

TEST RESULTS IN EASTERN CHRISTMAS TREES WITH A NEW BLEND PRODUCT OF SULFOMETURON-METHYL AND HEXAZINONE. Marsha J. Martin, Susan K. Rick, Donald D. Ganske, Mick F. Holm and Ronnie G. Turner, Field Development, DuPont Crop Protection, E. I. DuPont De Nemours and Co., Wilmington, DE 19898.

A new water-dispersible, granular blend of 6.5% sulfometuron-methyl and 68.6% hexazinone (Westar™) is labeled for weed control in non-crop sites and for the control of grass and broadleaf weeds in conifers grown for forestry. In 2004, Westar™ herbicide was labeled in Oregon and Washington for weed control in Christmas tree plantings at rates of 1.25 to 1.5 pounds per acre. In 2004, six trials were initiated to test crop safety and weed control spectrum of Westar™ herbicide in Christmas trees in the Eastern US.

The six trials were located in CT, MI, NY, PA (2) and WI and included several Christmas tree species such as Fraser Fir, Blue Spruce and Douglas Fir. Rates of Westar™ herbicide tested ranged from 12 to 40 ounces of product. Application timing was targeted in the spring before bud break either preemergence or postemergence to the weeds.

Westar™ herbicide gave excellent control of several weed species including quackgrass, large crabgrass, yellow foxtail, giant foxtail, Buckhorn plantain, Broadleaf plantain, field violet, common dandelion, mouseear chickweed, and common ragweed. At rates up to 20 ounces/acre, crop response was minimal on Fraser Fir and Douglas Fir, with no crop response on Blue Spruce.

Future testing in Christmas trees will examine a ratio containing lower rates of sulfometuron-methyl relative to hexazinone.