



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Neonicotinoids Benefit Cotton Grower's Crop and Community**

*A cotton grower bases his integrated pest management (IPM) program on neonicotinoids to manage early season pests and protect beneficial insects, ensuring a viable business with economic benefits to his community*

(October 28, 2014) – Cotton grower John Lindamood's family has been farming some of the same land in Tennessee for more than 75 years, so he fully appreciates what it takes to bring a successful crop to harvest. Cotton may not be the largest crop in the United States, but it is one of the most complex to grow, requiring careful management and specialized know-how. Like many cotton farmers, Lindamood considers neonicotinoid insecticides as fundamental tools in his production system. He also knows that his business is important to the economic health of his rural community.

Effective insect management is essential in producing a successful cotton crop. Neonic seed treatments or foliar sprays are used for early-season control of wireworms, thrips and plant bugs. Other chemical sprays are rotated to manage potential insect resistance. Starting with neonicotinoids is important because of their selective control of destructive pests and preservation of beneficial insects, which are needed to keep other pests in check.

The early use of neonicotinoids allows for less frequent spraying and helps increase the health and vigor of the plants, which translates to lower seeding rates, less costs and higher yields. Neonicotinoids are more effective during early emergence compared to the alternatives. Use of the limited number of currently registered alternative insecticides would add significant insect pressure on seedlings and result in more foliar sprays later in the season. Lindamood expressed fears that an overreliance on older chemicals also would lead to increased worker exposure and spray drift concerns.

Losing neonicotinoids would severely disrupt Lindamood's integrated pest management (IPM) program and negatively impact his yield and income, creating a ripple effect beyond his own business operations. The loss of these products "could very well provide the tipping point for a shift away from cotton production and into other crops," he said. "The economic impact of this shift would be dramatic and irreversible."

Cotton's specialization helps provide more of an economic boost to rural communities than almost any other crop. Lindamood's business provides full-time employment to 18 people and employs 20 more on a seasonal basis. His cotton gin is one of the largest taxed facilities in his community and its closure would impact local funding of roads, schools and other services. Beyond Lindamood's operations, cotton production has helped positively impact local land values, specialty equipment sales, auto dealerships, banking, and insurance industries, making it a primary economic driver.

## Report Reference

### ***The Value of Neonicotinoid Insecticides in North American Agriculture: A Case Study of Neonicotinoid Use in Mid-South Cotton***

*This report is one in a series that will be released over the next few months as part of a comprehensive evaluation of the economic and societal benefits of neonicotinoid insecticides in North America. The research was conducted by AgInfomatics, a consulting firm of independent agricultural economists and scientists, and jointly commissioned and sponsored by Bayer CropScience, Syngenta and Valent U.S.A.*

All reports will be published online beginning October 28 at: [www.GrowingMatters.org](http://www.GrowingMatters.org).

## **About Growing Matters**

Growing Matters is a coalition of organizations and individuals committed to scientific discourse on the stewardship, benefits and alternatives of neonicotinoid insecticides in North America. [Bayer CropScience](http://www.BayerCropScience.com), [Syngenta](http://www.Syngenta.com) and [Valent U.S.A. Corporation](http://www.ValentUSA.com) are leading this coalition with support from Mitsui Chemicals Agro, Inc.

Agriculture and horticulture are key to nourishing families and communities. Feeding a growing population, enhancing the beauty of our surroundings, and sustaining a commitment to environmental protection are fundamental needs that matter. Crop protection products, both natural and synthetic, are important tools that protect plants from tough and invasive pests that can devastate crops and urban landscapes.

Go to [www.GrowingMatters.org](http://www.GrowingMatters.org) for the latest information, reports, videos and infographics on the benefits of neonicotinoid insecticides or to show your support.