

# Area Crop Report 11/4 – 11/8

## Weed Control Options Broaden Going into 2025

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved a new glufosinate-based herbicide for post-emergence control of broadleaf and grass weeds in glufosinate resistant soybeans, cotton, corn, and canola. The trade name Liberty Ultra, BASF trademarked and Glu-L Technology, has received U.S. EPA registration and is now approved for use, subject to state approvals. It contains the active ingredient glufosinate-P-ammonium, also referred to as L-glufosinate ammonium, which is where Glu-L technology comes from. This patented synthesis process refines the glufosinate-ammonium active ingredient to its most herbicidally active component, meaning higher efficiency, lower usage rates, and better weed control on tough species such as the Amaranthaceae (palmer, water hemp, redroot pigweed) and Asteraceae families (common and giant ragweed).

## New Financial Relief Possibly Coming from Congress?

As we wait, albeit hopeful, for a new farm bill rather than another extension, the Farm Assistance and Revenue Mitigation (FARM) Act has been introduced to Congress with the hope of helping offset financial pressure faced by today's farmers. While I am far from a congressman, the way the new FARM Act has been understood is that all crops are eligible for payments, however, they are calculated in different ways. The following eight crops: corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, rice, sorghum, oats, and barley, all use the same calculated formula while all other crops not listed use a comparable estimate of gross return. Previous programs such as Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) look at base acres, whereas the new act goes off what you planted for 2024.

“If you planted 1,000 acres of corn in 2024 and 1,000 acres of soybeans, you're going to be paid based on 1,000 acres of corn and 1,000 acres of soybeans. Plus, you're going to then be eligible for an additional 50% of the acres that were prevented from being planted” – Farm CPA Paul Neiffer

The following is how calculations would be made: (USDA's Projected Cost of the Crop – National Projected Returns) x Eligible Acres x 60% = Total Payment. There is a current per person per entity limitation of \$175,000. Per entity are the key words here, as if you're an LLC or corporation with partnerships you are considered one “entity” and therefore can receive no more than the limitation. However, if you have a general partnership and have four equal general partnerships, your limit would now be \$700,000. Clear as mud, right? The act also doesn't change the current definition of equipment gain, which has been a hurdle for farmers and in some ways roadblocks. This means that most farmers end up not actually qualifying as a “farmer” because they can't include any of their equipment gains from trading in farm equipment. It is understood that the USDA does not plan on changing this definition.

## Is Limestone the Secret (or Heavily Overlooked) Solution to Greater Yields?

If you've read previous reports, you know I talk a lot about Return on Investment and looking heavily at how to achieve that goal. Ag lime, in more cases than not, can be the limiting factor within your operation hindering ROI; compared to most other inputs, it is relatively cheap (nothing is “cheap” nowadays) meaning calcium carbonate may have the ability to bring a multiyear, cost-effective benefit. Benefits such as higher yields, greater microbial activity, more efficient fertilization breakdown i.e. better soil fertility, higher water uptake in plants, and more persistent herbicide activity as weed control will be lower, or in some cases, non-existent in low to very low pH environments. It is important when looking at applying ag lime to know the ECCE (Effective Calcium Carbonate Equivalent) percentage and buffer pH to be able to adjust lab recommendations based off the numbers given. Most labs will use 90% ECCE for their recommendation as a reference.

*“All we can know is that we know nothing. And that's the height of human wisdom”*

**Leo Tolstoy**