

A WISCONSIN AGRICULTURAL FOCUS GROUP ADDRESSES GLYPHOSATE RESISTANCE. Chris M. Boerboom and Richard T. Proost, Professor and Regional Agronomist, Department of Agronomy and Nutrient and Pest Management Program, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706.

The introduction and rapid adoption of glyphosate-resistant crops in Wisconsin has provided many benefits. However, many individuals have expressed concerns about the potential of glyphosate-resistant weeds. Because this issue may affect many sectors of Wisconsin's agriculture, University of Wisconsin Extension decided to host a focus group to determine the level of concern about resistance among these sectors and determine what additional information may be needed by our agricultural industry. This focus group meeting was called the Glyphosate Resistance Roundtable.

Two representatives from each of the following sectors were invited to the Roundtable: dairy producers, corn growers, soybean growers, vegetable growers, independent consultants, pesticide dealers, extension agents, and university weed scientists. Invitations were limited to foster an open discussion. Thirteen individuals attended as Roundtable participants. The single day meeting was facilitated by an experienced community resource extension agent so that university weed scientists could participate and lessen the potential influence on the comments of the participants. A non-participating recorder kept notes. The Roundtable began with an introduction of goals and participants. This was followed by three 20 minute presentations by one out-of state university scientist and two corporate industry experts on resistance. The intent of the presentations were to provide information on the current scope of the glyphosate resistance problem, an understanding of future potential for development, and implications of resistance so that all participants were informed. The next phase assessed the level of concern by having each participant describe and rate their concern on a scale of 1 (none) to 5 (high). Following lunch, the facilitator summarized that nine of out of 13 participants were moderately concerned (rating of 4) and four participants were highly concerned (rating of 5) about glyphosate-resistant weeds. The issues and concerns were grouped into economic, education, biological, environmental, and managerial concerns. In general, participants felt grower acceptance of glyphosate technology was unprecedented and were worried about the loss of the technology due to the development of resistant weeds. The Roundtable was then asked what additional information was needed and steps that should be taken. Numerous ideas were suggested and many related to educational needs directed towards educating growers on the issue, being proactive, and developing a white paper that can be endorsed by Wisconsin's agricultural industry. Following this discussion, the speakers were invited to comment on suggestions for Wisconsin from their national perspectives. They noted numerous complexities with the topic including the rarity of resistance, how to get growers to adopt glyphosate stewardship, and the need for a consistent message. It should be noted that the speakers' participation was intentionally limited in the Roundtable so that the input from the Wisconsin participants was not inhibited. The Roundtable concluded with the participants being asked if anyone objected to exploring the ideas on glyphosate resistance management for Wisconsin. There were no objections and there were suggestions for continued education and publicity.

Roundtable participants were surveyed on their perceptions of the format of this event using a 1 (low) to 5 (high) scale. Participants rated the effectiveness of the presentations at increasing their knowledge about glyphosate resistance as a 3.6, which may indicate they were already familiar with many of the issues. Participants rated effectiveness of the Roundtable's format to allow expression of their views as a 4.2. One person commented that they liked that "industry was involved" and another felt that the presence of industry speakers at the discussion portion may have inhibited comments. Participants rated the Roundtable as a very appropriate way for Wisconsin to address the issue (4.4) and noted the grass roots approach. Participants found the Roundtable to be of value personally (4.1) and for the industry as a whole (4.4) although it was early in the total process. All the participants believed this format should be used to approach other state agricultural issues.