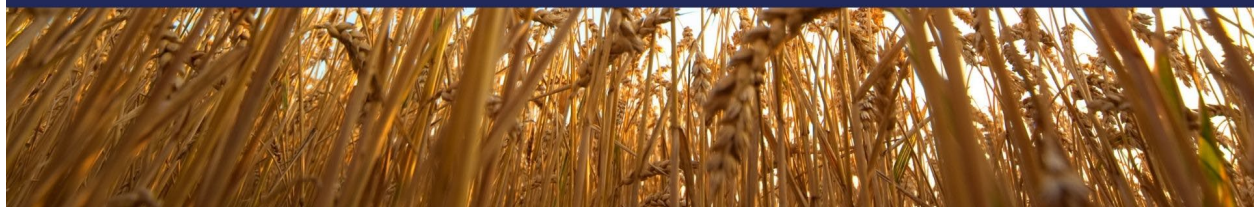




Heads Up: Wheat in DC: A bi-monthly column from NAWG CEO Sam Kieffer



One Set of Rules – and Facts – Matter

In a few days, the Supreme Court will hear *Monsanto v. Durnell*, a case that has drawn significant attention across agriculture. At its core, the question is straightforward: does the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) preempt a state-level ‘failure-to-warn’ claim that directly contradicts the scientific findings of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency?

That’s a legal question about consistency, whether farmers and manufacturers can rely on a single, national standard set by EPA. But some provocateurs have tried to frame the case as something else entirely, suggesting it’s about broad legal immunity for chemical manufacturers. It’s not. The case is about whether an individual state can add requirements after the science-based EPA regulatory process has set the rules and regulations.

For farmers, this case is about clarity, predictability, and the ability to follow the law with confidence.

NAWG has long supported a single, science-based, national framework for pesticide regulation. Farmers depend on clear, consistent, and science-based rules. Labels are not suggestions – they are the law. When growers apply crop protection tools, they are required to follow the EPA-approved label. A patchwork quilt of conflicting state standards would

create confusion, increase risk, and make it harder – not easier – to ensure safe and responsible use.

This conversation also underscores the importance of getting the facts right. Firebrands and self-proclaimed experts who likely haven't attended a pesticide education course or read an EPA label are painting the picture that farmers are dousing wheat with glyphosate to desiccate the crop for harvest. This simply isn't accurate.

Glyphosate is not labeled as a desiccant for wheat, and farmers are required by federal law to follow label directions. More broadly, the suggestion that growers would unnecessarily apply a product doesn't reflect the economic reality of farming today. With tight margins and rising costs, every expense on the farm is carefully considered. Applying a product without a clear agronomic or economic benefit simply doesn't make sense and farmers don't have money to waste.

The facts? Market data shows that 97% of glyphosate in wheat crops is used as a pre-plant herbicide, while only 3% is used post planting. When used post-planting, it's typically used to control errant weeds that would impact harvest and grain quality; and when the wheat is past the hard dough stage with less than 30% moisture. When present, green weeds clog or break equipment designed for harvesting dry grain. Again, this happens on fewer than 3% of all planted wheat acres.

Wheat growers take pride in growing safe, nutritious, high-quality grain. Crop protection tools, including glyphosate, are used carefully and judiciously as part of an overall system that prioritizes safety, efficiency, and stewardship. These products are among the most studied in the world and are reviewed extensively by regulatory agencies in dozens of countries.

As the Supreme Court considers this case, it's important to keep the focus where it belongs: on maintaining a consistent, science-based regulatory system that works for farmers and consumers alike. Undermining that system through conflicting standards risks creating uncertainty at a time when the farm economy is already under pressure. And inaccurately portraying the way farmers employ agricultural practices is more than unfortunate.

NAWG will continue to advocate for policies that support clarity, consistency, and confidence in American agriculture. And we will continue to engage in conversations – especially when they're difficult – to ensure that decisions are grounded in facts, not assumptions.