

# Transforming Organic Agriculture



## Preseason – Crop Care

March 7, 2019

# Tips & Tricks: Reduce the Risk of GMO Contamination

## Mandatory:

- Get an affidavit from the seed dealer at time of purchase stating that the corn is GMO-free
- Borders of at least 30' from neighboring fields
- Perform clean-outs of all shared equipment/bins

## Best Practices:

- Test seed in advance of planting & save a seed sample from each lot
  - *if there are challenges you can always go back to the seed sample*
- Plant later than neighbors to reduce the risk of cross pollination
  - *planting in warmer soil temps will result in quicker emergence & less stress*
- Test final product, or at a minimum retain samples from each truck/bin

# Spray Drift Protection & Protocols when Spray Drift Occurs

## Pre-Season Precautionary Measures

- Place “Organic” signs field borders and entry points
- Notify neighbors – your field is organic or transitional
- Register all fields organic/transitional on National Drift Watch Registry, and order “No Spray” signs at <https://driftwatch.org/>

## Protocol for Instances of Spray Drift

- CONTACT your Account Executive
- Immediate action is required



Chemical Drift and Crop Kill in Field



Chemical Drift and Burn on Field Borders

# Organic Soybean Rescue

- Scout often, especially at an early stage
- If 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> trifoliolate phase soybeans look like pic (right), then rescue is in order immediately

## Rescue Options

- **Flaming** – Consider soybean phase and weed growth phase to get the best weed kill without causing crop damage
- **Walkers** – Get them out early! It will be expensive; however, late weed removal will be even more costly to your yield and your pocket book
  - If as pictured, expect to have your field walked twice
  - Weeds begin to blend in with the beans and are hard to completely remove



# Managing Walkers

## Hiring Process

- Review expectations prior to starting
- Make sure to be ready to Negotiate!
- Agree to a fee per acre or fee per hour
- Prior to starting, review daily start and end times and break schedule (paid or unpaid)
- Ask for references of prior customers

## Management

- Be present during the process
- Inspect fields to ensure satisfactory results
- Break up large groups of walkers into smaller sets of 7-10 to help ensure better progress
- Flag field if special requirements are needed
- Cultivate aggressively post walking

## The Earlier the Better

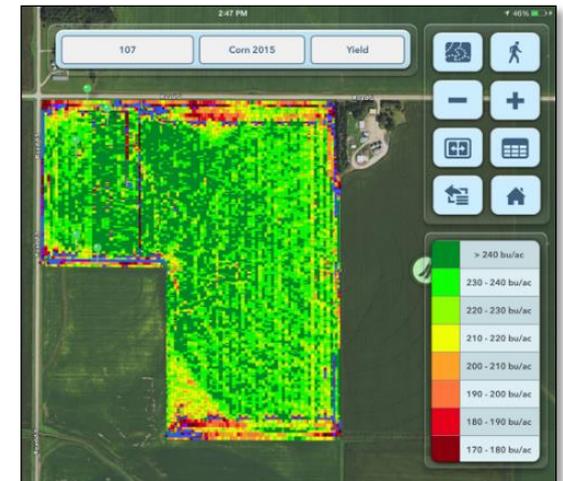
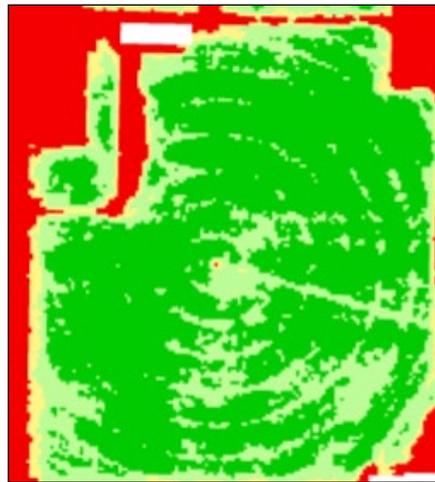
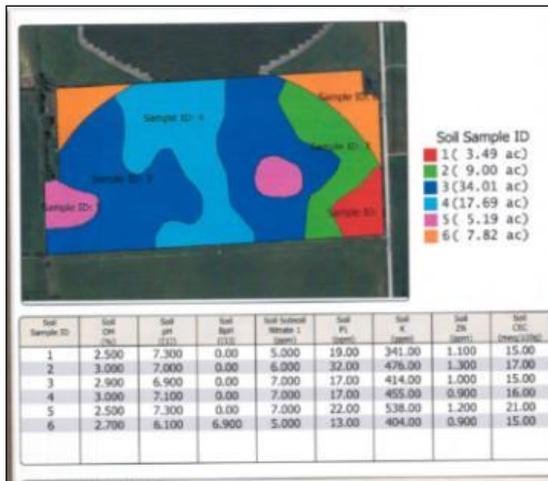
- Small sized weeds are Easiest to remove
  - Can be eliminated with hoeing
  - Cheapest removal time period
- Medium sized weeds must be pulled out
- Large weeds generally must be removed with machetes
  - If cut be sure to cut at ground level to prevent regrowth
  - Most expensive to remove



Walkers in a Bean Field

# In Season Crop Care – Things to Consider

- **Tissue Samples** - Assess deficiencies and stresses prior to visually seeing in plant
- **Understand Your Fields** – Interlay data to create next year’s plan
  - Soil maps
  - Aerial imagery (30,000’ view) – good for scouting post storms
  - Yield maps



# Cover Crops

- Develop a cover crop plan
- Some cover crops can be seeded into the canopy

## Cover crops can help

- Increase soil bacteria
- Maintain a controlled species growing on ground
- Hold nutrients in place
- Reduce weed germination
- Assist with compaction control

**MyFarm  
AgriSecure Soil Guide**



# References – Organic Inputs

## AgriSecure Organic Input Guide

- Highlights inputs by category
- An introduction to crop inputs that have been successful

**MyFarm  
Input Guide**

## Certification Watch-outs

- Check all documentation prior to use – and save all documentation
- Review OMRI and WSDA certificates
- Seek approval from certifier via the OSP, approved input list prior to use
  - Products need to be used as registered and restrictions must be followed
  - Just because it is OMRI or WSDA approved does not mean it can be used without limitation
  - Advance approval can be sought out and granted on products that do not have an OMRI or WSDA certificate, but get certifier approval first



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## Questions?

**Reach out to your Account Executive today!**