, including a strong corn rootworm (CRW) offense, realized more successful outcomes than those who did not.

“My plants stayed upright during last year’s wind event,” reports Kyle Van Bogaert, a third-generation corn and soybean grower in Belmont, Wisconsin. “I use crop rotation, insecticide treatments and a seed trait package to combat corn rootworm.”

That multipronged strategy could soon become the standard. Higher-than-normal adult CRW beetle activity in 2020 points to potentially increased pressure in 2021. That’s bad news for corn growers — especially those with corn-on-corn acres — who lose more than $1 billion to CRW damage every year. CRW larvae feed on roots from Colorado to New York, reducing water and nutrient uptake and causing lodging in extreme situations. Adult beetles feed on tassels and clip corn silks, further impacting yield.

But for growers like Van Bogaert who implement multipronged, proactive CRW management plans, fields can see strengthened crops and better profit opportunities. Committing to the multiyear approach needed for management strategies to work can be challenging, but the reduction of CRW root feeding represents a tantalizing reward.

Interpreting Natural Signals
Environmental signals from the previous year will allow growers to plan for potential pressure in subsequent seasons. Wet springs, for example, can kill CRW larvae in the ground, due to saturated soils. On the other hand, dry conditions in May and June create ideal environments for populations to thrive.

With most insect populations, predicting pressure is difficult. The life cycle of CRW, however, offers opportunities to plan control measures. Depending on monitored population levels, growers can begin incorporating insecticide treatments and seed trait stacks into their ongoing planning.

“Through better understanding of the CRW life cycle, growers can anticipate potential CRW populations before they become a problem,” says Meade McDonald, Syngenta product marketing lead for insecticides. “This includes scouting for larval feeding and damage as well as monitoring adult populations.”

Growers can dig corn roots in June to check for larval feeding and damage that can provide clues to coming adult beetle numbers. In July, monitoring populations of adult CRW beetles offers an indication of CRW larval pressure for the following year, according to McDonald. Scouting reports that showed high CRW beetle populations last July are driving expectations of heavy CRW pressure this year.

Working the Bugs Out
A key strategy for CRW management is crop rotation — not planting corn in the same field two years in a row. “It’s the easiest tactic growers can add to the mix of solutions for managing this pest,” says Andy Heggenstaller, head of agronomy for Syngenta Seeds, U.S. “But for some growers, crop rotation isn’t economically feasible, so they have to rely more on alternate solutions.”

The next step for growers to consider is using seed trait stacks — such as Agrisure Duracade® trait stacks — that act against CRW larvae. However, while trait stacks provide ample protection against CRW feeding, growers should consider a multipronged approach in high-pressure fields.

“Especially in corn-on-corn fields, growers may need to deploy multiple management tactics to protect roots, stands and harvestability,” McDonald says. “Growers in these situations should consider a soil-applied insecticide application on top of their trait stack.”

Syngenta offers two Force® brand insecticides to control CRW larvae. The first — Force 6.5G — is a higher-loading granular insecticide than the former Force 3G formulation. Packaged in a 20% lighter bag, Force 6.5G has a more concentrated formulation that allows growers to cover 175% more acres per bag.
**STICKY TRAPS FOR STICKY CRW SITUATIONS**

Sticky traps allow growers and consultants to monitor adult insect populations for foliar insecticide thresholds. To better manage corn rootworm (CRW) in their fields, corn growers in northern Illinois, eastern Iowa and southern Wisconsin partner with Syngenta to place sticky traps in expected high-pressure areas.

“The project really allows us to showcase what we’re doing to control CRW populations and mitigate product resistance,” says Todd McRoberts, agronomy manager for NK Seeds. “When you have growers with no CRW in their fields in high-pressure areas, the results speak for themselves.”

By working with growers who place the traps in their fields, Syngenta learns more about how to use the traps to inform CRW management strategies. The traps also provide population checks in areas expected to have high pressure.

**Planning for 2022**

When planning for next season, the first product a grower should consider to defend their fields against CRW damage is a Syngenta Bt corn seed trait stack.

Syngenta Bt corn seed trait stacks contain modes of action that target and kill CRW larvae. Agrisure Duracade is the primary Syngenta trait stack for CRW management and contains two proteins that are specifically toxic to CRW larvae when they feed on corn plant roots.

“By combining two separate traits into a plant, Agrisure Duracade delays adaptation to a single technology,” says Todd McRoberts, agronomy manager for NK Seeds. “This preserves yield potential and helps prevent problems years down the road.”

Still, a multiyear approach is necessary for effective CRW management. In heavy-pressure situations, rotating traits every few years can provide another defense.

“Especially for growers who don’t rotate crops, rotating traits may become necessary to prevent entrenched adaptation in CRW populations,” McRoberts says. “Even some growers who do rotate crops may need this tactic in high-pressure geographies.”

Agrisure® 3122 E-Z Refuge® is an excellent alternative trait stack for corn growers using the Syngenta genetic base. It contains a different mode of action plus the Herculex® rootworm trait.

How long growers can use trait stacks depends on local pressure; but if trait rotation is needed, growers should stick to a schedule. Even in lower-pressure seasons, rotating traits can help preserve trait durability.

There is no catch-all treatment for CRW, and planning for this pest spans years instead of months. But by finding the right mix of agronomic practices, seed traits and insecticides, growers can fight back against even the heaviest CRW infestations.
Seed to Seed in as Little as 7 Weeks

Faster development of high-performing soybean varieties gives growers the choice they need to plant the right seed in each field.

By Emma Kirkpatrick

To succeed in today’s competitive market, soybean growers need access to varieties that allow them to diversify, spread risk and maximize their whole-farm return on investment potential. This means they need choice — and they need it fast.

“Choice has become very important because of the complexity of the farming operations today and the different needs each of these operations desire,” says Eric West, senior product manager for GROWMARK, Inc., in Bloomington, Illinois.

Michael Gill, director of conservation agriculture, Illinois Soybean Association, agrees. “Growers need selection when choosing a new soybean variety because they look for several factors, including yield, disease tolerance and herbicide resistance,” he says.

To address this need, a team at NK Seeds, powered by the Syngenta Seeds research and development engine, uses a proprietary soybean trait conversion system to fast-track varieties for commercial release.

“We have a really cohesive team that is nimble, hungry, and driven to collaborate and focus on what the growers’ needs are,” says Travis Kriegshauser, Syngenta soybean strategic marketing manager. “We always challenge each other to make sure everything we’re doing is in the best interest of growers’ successes.”
These rows of young soybeans in southern Wisconsin exhibit both health and vigor, which are qualities present in soybeans grown from seeds developed from the NK Seeds elite germplasm.
Condensing the Timeline
Traditionally, it takes six to seven years to develop a soybean variety and bring it to market. But at a state-of-the-art introgression facility in Clinton, Illinois, Syngenta breeders can bring new NK® soybean varieties to growers in as little as three years. The Seed to Seed in Seven Weeks concept speeds development, but at the same time does not sacrifice precision. This concept allows researchers to produce as many as seven generations of seed in one year, resulting in high-yielding germplasm, complete with an elite genetic pool that advances performance.

When a new trait is identified — for example, Enlist E3® soybeans, which offer a higher standard for weed control and yield performance — the team inserts that trait into its exclusive conventional germplasm. By using its elite conventional germplasm pool, NK is ahead of the competition because the germplasm will perform with the characteristics it was selected for: outstanding yield potential, defensive traits and agronomic strength. Researchers also can easily predict its performance, giving growers data-based confidence in the potential a new variety offers.

Tony Lorenzen, a grower in Edgar County, Illinois, started planting NK brand Enlist E3 soybeans in 2019. For him, the proof was in the performance. “Sometimes, you plant a new product, and your yield suffers — but we didn’t see that with our NK brand Enlist E3 soybeans,” Lorenzen says. “They’re just good products with good seed quality. We’ll be all Enlist E3 soybeans again in 2021.”

The Seed to Seed in Seven Weeks process is straightforward. After Syngenta introduces the trait into the germplasm, planting in company greenhouses begins. Using cutting-edge
greenhouse technology, Clinton researchers create ideal conditions to maximize the plant’s growth cycle. Three days after planting, seedlings emerge. On day seven, researchers take tissue samples and perform DNA analysis to determine whether the plant is showing the desired trait.

**Moving Beyond Day Seven**

Of course, the process of bringing seed to market doesn’t end on day seven. Researchers do additional work on the chosen varieties so that by days 20 to 23, they can perform fingerprinting and cross-pollination. The team then adapts the environment to push the plant’s reproductive life cycle and achieve the first generation of seed rapidly. Given the hardiness of the original germplasm, that first generation of seed then goes straight to the field for additional characterization and testing.

“We’ve refined and optimized a process that allows for trait introgression, population development, product evaluation, testing and launch so we can get to market as fast as — or faster than — anybody else in the industry, with a higher level of confidence that our products won’t fail when they get to our customers’ fields,” Kriegshauser says.

Because of innovative growth chambers that enable constant planting, pollinating, sampling and harvesting without fear of inclement weather, this conversion capability is used year-round and is how NK brought Enlist E3 soybeans to market faster than competitor brands.

**Making Choices, Choices, Choices**

To maximize their return on investment and remain profitable, growers may want to switch up their soybean lineup by adding new varieties from one or more of the leading trait platforms. Or maybe they need to address a specific management issue.

Cab Weaver of Adair County, Missouri, is one of those growers. “Everybody is looking for something new,” he says. “When I went with the Enlist E3 technology, it was to hopefully save some on spraying — get more bang for the buck. NK does a lot of research and development and has come up with a better product that can help us be more profitable. Growers are hearing about it because everyone wants to get more for less.”

NK also offers soybean varieties across the XtendFlex®, Roundup Ready 2 Xtend® and LibertyLink® GT27® platforms.

“NK brings a differentiated set of genetics to the marketplace to give growers choice — and growers always want choice,” Kriegshauser says.

And so do retailers like West whose primary goal is bringing customized, better-performing solutions to growers’ fields.

“The NK soybean brand has had success with our organization as well as with our customers due to the long history of proven performance in its germplasm as well as multiple trait options,” he says. “As a result, we’re able to give growers choices for what best fits their farms.”

In 2022, farmers who plant NK will have the added benefit of accessing one of the only portfolios in the industry that pairs Enlist E3® soybeans with long-proven soybean genetics exclusive to Syngenta Seeds.

“As a result, growers and retailers are going to see a step change in stability of performance,” says Travis Kriegshauser, Syngenta soybean strategic marketing manager.

In combination with high-yielding genetics, NK® soybeans with Enlist E3 technology provide tolerance to 2,4-D choline, glufosinate and glyphosate herbicides for critical protection against tough, yield-robbing weeds for big advantages in the field.

In addition, growers will have access to exclusive Enlist E3 soybeans and XtendFlex® varieties through the new Field Forged Series™ from NK Seeds, launching for the 2022 growing season. The Field Forged Series introduces a step change in innovation for NK soybeans — with varieties that pair the latest, most desired traits in Enlist E3 and XtendFlex with proven, exclusive NK genetics.

Doug Stierwalt, a grower in Champaign County, Illinois, saw the advantages Enlist E3 soybeans bring when he planted them in 2020. “We were really happy with the yields, and the emergence and stands were really good,” he says. “There’s also a good range of maturities available.”

To help growers further maximize profit potential, NK Seeds and Syngenta launched the Cropwise™ Seed Selector in 2020. This cutting-edge tool empowers NK retailers to make highly accurate, data-driven seed recommendations specific to growers’ fields and farms. Tapping into a depth of information, the Cropwise Seed Selector helps make sure every NK customer is planting the best mix of hybrids and varieties for his or her operation.
more face-to-face interactions, which create inefficiencies,” says Morris, who owns and manages Schneider Farms. He farms a total of 2,000 acres and produces grass seed, potatoes, sweet corn and peas for processing.

Morris uses apps for any number of tasks: to view satellite imagery that helps detect crop problems, look up invoices, monitor equipment operations, check fuel levels, buy inputs, transfer data, manage application rates, peruse agronomic recommendations, review sampling and scouting information, and much more.

“The apps help eliminate a ton of paperwork and trips to the office to grab files,” he says.

Morris equips each of his employees with a smartphone or tablet and trains them on those devices. The operation relies heavily on a notes app and Dropbox to maintain to-do lists, communicate and transfer data.

“I can see on the notes app when they’ve completed their work, so I don’t have to call and check up on them,” Morris says.

Kansas Farmer Adds Acres, Cuts Windshield Time

Producer Matt Moreland of South Haven, Kansas, says mobile communications have helped him reduce driving time between the different sections of Moreland Farms. With 10,000 acres of corn, cotton, soybeans and winter wheat spread over 40 miles, that’s significant.

“So much of our business is based on spreading the cost of our equipment over many acres; and the more acres we can spread those costs over, the more profitable we can be,” says Moreland, who farms with his wife and three sons. “By using mobile apps and other tools, we can manage a greater number of acres.”

He uses a multitude of apps to help his operation run smoothly, and he’s a big fan of the Syngenta AgriEdge® whole-farm management program. The program’s record-keeping platform enables him to simply and quickly access all of his farm information via mobile communications.

“I have all of my fields mapped, so at any given time, I can use my phone to see the exact acres on a field and what’s been applied to them, check planting dates, and much more,” Moreland says.

He also uses apps to monitor rainfall and irrigation, an efficiency that saves money and can reduce water usage.

“We’ve installed monitors on the center pivots, so I can use my phone to check water pressure and the speed at which each is moving,” Moreland says. “If necessary, I can change the directions they’re moving and adjust water amounts with my fingertips. I will get a text, email or call if anything goes wrong — the app gives us that immediate notification and saves us trips to the fields.”
Morris and Moreland are just two of the many ag professionals who have adopted mobile technology to work more efficiently.

“The most significant value created by mobile communications is a return on time invested,” says Tommy Jackson, an executive account lead for Syngenta Crop Protection. “Our growers have the ability to make decisions quickly because the information they need is right at their fingertips.”

To help keep its customers on the cutting edge of mobile technology, Syngenta is hard at work delivering digital tools that drive efficiency and accelerate profit potential.

“Slightly more than 50% of the traffic on our websites comes from mobile devices,” says Tom Lesser, a digital marketing lead at Syngenta. “Whenever we build or change anything on our websites, we take a mobile-first approach to design.”

Growers Benefit From On-the-Go Pest Alerts

Pest Patrol, a Syngenta tool developed to provide free and timely agronomic information for ag professionals throughout the South, is another way growers and crop consultants can get information quickly on their mobile devices.

They can sign up on the Pest Patrol website to receive text messages from university personnel and Syngenta agronomic service representatives (ASRs) from any of the 11 participating states. When specialists post crop updates, subscribers receive text messages with a Pest Patrol website link that takes them to a short recorded commentary on a timely topic.

The program sees significant annual growth. “It helps land-grant university extension specialists gain a wider audience for the information they generate and gives growers and crop consultants the in-season information they need to be more efficient,” Syngenta Marketing Communications Lead Pam Caraway says.

Dominic Reisig, Ph.D., North Carolina State University extension entomologist, is a regular contributor to Pest Patrol. “It’s one of the methods I use to get timely updates to farmers and crop consultants during the growing season,” he says. “Our extension participants tell us that this is the program they receive the most positive feedback from.”

Mississippi-based Syngenta ASR Tripp Walker started posting alerts last year when growers needed in-season updates on the status of herbicides under regulatory review.

“I use it in situations where I need to provide more information than a text message can,” says Walker, who encourages growers to sign up now for this year’s growing season. “The alerts are focused and precise and have been well-received both internally and externally.”

To view archived agronomic posts, find more information on the 2021 Pest Patrol program and sign up for alerts, go to syngentaus.com/pestpatrol.

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Ag Avengers
NK Seeds and Pearl City Elevator team up to fight corn rootworm.

The northwest corner of Illinois has some of the highest corn rootworm (CRW) pressure in the state. That puts Steve Marr, sales agronomist at Pearl City Elevator, Inc., in Warren, at ground zero in the fight to protect yields from what’s known as “the billion-dollar pest.”

“That’s not an exaggeration by any means,” Marr says of the moniker. “Last year, corn rootworm definitely took a toll on the crops. So this year, it’s a point of emphasis for growers who are trying to decide how to best control it and mitigate their losses.”

Joining Marr and area growers in that effort is Susie Heavner, sales representative for NK Seeds. While still in college, Heavner signed on as an intern with Syngenta. After graduation, she started as a developmental sales representative and then took a sales rep role, where she now serves northwestern Illinois.

“One thing I knew I wanted to provide as a service was working with retailers to help their growers better manage corn rootworm,” she says.

Since then, Heavner and Marr have been spreading the word about NK® corn and traits, including Agrisure Duracade® trait stacks. These trait stacks offer a unique protein and multiple modes of action that make them the foundation of any CRW management program. Managing below-ground pests also pays off above-ground with healthier plants, fuller leaves that allow for increased photosynthesis and maximum grain fill, and more robust stalks that stand tall.

“Nothing’s going to be a silver bullet for any kind of pest,” Heavner says. “But what I’m trying to provide to Steve is another tool in his toolbox that he can use to help his growers avoid the high cost corn rootworm can impose on their crops.”

Any growers concerned about CRW should have a multiyear management plan in place that incorporates multiple control strategies for each field, including crop rotation, CRW-traited corn hybrids, soil-applied insecticides and adult beetle management. The Syngenta “Take Control of Corn Rootworm” decision guide, available from any Syngenta representative, can help growers build an effective management plan.

Crops and Cows
For Marr and many of his growers, there’s another benefit to his partnership with Heavner: A number of his customers are dairy producers interested in dual-purpose silage and grain hybrids to be used as feed for their dairy herds, and Enogen® corn for feed — available through NK retailers — fits the bill.

“I’ve had conversations about the benefits of Enogen corn hybrids with the Agrisure Duracade trait and the potential benefits it can have from a feed standpoint,” Marr says. “It garners interest from growers pretty quickly.”
Third-generation farmer Tim Leitzinger is one of those growers. He raises corn and alfalfa, along with 150 dairy cows and a small beef herd, on 500 acres in Lafayette County, Wisconsin.

“Rootworm has been a significant problem in our corn-on-corn acres over the last several years,” he says. “Steve brought Susie to talk with us when we originally started considering Enogen corn for our silage needs, and they provided information and data that led us to believe Enogen corn hybrids with the Agrisure Duracade trait were worth planting.”

Leitzinger had tried other traited corn hybrids but was interested in the ability of Enogen with Agrisure Duracade to protect the plant from CRW feeding as well as its potential benefits to the farm’s silage. Enogen corn silage maximizes starch digestibility, and research shows an increase in sugar content even while silage is in the pit. The result can be an increase in feed efficiency of about 5%,¹ which helps cattle producers reduce feed costs and improve profit potential for their operations.

“We don’t operate extra acres, so we need to be aggressive with the acres we do have,” Leitzinger says. “Spending responsibly to maximize our own acres is definitely better than having to buy forages.”

Another aspect of the Enogen trait that’s intriguing to growers, Marr says, is that, unlike some other silage-specific hybrids, Enogen corn hybrids don’t have to be managed differently than traditional corn hybrids.² And since Enogen hybrids are offered in elite genetics, producers can take advantage of their feed efficiency benefits without sacrificing yield.

“Some feed hybrids on the market do require special treatment due to the genetics,” he says. “They inherently don’t handle stress as well; they don’t have good disease tolerance; and the roots and stalks may not be as strong. Enogen just offers more peace of mind to growers.”

In-Person Service During a Pandemic
Providing service during a pandemic presented a challenge, but Heavner found a creative opportunity in the crisis. She largely replaced field days with Tailgate Talks, smaller gatherings where attendees could socially distance by sitting on their own tailgates. The format has advantages.

“If you have a presenter talking and there are 50 people around you, the likelihood of raising your hand to ask a question is a lot lower than when you’re in a group of 10 people,” Heavner says. “So, I think Tailgate Talks may have been more effective because we had more interactive discussion.”

Heavner and Marr both prefer face-to-face meetings, but Zoom eventually came into play when it was time to report to retailers on the harvest and product performance.

“I would have liked to have done that in person; but if I had waited to meet in person in big groups, I would have been late to the game from a sales and a resource perspective,” Heavner says. Everyone hopes that the 2021 season will be a return to normalcy. But no matter what’s going on globally, Pearl City Elevator customers know their level of service will stay high.

“Steve understands that we need to maximize our production while also keeping expenses reasonable and manageable,” Leitzinger says. “He brings us information and recommendations that give us a good return on investment and meet our production needs.” STORY BY AMY CAMPBELL

². Growers must comply with specific yet simple stewardship requirements.

EDITOR’S NOTE: This article is part of a continuing series celebrating the strong partnerships that help propel agriculture forward. Find related stories online at sygentathrive.com/community.
Ripple Effect

AgriMarketing chooses Saltro fungicide seed treatment as its 2020 New Product of the Year. The ag industry ramps up its diversity and inclusion efforts.

AWARDS

AgriMarketing Names Saltro Fungicide Seed Treatment Its New Product of the Year

Saltro fungicide seed treatment is the 2020 AgriMarketing New Product of the Year. Available for commercial use following its September 2019 registration, Saltro provides stronger emergence and higher yield potential.

“Many soybean growers think they have to give up early-season plant health to get Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) protection. But with Saltro, that’s no longer true, and growers confirmed the excellent performance against SDS and soybean cyst nematode that we had seen in our trials,” says Paul Oklesh, Syngenta Seedcare product lead. “We’re very proud to be named AgriMarketing’s New Product of the Year — and it feels great knowing that we’re helping growers get better yield and a better deal.”

To learn more about Saltro and see more local trial results, visit whysaltro.com.
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Going the Distance
Increasing diversity in agriculture starts with showcasing the opportunities for students and also opens new markets for ag employers.

Diversity and inclusion programs may focus on opening doors to women and people of color, but they also ultimately drive tangible benefits and opportunities for the entire agricultural industry.

“As agriculture becomes more diverse, more companies are realizing diversity is good for the bottom line,” says Ebony Webber, chief operating officer of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS). “They see opportunities to expand into new markets and stay competitive.”

MANRRS, which has 2,050 members in 65 chapters across 38 states, promotes academic and professional advancement by empowering minorities in agricultural and related scientific careers. The organization helps members through networking and leadership-training programs. It also provides role models and networking opportunities for student members as early as the seventh grade. A growing number of companies are offering internships and full-time positions to MANRRS members.

“Once our members have the chance for hands-on experiences and realize the opportunities in agriculture, they become more engaged,” says Antomia Farrell, Ed.D., assistant dean and director for diversity, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, University of Kentucky. She is also serving as the 2020–2021 national MANRRS president and as the University of Kentucky’s MANRRS adviser.

Women are already playing a sizeable role in agriculture. Female-operated farms accounted for 38% of U.S. agriculture sales and 43% of U.S. farmland, according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture.

Joy O’Shaughnessy, chief operating officer, agribusiness, at HighQuest Partners, works with Women in Agribusiness. This group encourages its members to learn about the many career opportunities in agriculture, such as law, finance, insurance, research and more. A part of O’Shaughnessy’s role is working with ag retailers looking to transform their workplaces by hiring and retaining more female employees.

In addition to supporting groups like MANRRS and Women in Agribusiness, agricultural companies can develop their own initiatives. For example, Syngenta recently launched a four-year equity, diversity and inclusion plan. The plan focuses on building diversity and inclusion into senior-level and management teams as well as into employee recruitment, advancement and retention, says Brandon Bell, diversity and inclusion lead at Syngenta, North America.

Webber believes that working together is the key to building greater diversity and inclusion in agriculture. “I hope that as an industry we can become more proactive,” she says. “It’s going to take everyone. But this is a marathon, not a sprint.”

STORY BY LYNN GROOMS

PHOTOS: WOMEN IN AGRIBUSINESS
More than 800 attendees participated in the 2019 Women in Agribusiness Summit, an important networking event, in Minneapolis.
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