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Bacillus Thuringiensis (BT) Corn in Maine: Maine Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) Factsheet

Maine Board of Pesticides Control

Maine Department of Agriculture

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Maine Board of Pesticides Control (BPC) Factsheet

BACILLUS THURINGIENSIS (BT) CORN IN MAINE

(revised May 2012)

***Bt* Corn Growers—BPC Regulation Chapter 41, Section 5**

To plant *Bt* corn, growers must attend a BPC-approved training session and possess a valid *Certificate to Use Bt Corn*. The training certificate expires on December 31 of the third year after it is issued. Requirements include record keeping, buffer zones near non-*Bt* corn, and licensing for seed dealers.

Record Keeping

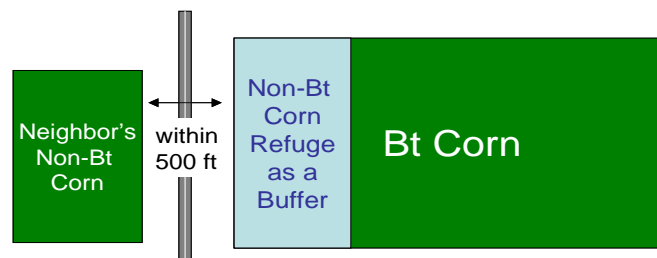
The following records must be kept for two years from the date of planting:

- Site and planting information, including town and field location, a map showing crop location, and refuge configuration in relation to adjacent crops within 500 feet that may be susceptible to cross-pollination
- Total acres planted with *Bt* corn and total acres planted as refuge, as well as seeding rates for both
- Pesticide records for any refuge treatment and planting information for each distinct site including date/time of planting and brand name of *Bt* corn

These records shall be kept on the farm and be available for BPC inspectors upon request; the records may be declared confidential. There are no reporting requirements for growers. A sample *Bt Corn Records Log Sheet* is available at www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/library/, or from the BPC office.

Buffer Zones for Non-*Bt* Corn

If you are planting a product that requires a separate refuge, e.g., *Bt* field corn, and are notified by a neighbor who will be planting non-*Bt* corn within 500 feet of your fields, unless otherwise agreed upon, *Bt*-corn growers must plant any refuge in a manner that minimizes the potential for pollen drift to the non-*Bt* corn (*see diagram below*).



The current rule requires that a 300-foot non-*Bt*-corn buffer be maintained if a grower requests a buffer and no refuge is required on the *Bt*-corn product label, e.g., *Bt* sweet corn. A BPC policy adopted in February 2012 requires the same buffer for “refuge-in-the-bag” (blended refuge) products.

Bt Corn Seed Dealers

Bt-corn dealers must have a pesticide dealer's license to sell *Bt*-corn varieties. They must tell the BPC of their intent to distribute *Bt*-corn varieties **and** let the BPC know when they stop selling *Bt* corn.

Bt-corn dealers must keep sales records, showing a list of the names and addresses of all purchasers, for two years. These records must be available to BPC inspectors at reasonable times; the records may be declared confidential.

Labels and Insect Resistance Management Guides for *Bt* Corn

The *Bt*-corn labels and Insect Resistance Management (IRM) guides explain what a refuge is, why it is important, and how to do it. What may not be obvious is that **if** resistance occurs, the use of the product and all other products with the same gene makeup may be taken away by EPA.

Components of a separate refuge are:

- Size (usually 20% of the total corn planted needs to be refuge),
- Proximity to *Bt* corn (within, adjacent, or within ½ mile—¼ mile preferred),
- Shape (4 to 12 rows, block, etc.),
- Label-allowed corn varieties (maturing at the same time, etc.),
- Allowed insecticide use (non-*Bt* based, only when an economic threshold is reached), and
- Land use (it makes a difference if you are in continuous corn or in rotation).

Refuge-in-the-bag is much simpler—no separate refuge is required. In addition to BPC inspectors, the companies selling these products will be visiting to assure that the IRM is ongoing and that their grower agreements are working.

For More Information

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