

Series of auxin herbicide trainings for area producers in February

By Corrie Bowen  
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The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will conduct a series of auxin trainings for producers in the Wharton County area in February. The Texas Department of Agriculture has required a special auxin-specific training in 2018 for those applying the new auxin formulations of dicamba. The auxin training is required for all applicators including licensed applicators and unlicensed applicators who spray Engenia, Fexapan, or Extendimax under a licensed applicator.

Why is this training important? In response to an elevated number of off-target movement claims in many states in 2017, this training has been mandated by the EPA for application of newly formulated dicamba products. XtendFlex® cotton acreage in 2017 accounted for 65% of all cotton planted in Texas, and that number is expected to increase for 2018. It is important to understand the potential impacts these products can have on sensitive and susceptible plants. It is extremely important to understand the factors that can cause off-target movement and how to effectively manage it. EPA has set an expiration date for these labels of December 2018. Renewal of these labels will depend on the success demonstrated in 2018. As a weed management tool, the loss of this technology would be detrimental to cotton growers in Texas.

The training is not required for those using range and pasture dicamba products. The Auxin Specific Herbicide training is an annual training, so licensed applicators and unlicensed operators will need to complete the training again next year, in 2019. Auxin training is not required to purchase seed or chemistry, it is only required prior to applying Engenia, Xtendimax or Fexapan herbicides.

Dates, times and locations for the trainings, which all share the same curriculum are:

- Thursday - February 15, 2018 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. , Wharton County Extension Office
- Thursday - February 22, 2018 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. , Wharton County Extension Office
- Thursday - March 1, 2018 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. , Wharton County Extension Office

Each program will be one hour and will provide one Texas Department of Agriculture laws and regulations continuing education unit (CEU) and will meet the annual Auxin training requirement for 2018. An applicator or operator must attend only one of the three available trainings. The Wharton County Extension Office reached 220 pesticide applicators in the past month with the required Auxin training, however, there will be more cotton and soybean producers who will need to complete this annual training. Therefore, I'm providing these three trainings on Thursday mornings through March 1<sup>st</sup>. The Wharton County Extension Office will continue to provide these trainings through the growing season as needed. The Wharton County Extension Office is located at 315 E. Milam, Suite 112, Wharton, Texas 77488. For any questions regarding the Auxin trainings, contact Corrie Bowen at 979-532-3310.

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