

THE BXN® SYSTEM
David S. Guthrie
Director of Technical Services
Stoneville Pedigreed Seed Company
Memphis, TN

measured once all the production components, including weed control are brought together into a cohesive package that optimizes returns on their investment. For many growers, the BXN system will be part of that profitable production package.

All technologies have risks and benefits associated with them. Weed management options will continue to expand as additional herbicide-tolerant transgenic varieties are released and new, more selective herbicide chemistries are introduced. Each of these new tools will be added to the present assortment and utilized where appropriate. Stoneville Pedigreed Seed Co. suggests that cotton farmers employ a systems approach that integrates cultural, biological and herbicidal approaches that fit specific situations. Growers contemplating the use of BXN and/or RR must take a business approach to which assortment of tools, transgenic and conventional, will best fit their production system. This analysis must consider weed spectrum, available equipment and personnel, seasonal variations in crop and weed growth dynamics, consequences of misapplication, unexpected environmental impacts etc..

Growers have found the BXN system to be a powerful means to control troublesome weeds such as morninglory, cocklebur, velvetleaf, Pennsylvania smartweed and wild poinsettia. The extremely high tolerance of BXN varieties to Buctril® 4EC and the wide application window are additional benefits to users of this technology. These last two attributes can be extremely valuable when spring rains keep growers off fields for prolonged periods of time.

Seed and agrochemical companies must also be prepared to offer credible answers to practical and sometimes thorny questions on potential weaknesses with their weed management approach. A sample of some of these questions include:

- 1) What weed species are not effectively controlled by the transgenic technologies or new herbicides?
- 2) Are our new technologies compatible with conventional approaches that growers are familiar with?
- 3) Are our varieties more susceptible to any previously safe cotton herbicides? If so, which herbicides and why?

In the final analysis, the single most important question a cotton farmer must answer is how best to maximize net profit, regardless of weed management approach? Cotton farmers are in the business of producing cotton , not controlling weeds. Success in a cotton farming enterprise is