

# Review chemical labels to improve product performance

## 5 key areas can help you better understand your products

By Todd Burkdoll

Product labels aren't the type of reading material you can snuggle up with, but they're also not the kind you can ignore or just skim through before filing away.

Labels deserve routine attention beyond the one-time, quick read after purchase. However, it can be common practice to follow use recommendations from colleagues and distributors without analyzing the important details explained on the product's label. But

taking time to carefully read the label can save money, prevent injury and help grow better plants by ensuring product performance.

Most people using fungicides, herbicides and insecticides only ask themselves, "What product do I need to control the weed, insect or disease and what rate do I apply?" Rate information is essential, but labels provide a technical breakdown and need-to-know information prior to application. Here are five information hot spots to read on a label.

## 5 key areas to read

### 1. Mix mindfully.

The tank-mixing section of a label lays out exactly how to combine a product with other additives. Glazing over these guidelines can create an unusable compound, clog application equipment and reduce efficacy.

The basic rule of thumb — mix dry materials first, then add liquids — may not ring true for all products. One must be mindful of variances between generic and patented formulas and know that even though an active ingredient may be the same, its formula could require a different mixing order. So don't rely on old standards. Get up to speed on the label's specifics before adding each product to the tank.

### 2. Follow special statements.

Special statements on a label clearly communicate how to use a product for particular conditions. In uncontrolled climates, weather is an important variable to consider.

Be sure to make note of the rain fast or drying



Even though active ingredients may be the same, formulations vary among products. Make sure you know who formulated your post-patent product.

Active ingredients vary, even among Group Numbers. When prime weather conditions cause high pest pressure, use the highest labeled rate to control the maximum percentage of the pest population.

Be a steward of good chemistry and the environment by reading and following labels.

To minimize pesticide resistance, rotate chemistries by Group Numbers.

This number is important to know if reporting use concerns or spills.

Educate applicators and handlers about protective gear, restricted entry intervals and other safety hazards.