

Despite concerns about neonic pesticides, farmers still prefer them

Neonicotinoid insecticide seed treatments, which cost extra and have come under attack on multiple fronts in the past year, might seem ripe for removal. Yet despite some aggressive cost-cutting efforts — such as planting less expensive, non-GE corn and bean seed — Matt Hughes is sticking with fully treated corn and soybeans this year.

Hughes' decision is not an unusual one, ag experts and company representatives told DTN. Despite government, academic and environmentalist criticism of neonicotinoid use, company seed offerings and replant policies continue to strongly favor them and their use is at an all-time high in the industry.

An EPA report last fall concluded that neonicotinoid insecticide seed treatments on soybeans yield little to no benefit for most Midwestern growers (although it conceded that Southern growers may find more value in them). Many northern and southeastern university entomologists have endorsed this conclusion, which they say is supported by years of field research and experience. Most recently, the EPA imposed a moratorium on any new uses of neonicotinoid products until the agency's registration review of the chemicals is complete later this year or in 2016. Through it all, environmentalists have continually called for the total removal of neonicotinoids from the market, citing pollinator health concerns.

Despite these developments, most farmers continue to opt for neonicotinoid seed treatments, generally from a mixture of sales pressure, risk aversion, and the lack of good alternatives.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Company Policies, Farmers Still Favor Neonics](#)