

Viewpoint: Federal court banned dicamba weedkiller at worst possible time for farmers

As a farmer whose family has raised soybeans, corn, and pumpkins for the last 50 years, I know first-hand how narrow the margin can be between a successful season and a devastating one. In 2020, the global COVID crisis and its effects on economies and supply chains had already given farmers plenty to worry about.

Then the Ninth Circuit vacated the EPA's registration of three over-the-top weed control products that use the herbicide dicamba. Now, we are waiting on the EPA to re-register dicamba-based herbicides just as farmers are trying to decide what soybean and cottonseed to purchase for next season. Taking dicamba away could hardly have come at a worse time. We need dicamba more than ever and we need it back now.

In a growing season already at risk, handcuffing our ability to control weeds will affect millions of acres nationwide and threaten the livelihood of everyone who farms them. The yield losses from this court decision could approach 50 percent for some farmers — which could mean a \$10 billion hit to the soybean industry and about \$800 million lost to the nation's cotton farmers.

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There are a lot of views on this issue, but none more close-up than mine [W]e know that not all green is created equal: The crops we grow help feed the world, power our nation's economy, and sustain our families' livelihoods. The weeds that grow alongside them have the opposite effect.

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