



An Open Letter to Our Farmer-Customers: Preparing for the 2018 Season

Happy New Year. Even though we're still in the early days of 2018, we're only a few short months from planting. Here at Monsanto, we're excited for the 2018 season and for growers to once again experience outstanding weed control and yield potential with the Roundup Ready® Xtend Crop System.

As we've previously communicated, the registration for XtendiMax® with VaporGrip® Technology has recently been updated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the product is now a Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP). The updated EPA label requires all applicators to complete dicamba or auxin-specific training before applying the product in 2018 and to keep and maintain specified records associated with each application. We've taken an in-depth look at the inquiries we received from customers in 2017 and are using that base of information and the EPA requirements to enhance 2018 through extensive training and resources, expanded partnerships and broad communication to the entire industry.

In 2017, the majority of growers saw tremendous results with the Roundup Ready Xtend Crop System. The weed control, performance and adoption of this technology has been outstanding, as many farmers have [reported](#).

- Soybean growers surveyed who applied XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology this past season reported **97 percent weed control satisfaction**.
- The Roundup Ready Xtend Crop System yield results from our 2017 trials showed a **5.7 Bu./A. average yield advantage versus the LibertyLink® System**.¹
- Customer demand indicates **Roundup Ready 2 Xtend soybeans account for 80 percent of our branded soybean demand**, which together with our partners and licensees, supports our estimated 40 million acres of Roundup Ready 2 Xtend soybeans planted in 2018 – nearly double the number of acres planted in 2017.

As we prepare for 2018, it is important to remember that under the new EPA RUP label, **1) XtendiMax is approved for use only by certified applicators or persons under their direct supervision, depending on state requirements** and **2) mandatory training is required for ALL applicators**.² With that in mind, we're gearing up with an even more robust communications and training program to help growers and applicators prepare for success this season.³

- This month, we're kicking off our training program in a number of states with in-person training sessions focused on compliance with the product label, application requirements, required record keeping, understanding of susceptible/sensitive crops, window of application and understanding environmental conditions such as inversions, along with other important topics. To sign up for a Monsanto training event in your area, [check out our list of events](#) and look for more events to come throughout January and in the coming months.

- In some states, training sessions began in December through partnerships between dicamba manufacturers and state associations. In Illinois, for example, we've already seen strong [feedback from growers](#) who attended trainings hosted by state industry associations, which include presentations from Monsanto and BASF. We are pleased to [hear farmers responding well](#) to these efforts, and we'll continue to participate in these events going forward.
- In a handful of states, required training must be completed through the state, such as the university extension. A list of states with this requirement are included on our [Dicamba Training](#) webpage. We'll continue to update this page with additional state information as it becomes available.

Over the past couple of months, we've also let you know about other efforts underway to help growers maximize their success in 2018. I'm happy to report:

- Based on customer requests, we will be **distributing approximately 1,000,000 spray nozzles at no cost** to grower customers ahead of the spray season
- The **technical support call center will be open by early March** and can be accessed by calling 1-844-RRXTEND; applicators and customers can have their questions answered regarding the Roundup Ready Xtend Crop System
- The **RRXTEND Spray App is in development** to help applicators create and retain application records and identify weather conditions conducive for successful application, including a tool to forecast inversion risk. We anticipate sharing it with growers and applicators ahead of the application season
- Monsanto seed and crop protection dealers are ready to provide growers with **more than 100,000 Roundup Ready® Xtend Crop System field flags** that will help them identify fields
- We're working with growers to help them take advantage of an **additional incentive up to \$6 per acre when applying XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology**, plus additional solutions, through Roundup Ready PLUS® Crop Management Solutions. Talk to your chemical retailer or visit www.growyourincentives.com to see total incentive opportunities for soybeans or cotton
- We're continuing to **add approved tank mix options including herbicides, adjuvants, micronutrients, insecticides and fungicides** to www.XtendiMaxApplicationRequirements.com to provide growers additional choice and flexibility for efficient, best management solutions

Our top priority is ensuring grower and applicator success. We know 2018 will bring more positive grower experiences, but as with any new technology, we know you will have questions as well. We are committed to addressing your questions and concerns throughout the season, and we will remain in regular communication with you in the months ahead. Look for more news and updates from us throughout 2018. We're with you every step of the way this season, and we'll continue to partner with you to make it even more successful.

Sincerely,



Robb Fraley
Chief Technology Officer

¹ Data as of November 13, 2017, based on Monsanto and University Systems Trials from 27 locations

² XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology label: RESTRICTED USE PESTICIDE For retail sale to and use only by Certified Applicators or persons under their direct supervision and only for those uses covered by the Certified Applicator's certification.

³ Check with your state for any specific requirements regarding training provider or method