

From: greg larson <g.larson@mchsi.com>
Sent: Friday, June 21, 2024 12:01 PM
To: David Hartwell <david@dbhartwell.com>
Cc: Laurie Schneider <laurie@lschneider.com>
Subject: Neonic coated seed in DNR WMA food plots

David,

Last fall we discussed DNR WMA food plots and how they appear to be managed in a way that is counterproductive to wildlife. In November, I had emailed you photos of a WMA near our family farm in Meeker County. Based on simple observations of the crop stand and corn variety signage I was strongly suspicious that the corn group in the food plot was likely planted with neonic coated seed.

On May 28 of this year, I was able to collect some recently planted kernels of seed corn from that WMA food plot. I sent the seed samples to a USDA lab in North Carolina and received the results back last week. The results are in the attachment.

The results confirmed that the planted seed was indeed coated with neonics. Planting coated seed on public land was outlawed by legislation passed in 2023 and is contrary to the long standing DNR contention that coated seed isn't allowed in WMA food plots and is also contrary to conditions of the DNR Cooperative Farming Agreement contracts.

I can't confirm how widespread this is but I don't believe it is a single rogue grower but instead a systemic problem resulting from the lack of oversight of food plots and weak enforcement of the agreements. Common sense tells me that growers do not change out equipment and purchase non-coated seed for planting on a few acres of state land.

The WMA where the seed was collected is the Greenleaf WMA in Meeker County. It will be very apparent as the crop matures that there isn't a speck of difference between the crop on DNR land and the crop on adjoining property.

Reams of research confirm the dangers to the environment and human health from neonicotinoids. The DNR itself has confirmed the high prevalence of neonics across the state in wild deer populations. The DNR, as you may know, began testing deer spleens from harvested animals based on research at South Dakota State University which found severe health issues in captive deer. Other studies have found health problems caused by neonic in other mammals and more recently in humans.

Just this month a study was published showing a direct link between monarch butterfly population declines and neonic coated seed:

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0304319>

I can provide additional studies related to human health, declines in aquatic insects and other serious environmental problems related to neonicotinoids.

It is just plain wrong for the DNR to tacitly allow wildlife killing pesticides in land purchased by taxpayers for the protection of wildlife. Residents of Minnesota should be outraged – I certainly am.

Regards,
Greg Larson
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