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What Does the Label Say?

While the growing season is spent looking at the various practices or products we tried over the last year, winter is often when we pause long enough to evaluate them. As you do, I would offer one (admittedly broad...) encouragement: read the label.

If your last trek across an armyworm damaged brome stand has you evaluating reseeding or weed control or both, knowing what's on the seed label (germination percentage) and herbicide label (planting restrictions) will be an important part of how the stand performs moving forward. Doing everything right on the seeding side can be quickly negated by applying a herbicide detrimental to seed establishment. Make sure you understand herbicide label requirements – or visit with someone who does – as you formulate a plan. For brome reseeding, this article is a good first reference: <https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article/herbicides-for-cool-season-hayfields-and-pastures-damaged-by-fall-armyworms-661-3>.

Maybe you're evaluating products you tried on your own farm or that you've heard/read about. Product labels can be confusing – if you can find them at all. Not all products are regulated similarly. Some require stringent labeling and others no label at all meaning consistency isn't always guaranteed and products might be difficult to compare. If evaluating claims, read the label closely. I heard a claim this winter about a product *replacing* a standard seed treatment when it actually included a standard seed treatment *in* it. Why is that important? For starters, there may be less need for additional seed treatment if it's already included. Second, when evaluating performance, it's good to know what might be helping carry the load.

New crop protection product? Not only might active ingredients change but application requirements might as well. If the active ingredient is one with known resistance issues, having it in the product might be less important. Further, as crop protection products (herbicides, fungicides, insecticides...) come due for reregistration, labels are changing to meet requirements originating from enforcement of the Endangered Species Act. They may not mean *huge* changes for you but could at the very least mean changes to recordkeeping requirements.

Need help finding a label or taking a second look? Your retailer will often have label information at their fingertips and there are websites with searchable product labels available as well, not to mention references like the *2026 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide*. I'm always happy to take a second look at them as well.