

# Pigweed's Newest Enemy

By: Mackenzie Gregory

**W**ith a limited number of grain sorghum weed protection products on the market, growers are constantly looking for new ways to keep weeds out of their fields. One product recently labeled for use by Kansas and Nebraska growers is Lumax®. With the combined efforts of three herbicides – Atrazine, Dual MAGNUM®, and mesotrione – Lumax® offers outstanding weed control to many farmers.

## Fighting Resistance

Dave Regehr, a Kansas State Extension Weed Specialist, said a product like Lumax® became much needed when many pigweeds and velvetleaf weeds became resistant to products such as Atrazine and Dual MAGNUM® when the products were used by themselves. “Over time, many pigweeds have become resistant through selection,” he explained. “Some herbicides were simply not strong enough on pigweed by themselves.” He said this resistance was a driving force behind the development of Lumax®.

Kelly Miller is a grower from Ellinwood, Kansas, and is excited to see Lumax® on the market. “I’m happy we can finally use it on milo,” he said. “It’s a nice option as far as the limited products that are available for sorghum growers go. I’m glad

there’s at least something we can use that’s different from the typical Atrazine and dual-type applications. It’s been keeping our fields clean.”

## Pay Attention to this Technique

Regehr explained that professionals recommend applying half of the Lumax® dose 10 days to two weeks before planting and the second half of the dose immediately after planting, before sorghum begins emerging through the soil. Once the

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first dose of Lumax® has been put on the soil, it does not need to be tilled into the ground. Instead, it needs to stay on the soil surface to be soaked in by rain.

After using the product according to the split application recommendation, Regehr has received what he says has been excellent weed control. His neighbor, on the other hand, applied Lumax® using a different method and did not see success. “I had a neighbor this year in Kansas who put all his

Lumax® down in a single dose before planting, and his intent was to plant within 10 days. We had quite a bit of rain, though, and he got delayed. It was four or five weeks before he got to plant. Under those conditions, Lumax® did not control all his pigweed. He got weed control, but his timing was not what he was looking for.”

Jeff Filingier is a sorghum grower from Cuba, Kansas, and he agrees that using Lumax® by split application, as he did during the 2007 season, provides better results than applying it all in one dose. “The split application a year ago was kind of an accident, actually,” he explained. “I didn’t get enough on the first application so I went back and put the rest on with split application. I ended up being very, very pleased. That was in a low disturbance, no-till situation.”



Lumax has helped some Kansas and Nebraska growers achieve cleaner fields of sorghum.

This year, however, Filinger applied all of the herbicide before planting and received different results. "This time, I did not get good weed control. Not only was 100 percent of the product applied before planting, but there was also a higher disturbance at planting time. It still worked fairly well, but weed control was not as complete as the year before. I feel my crop definitely would have benefited from the split application."

### Worth Every Penny...

Filinger mentioned that the price of Lumax® is higher than other products, but this has not stopped him from using it. "Lumax® is a little more costly than some of the older things we've been using, but the older things were not doing the job we needed. When that's happening, I'm willing to try anything new that comes along."

Donald Bloss farms sorghum in Pawnee City, Nebraska. After hearing about the benefits of Lumax® and knowing it was finally labeled in his state, he had every intention of applying it to his crop this year. Unfortunately, Lumax® suppliers had


not delivered any of the product to suppliers near him. "I was sure wanting to try it," he said. "I still want to. I am going to make sure I have some ordered for next time." Bloss also

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mentioned he does not know of any farmers in his area who got to use Lumax® this season because of supply issues. But Nebraska growers may explore its use next season.

### ...Because it Works

Regehr believes the bottom line concerning Lumax® is that despite the fact farmers may pay a bit extra out of their pocket, the product works if used correctly. "Yes, two trips with a sprayer may have to be made, and I know prices of sorghum are low right now. People will be pinching pennies as much as possible this spring, but the product works." 🌾




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