

Profiles in Success

Across the Cotton Belt, growers rely on PhytoGen® cottonseed varieties for outstanding performance and maximum yield potential.



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“PhytoGen cotton with the Enlist trait has really changed the game so we can grow cotton more easily around our rice and Enlist E3 soybean acres.”

– BRIAN ALUMBAUGH

Built-in traits provide path to improve cotton ROI potential

As you consider cotton varieties to plant this season, remember the age-old advice about building good character: “It’s what’s inside that matters most.”

Traits and technologies in your cottonseed provide opportunities to help increase profitability and return on investment (ROI). These intangible benefits are sometimes overlooked, but many producers are discovering new PhytoGen®

cottonseed varieties with built-in traits such as nematode resistance and herbicide tolerances that help protect their crop, gain efficiencies and improve yield potential.

Brian Alumbaugh farms 6,000 acres of cotton, rice, soybeans, corn and wheat near McCrory, Arkansas. Over the last three seasons, he’s increased his cotton acres each year because of his success with PhytoGen® W3FE varieties and the trait technologies available in the seed.

Alumbaugh first planted newer PhytoGen brand varieties for their industry-leading resistance to root-knot and reniform nematodes. Some of Alumbaugh’s fields have a three-pronged challenge: nematodes that damage roots, sandy soils that don’t hold water, and limited irrigation capacity. PhytoGen W3FE varieties with nematode resistance helped all three issues, protecting roots and allowing plants to make better use of available water.

“PhytoGen W3FE varieties are a great fit because of their nematode resistance. They are more drought tolerant and forgiving on fields where we have nematodes and the irrigation is a little off,” Alumbaugh said. “It helps from an expense perspective because we don’t have to water as much, and that also saves us time on irrigation maintenance. The return on PhytoGen cotton is better all around.”

Alumbaugh has grown PhytoGen brand varieties since 2022 and produces between 1,300 – 1,500 pounds per acre – as high as 1,600 pounds per acre – on fields with adequate irrigation.

He also says PhytoGen varieties with nematode resistance have helped lower nematode populations and improved his soils for better ROI on other crops. He planted PhytoGen® brand PHY 411 W3FE on a field for two years and then rotated the field to soybeans. That field previously yielded about 35 bu/A, but the soybeans yielded 77 bu/A following PHY 411 W3FE.

“PhytoGen is helping maintain our soils and their productivity for other crops,” Alumbaugh said. “We doubled the soybean yield in that field after planting PhytoGen – that’s a big deal for any farmer.”

Another benefit to his bottom line is the Enlist® cotton trait, which he says fits better with his multi-crop operation where rice and soybean fields are often adjacent to cotton. Rice is considered a compatible crop with the Enlist® weed control system, and Alumbaugh plants Pioneer® Enlist E3® soybeans so he can spray Enlist® herbicides over his soybeans and cotton.

“PhytoGen cotton with the Enlist trait has really changed the game so we can grow cotton more easily around our rice and Enlist E3 soybean acres,” Alumbaugh said. “You can load the sprayer with Enlist One and go right from cotton into

soybeans with the same tank. That keeps you from wasting chemicals, and you’re saving fuel by not having to go back and forth to the shop.”

Alumbaugh said his weeds have been “very controlled” and the ease of application makes life a little less

varieties for their built-in traits and ROI potential.

“PhytoGen makes growing cotton easier with the technologies in these varieties. It pencils out better than other options, and it’s a very consistent cotton. You can take it

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hectic during busy summer weeks when he’s managing multiple crops.

“In my experience, the Enlist system is the easiest weed control system to use since the glyphosate-resistant crops came out in the 90s,” he said. “I like the fact that Enlist One is a stable product. It doesn’t move after you spray it. I’ve been spraying Enlist One in PhytoGen cotton for three years and Enlist soybeans before that, and I can tell you it’s a very good system.”

As he plans for the upcoming season, Alumbaugh may increase his cotton acres for the fourth year in a row, planting PhytoGen

to the bank,” Alumbaugh said. “We get all of that, and we couldn’t ask for better support from our local PhytoGen rep. It’s the best in the business.”

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Georgia cotton producer says PhytoGen® brand varieties have helped his farm produce higher yields with lower crop protection costs for better overall profitability.



Georgia producer Chris Hill says PhytoGen® W3FE varieties have given him tools to increase yield, lower crop protection costs and simplify weed management on his cotton-and-peanut operation.

The soil at Roland Hill Farms has provided for six generations of the Hill family in Twiggs County, Georgia. As Chris Hill carries that legacy into the future, it's ironic that one of his biggest assets is also a major challenge.

"For decades, we've had reniform nematodes in these soils that have held us back on yield, especially in dry years," Hill said. "Nematodes make drought stress worse, and we go through droughts almost every season in Georgia."

Hill tried many crop protection solutions through the years, including soil fumigants and aldicarb. Those products raised input costs by nearly \$100 an acre and required extra trips across the field. Hill also added corn into his rotation because corn is not a host for nematodes. Even then, the reniform populations kept growing.

"We knew what our problem was but we couldn't find a good tool to solve it," Hill said.

After discussing options with his retailer and the local PhytoGen field agronomist, Hill decided to plant PhytoGen® brand varieties with built-in resistance to reniform and root-knot nematodes. For years he had heard that nematode-resistant varieties didn't have high-end yield potential, but his reps explained that the newer PhytoGen varieties were different.

The proof came from the gin after harvest: PhytoGen® brand PHY 411 W3FE yielded 1,600 pounds/A — without any nematicide treatments.

"That's better than we could yield with the competitive varieties plus nematicides, and I saved \$100 an acre on crop protection," Hill said. "We're making more money with PhytoGen. That's the bottom line."

In addition to higher yields and lower crop protection costs, Hill also significantly decreased reniform populations in his soils. Before planting PhytoGen varieties, soil samples showed 5,380 reniform nematodes per 100 cc of soil. After one year of planting PhytoGen brand varieties, the same field showed only 700 reniform nematodes per 100 cc.

"We are moving in the right direction, and I think we can get these numbers even lower with these PhytoGen varieties," Hill said.

In 2024, Hill planted PhytoGen brand PHY 475 W3FE, PHY 411 W3FE and PHY 415 W3FE, which have resistance to both reniform and root-knot nematodes. He believes the root-knot resistance also is helping his peanut yields.

Hill rotated peanuts onto a field planted to PHY 411 W3FE the previous year. Those peanuts were 1,000 pounds heavier than any other peanuts he planted last season, and he believes it's because PhytoGen

"We're going to be wall to wall PhytoGen next year. It's easier, simpler and yields as good or better than anything else out there." — CHRIS HILL

brand varieties lowered the root-knot population.

"Year in and year out, we average about 5,000 pounds on our peanut acres. That's the peanut yield we can make on our farm," Hill said. "But we hit 6,000 pounds per acre on the field that followed the PhytoGen variety. I think the root-knot nematodes have been holding us back more than we realize on our peanuts."

BEYOND NEMATODES

Another advantage with PhytoGen® W3FE varieties is the Enlist® weed control system, which

enables Hill to manage weeds without a dicamba-based system. Producers growing cotton and peanuts have long dealt with the challenge of 2,4-Db applications drifting from peanuts into cotton. With the advent of dicamba-tolerant cotton, growers had to also worry about dicamba from cotton moving into peanuts.

PhytoGen W3FE varieties and peanuts work well together because growers can spray Enlist® herbicides in cotton even if peanuts are downwind, since peanuts are considered a compatible crop with Enlist herbicides.

Growers can spray Enlist One® herbicide on their PhytoGen W3FE varieties, triple rinse the tank, and then spray 2,4-Db on their peanuts — and never have to put dicamba in the tank.

As for weed control, Hill said Enlist One tank mixed with glyphosate keeps his fields clean.

"We were pleased with our weed control, especially on our big three weeds: pigweed, grasses and morning glory," Hill said. "The Enlist system makes it simpler with peanuts. You can spray Enlist One herbicide, and you don't have to worry about cleaning dicamba out of your sprayer."

As Hill plans for next season, he says the yield, nematicide savings and peanut compatibility make PhytoGen a better choice for his cotton acres.

"We're going to be wall to wall PhytoGen next year," Hill said. "It's easier, simpler and yields as good or better than anything else out there."



Three generations of Hills work together at Roland Hill Farms: from left, Chris Hill; his father, Billy; and his son Caleb. Chris said they're 'making more money with PhytoGen' because of higher yield potential and lower input costs, compared to previous cotton varieties.

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