

"It's not too difficult." — Greg Stewart

exceed the 50 per cent limit for 2016 such an assessment will have to be done, he says.

DeKalb agronomist and CCA Bob Thirlwall says the process isn't as onerous as some growers may think. "We talked about that with a few growers: is it any more work than the paperwork for having an insecticide applied by airplane?" he says. "We decided it's actually less work."

For 2016 and 2017 the assessment can be done by the farmer, Denys stresses. You need to dig a minimum five holes per field and average one wireworm or two grubs per hole. Starting with the 2018 season the government will require growers in some counties to have their pest assessment done or verified by a certified crop advisor.

The time to do the scouting will be either spring or fall, since wireworms tend to go deeper into the soil in summer and come back up when it gets cooler.

Another option is to find an alternative insecticide seed treatment to use on your seed. "You'll have to decide what's the best route: try to prove need or look for a non-neonic alternative," Stewart says.

For the coming year and for those selecting the 50 per cent approach, Maizex will provide three options for the other 50 per cent of corn seed. You can buy completely untreated seed, fungicide-only, or seed treated with Fortenza, a new insecticide from Syngenta. Stewart says preliminary company data has shown it has "pretty respectable" activity on wireworm and chafer and good activity on cutworm.

Since Fortenza is not registered on soybeans, the fungicide-only route is the only seed treatment option offered for that crop.

Pride Seeds will also offer naked seed, fungicide-only or fungicide plus Fortenza corn seed for the coming year, Denys says. They're also looking at including BASF's fungicide Stamina as an add-on to the fungicide-only seed.

For soybeans, the only options for the other 50 per cent of seed will be naked seed or fungicide-only.

Growers should treat 2016 as a learning year, says Pride agronomist and CCA Ken

Currah. "We are encouraging growers to have that discussion with their agronomist. 'What acres do I need it on? What percentage can I do without?'"

He says years of data on replants caused by insect damage "pretty much tell us where the high-risk areas are."

Even if they're in a high risk area and decide to do a pest assessment to exceed the 50 per cent limit, Denys says a good approach will still be to do some strips of fungicide-only and some strips of an alternative insecticide seed treatment to better assess the value of the neonic

treatment.

For the coming year, DuPont Pioneer will be offering Cruiser 250 or Poncho 1250 for its neonic-treated corn seed option. The other 50 per cent will have to be either naked or fungicide-only, says company agronomist Aric Bos. As of today, there is no alternative insecticide option.

The story is the same on the soybean side: either naked or fungicide-only for the non-neonic portion, he says.

The same goes for DeKalb, where Thirlwall says the options for both corn and soybeans will be either neonic treated or fungicide-only. The

company has opted not to offer an alternative insecticide treatment because "we feel neonics are still the best option on the market for our Ontario pest spectrum."

One thing that could still change the seed treatment picture for this year is the Grain Farmers of Ontario lawsuit that seeks an injunction from the

regulations for the 2016 season. It will be heard next month, before the early order deadline for most companies, Denys says. If it's successful, growers may be able to operate under the old rules for one more year, he says.

Denys also stresses that seed corn growers are exempt from the regulations at this time.

Avoid fall 2,4-D on winter wheat

Controlling fleabane in winter wheat is good strategy. Using 2,4-D to do so, is not.

Independent agronomist Peter Johnson says that weed researchers in Ontario have seen a number of cases over the years where the herbicide has injured the wheat crop. At times that injury has been "very

significant."

Johnson also says the herbicide, when applied in the fall tends to make the wheat more susceptible to spring frost injury. That happened this year when the crop was frosted on May 23rd.

There are many better herbicide options, including Eragon, Infinity, Refine and Buctril M,



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