

COMMERCIAL FIELD COMPARISONS USING IMAZAMOX TO ESTABLISH AND IMPROVE ALFALFA (*Medicago sativa*) STANDS. Ken Deibert, Duane Rathmann, Dennis Belcher, Mark Storr, and Paul Vassalotti, Technical Service Representatives, BASF Corporation, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709.

Alfalfa is the most commonly used forage for livestock feed in the United States. Currently, there are more than 23 million acres grown across the country to satisfy the demand for this high-energy forage. Imazamox herbicide is registered for use in seedling and established alfalfa for control of many economically important grass and broadleaf weeds. Research plots and field demonstrations were established across the Midwest to provide comparisons of alfalfa quality between imazamox herbicide treated alfalfa and untreated alfalfa. The objectives of this research were to demonstrate the effectiveness of imazamox to control important weeds in alfalfa production; compare relative feed value and crude protein between imazamox treated alfalfa and untreated alfalfa; and to evaluate the impact of forage quality on market value of alfalfa hay. Imazamox directly influenced the market value of alfalfa by increasing the quality of the hay. Conclusions were made to reflect that weed control is an essential component of alfalfa production in the interest of increasing overall forage quality.