The impediments to using best management practices

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Q: Why do growers resist using best management practices for herbicide resistant weeds?
A: I think this has many answers, but one of the major concerns is from the crop insurance industry. Growers who insure their crops or some that are just “insurance farmers” will plant a crop and put the least amount of inputs into a crop whether they have resistant weeds or not. They know that they are getting paid on yields or income and not how well they manage resistant weeds. Therefore they have no concerns for resistance. Also there are still a small group of growers who think resistance is not on their farms. This is a small number, but there are still a few around.

Q: Do consultants make recommendations on best management practices or the one that has the easiest convenience?
A: I really think that all consultants make recommendations based on best management practices. Now there may be many choices in the best management practices and we all tend to make the most logical recommendations based on mixing ability of herbicides or the pounds of material that may be used or ones that have rotation restrictions, but best management practices are a large part of our business.

Q: Are there recommendations you make that growers are particularly resistant to?
A: We do make recommendations that growers are resistant to. Generally these recommendations require more money than they budgeted for or an extra trip across the field or a product that requires a large amount of water during application or a application that requires water or rainfall for activation. Growers do want to resist to some recommendations, but they always make the applications because they know the consequences if they do not.
Q: Where do you get your information about best management practices? Where do crop consultants get their information in general?

A: We get most of our information from other consultants in the business, from all university programs, basic manufacturers’ development trials, and our on-farm trials. We look for trends of what works and what does not. We feel very comfortable with the science that we have to make recommendations. The major problem that we have is the lack of products and the lack of products in development that we have to choose from. We are very limited in our product selection with weed resistance.