

'Refuge-in-a-bag' corn seed mixes may be accelerating Bt resistance in insects

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Farmers love "refuge-in-a-bag" (RIB) systems for the ease they bring to planting Bt corn, but there is mounting evidence that they could accelerate Bt resistance in certain above-ground pests.

The practice of RIB. . . has been widely adopted by seed companies. . . By mixing 5% or 10% non-Bt seed into a bag of Bt corn, companies guarantee refuge compliance among growers. . .

Now entomologists . . . are sounding the alarm that RIB may not be the simple refuge solution industry and regulators hoped for. . . .

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. . . . The 5% or 10% non-Bt refuge corn plants are supposed to provide a place for non-resistant insects to survive, thrive and mate with any Bt-resistant insects that emerge from the Bt corn hybrids.

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However, corn plants pollinate each other freely in a field. . . . The result are "refuge" corn plants that contain a mosaic of Bt toxins. Instead of supplying an ear of only non-Bt kernels, the refuge ears give the insects "a buffet [of kernels] of moderate or low-dose toxins or no dose at all"

. . . .

The end result is a recipe for allowing insects to evolve resistance to Bt. . . .

Read full, original post: [Bt Corn Raises Questions](#)