Weed Control in Newly Seeded Alfalfa with Raptor® Herbicide

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Weed control in newly seeded alfalfa is a major challenge to growers. Weeds compete directly with alfalfa for soil moisture, nutrients, light, and space. In addition, alfalfa contaminated with too many weeds may be unpalatable to livestock, less nutritious and worth less than premium alfalfa.

Weeds should be controlled early, before they begin to compete with the alfalfa. This will allow the new seedlings to establish free of interference of weeds, resulting in a thicker stand of alfalfa.

One solution for weed control in newly seeded alfalfa is to use Raptor® herbicide. Raptor controls and suppresses several broadleaf weeds and grasses that may infest newly seeded alfalfa. This includes lambsquarters, black nightshade, field pennycress, wild mustard, wild radish, London rocket, redroot pigweed, barnyardgrass, foxtail species (giant, yellow and green), and volunteer cereals. It also helps suppress tough weeds such as chickweed, shepherd's purse, and dandelion.

Raptor is applied postemergence to newly seeded alfalfa after it has two fully-expanded trifoliates and when the majority of weeds are one to three inches tall. This allows for the best weed control and crop safety.

Adding a non ionic surfactant and ammonium sulfate (AMS) to the spray mixture that includes Raptor is recommended for best control of weeds. Application rates of Raptor will vary by weed species, so it is recommended to read the label for specific details or to consult a local BASF representative for more information.

Two other important items are that Raptor is rainfast in one hour after application. Also, there is no pre-harvest interval (PHI) for Raptor in alfalfa, which allows more flexibility in managing weeds.

Timely management of weeds in newly seeded alfalfa is critical to getting the stand off to a good start. Raptor herbicide is an excellent choice to help remove weeds and help producers reach goals of maximizing alfalfa yield and quality.

Reference:

Putnam, Dan et. al. UC Studies Genetically Engineered Alfalfa to Produce Objective Information. University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Cooperative Extension. April 2004.