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Pioneer releases 62 new corn hybrids for 2006 planting - Eleven hybrids contain newly approved Herculex XTRA or Herculex RW insect protection technology

Des Moines, Iowa
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Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. announces the recent release of 62 new Pioneer® brand corn hybrids, available to growers across North America for the 2006 planting season. This includes nine new genetic families with 34 hybrids containing technology from the Herculex® family of insect protection traits, including hybrids with Herculex XTRA or Herculex RW Rootworm protection for transgenic corn rootworm control, and new hybrids containing the Roundup Ready® Corn 2 trait.

"Growers will have access to a broad range of technology and a number of new products containing unique, proprietary genetics available only from Pioneer this growing season," says Bob Heimbaugh, North American director of corn product management for Pioneer. "We anticipate more than 75 percent of acres planted to Pioneer corn hybrids in 2006 will contain products on the market for three years or less. We have continued to introduce these new hybrids to help meet the growing demand for innovative technology."

Additional corn hybrid advancements of 2006 products will be made as further product and yield data is analyzed.

The Herculex family offers three insect protection options for growers. Twenty-three new hybrids will contain the Herculex I trait for above-ground insect protection. Eleven new hybrids will contain the Herculex RW gene for transgenic corn rootworm control; this includes five new Pioneer hybrids containing the Herculex RW rootworm protection trait alone and six hybrids containing Herculex XTRA insect protection, which is a combination of the Herculex I and Herculex RW traits stacked together.

The Herculex I gene protects the corn plant against European and southwestern corn borer, western bean cutworm, black cutworm, fall armyworm, corn earworm, sugarcane borer, southern cornstalk borer and lesser cornstalk borer, while the Herculex RW trait protects against western, northern and Mexican corn rootworms. And since Herculex XTRA contains both, it guards against a broader range of above- and below-ground insects in corn than any other in-seed product on the market.

"Herculex RW utilizes two proteins instead of one to consistently control more than 90% of rootworm larvae, which in turn reduces the number of emerging adult rootworm beetles," says Paula Davis, senior marketing manager for insect and disease control traits at Pioneer. "This superior rootworm control helps reduce the risk of lodging and maximizes the yield potential of Pioneer genetics."

In 2005, hybrids with Herculex RW and Herculex XTRA were tested by Pioneer for yield and efficacy against larval corn rootworm feeding. In normal growing conditions, the effectiveness of Herculex RW in controlling feeding was equal to that of insecticides.

"Average grain yield of hybrids containing Herculex RW and Herculex XTRA in plots across four drought-stressed locations was 16-19 bushels higher than yields of hybrids in plots treated with Aztec® granular insecticide, and 22-25 bushels higher than untreated check plots," says Davis.

Heimbaugh indicates that all hybrids containing Herculex RW or Herculex XTRA technology will be treated for 2006 with a new premium seed treatment package that combines Poncho® 250 insecticide seed treatment and Dynasty® fungicide for additional protection against secondary insects and seedling diseases.

To meet the continued rising demand for herbicide-resistant products, 28 of the newly released Pioneer hybrids contain the Roundup Ready Corn 2 trait. Seventeen of these new products are stacked with either corn borer or corn rootworm resistance and eleven are hybrids with only the Roundup Ready Corn 2 trait to help provide options for refuge management. In addition, all hybrids with Herculex technology also contain the LibertyLink® gene which provides tolerance to Liberty® herbicide. Liberty controls more than 100 grass and broadleaf weed species upon contact.

For more information about these new hybrids and technologies, growers should contact their local Pioneer sales professional.

Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., a subsidiary of DuPont, is the world's leading source of customized solutions for farmers, livestock producers and grain and oilseed processors. With headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa, Pioneer provides access to advanced plant genetics, crop protection solutions and quality crop systems to customers in nearly 70 countries. DuPont is a science company. Founded in 1802, DuPont puts science to work by creating sustainable solutions essential to a better, safer, healthier life for people everywhere. Operating in more than 70 countries, DuPont offers a wide range of innovative products and services for markets including agriculture, nutrition, electronics, communications, safety and protection, home and construction, transportation and apparel.

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