

FACT SHEET

The Value of Neonicotinoid Insecticides in North American Agriculture

Summary of Grower and Agri-Professional Perspectives from Regional Listening Sessions in the United States and Canada

Summary

In a series of facilitated regional listening sessions throughout the United States and Canada, growers and other agricultural professionals affirmed the importance of neonicotinoid insecticides to their operations and expressed deep concerns of what the loss of these tools would mean to their **business** and their rural communities. In addition to their critical role in pest management systems, neonicotinoids or “neonics” have worker exposure and environmental advantages over alternative products. Their loss would result in a reliance on older broad-spectrum chemicals, higher costs, reduced yields, more sprays and represent a serious setback to today’s effective integrated pest management (IPM) and insecticide resistance management programs.

Methodology

- A total of 78 growers, agricultural consultants and university specialists participated in one of eight regional listening sessions convened in the U.S. and Canada, covering multiple crops.
- Participants were not selected or excluded based on their use of neonicotinoids – several participants were responsible for organic production within their overall operation.
- Crop segments represented included corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, canola, rice, dry beans, peas, potatoes, citrus, tree fruits, grapes, tomatoes and other vegetables.
- The sessions were moderated by independent agricultural economists and scientists to obtain expert qualitative data, as part of a study on the value of neonicotinoids in agriculture.
- Panelists participated in half-day sessions to discuss their use of neonicotinoids and what would happen to their operation if these products were no longer available.

Key Findings

- Neonicotinoids are a critical tool in many IPM programs.
- The effectiveness of these products is amplified by their ease of use and safety profile to workers, wildlife and beneficial insects.
- A loss of neonicotinoids would have a substantial negative impact, including:
 - **Reverting to Older Chemistry** – alternatives are older, non-selective products
 - **Reduced Performance** – decreased yields and loss of product quality
 - **Higher Direct Costs** – in seed purchases, equipment, fuel, scouting and chemicals
 - **Increased Risk** – relative safety to workers, wildlife and the environment
 - **Disruption of IPM** – loss of beneficial insects and increase in secondary pests

- **Socioeconomic Effect** – many rural community economies are directly tied to agriculture
- Growers fear that emotion, not science, dominates the discussion about neonicotinoids and bees and feel the public has little knowledge of what it takes to produce a crop.
- Many growers have an excellent long-term working relationship with their local beekeepers, even when they derive no economic benefit from the hives that are placed around their fields.

Report Reference

The Value of Neonicotinoid Insecticides in North American Agriculture: Summary of Grower and Agri-Professional Perspectives from Regional Listening Sessions in the United States and Canada

This report is one in a series that will be released over the next few months as part of a comprehensive evaluation of the economic and societal benefits of neonicotinoid insecticides in North America. The research was conducted by AgInfomatics, a consulting firm of independent agricultural economists and scientists, and jointly commissioned and sponsored by Bayer CropScience, Syngenta and Valent U.S.A.

All reports will be published online beginning October 28 at: www.GrowingMatters.org.

About Growing Matters

Growing Matters is a coalition of organizations and individuals committed to scientific discourse on the stewardship, benefits and alternatives of neonicotinoid insecticides in North America. [Bayer CropScience](#), [Syngenta](#) and [Valent U.S.A. Corporation](#) are leading this coalition with support from Mitsui Chemicals Agro, Inc.

Agriculture and horticulture are key to nourishing families and communities. Feeding a growing population, enhancing the beauty of our surroundings, and sustaining a commitment to environmental protection are fundamental needs that matter. Crop protection products, both natural and synthetic, are important tools that protect plants from tough and invasive pests that can devastate crops and urban landscapes.

Go to www.GrowingMatters.org for the latest information, reports, videos and infographics on the benefits of neonicotinoid insecticides or to show your support.