Wheat Crop Problem – Day 3

Day 3 in class

Driving back to the barn, Trent was really confused. He knew he had mixed the chemical in the tank, correctly. He had used the correct gallon size Goldsky bottles. And he trusted Fred that he had mixed the sprayer tanks properly too. Fred had done this for years so it wasn’t new to him. Besides there were two empty gallon size Goldsky bottles right there in the barn for everyone to see and you could see where they had been removed from the shelf. There had to be something wrong with the Goldsky chemical. It had to be that…

As they arrived at the barn, Trent’s father, Robert, had arrived, wanting to become part of the discussion. After all, even though Trent was his son, and had operated the farm for years, the farm was after all, Roberts and the loss of money would roll up to him eventually. He listened carefully to Trent and Fred as they explained what they had done and how sure they were that the chemical must have been the culprit. The extension agent went over all the questions he had been asking, about the sprayer, the history of the field, the weather, and the geography of the field. The weed specialists both talked about their disagreement about whether or not the injury was caused by a glyphosate type chemical like Roundup or Touchdown. Or was it an ACCase inhibitor like Fusion or Assure II or Targa chemicals?

Robert was silent listening to it all. Trent asked him if he could remember anything about the field, the spraying or the equipment. He said he really hadn’t spent that much time on the farm lately. He was retired and even though he enjoyed working when he was restless he hadn’t had anything to do with this year’s crop. However about a month previously he had come out to get the empty bulk tank of Roundup, which is a glyphosate type chemical, to take it back to the distributor to get refilled. He noticed that there was a gallon or so of Roundup in the tank. So rather than waste it, Robert grabbed the nearest empty gallon bottle and drained the remaining Roundup from the bulk tank into that bottle and put it back on the shelf. Other than that, he really hadn’t done much else on the farm.

14 days later: The lab test came back and there was glyphosate residue on the wheat samples.