

Oral Argument Held on April 21, 2020

No. 19-70115

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

NATIONAL FAMILY FARM COALITION, *et al.*,
Petitioners,

v.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, *et al.*,
Respondents,

and

MONSANTO COMPANY,
Intervenor-Respondent.

On Petition for Review of Agency Action
of the United States Environmental Protection Agency

**MOTION OF AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION, AMERICAN
SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION, NATIONAL COTTON COUNCIL OF
AMERICA, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WHEAT GROWERS,
NATIONAL CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION, AND NATIONAL
SORGHUM PRODUCERS FOR LEAVE TO FILE AMICUS CURIAE
BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO PETITIONERS' EMERGENCY MOTION
AND IN SUPPORT OF RESPONDENTS**

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Pursuant to Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 29 and Ninth Circuit Rule 29-3, the American Farm Bureau Federation, American Soybean Association, National Cotton Council of America, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Corn Growers Association, and National Sorghum Producers (together, “the Growers”) respectfully request leave to file the attached *amicus curiae* brief in opposition to Petitioners’ Emergency Motion to Enforce This Court’s Vacatur and to Hold EPA in Contempt. The proposed amicus brief is attached as Exhibit 1. In support of this Motion, the Growers state as follows:

1. Counsel for *amici curiae* endeavored to obtain consent from all parties before filing this motion. Respondents EPA and Monsanto Company consent to the filing of the brief. Petitioners, however, oppose the filing of the brief.

2. The Growers are six national trade associations that represent farmers, ranchers, and their families nationwide. The Growers’ soybean, corn, wheat, sorghum, cotton, and other crops provide the United States and the world with food, fuel, feed, and fiber.

3. Founded in 1919, the American Farm Bureau Federation (“AFBF”) is a voluntary general farm organization formed to protect, promote, and represent the business, economic, social, and educational interests of American farmers and ranchers. AFBF represents nearly six million member families through its state and county Farm Bureau organizations in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. A letter sent by

the AFBF to EPA regarding the need for EPA to issue guidance on the use of existing stocks of Xtendimax, Engenia, and FeXapan (the “Dicamba Products”) is attached as Exhibit 2.

4. Founded in 1920, the American Soybean Association (“ASA”) is a national, private, not-for-profit trade association representing U.S. soybean growers on domestic and international issues of importance to the soybean industry. It represents the interests of more than 300,000 soybean farmers nationwide. A letter sent by the ASA to EPA regarding the need for EPA to issue guidance on the use of existing stocks of the Dicamba Products is attached as Exhibit 3.

5. Founded in 1938, the National Cotton Council of America (“NCC”) is the trade association for the U.S. cotton industry, representing the seven segments of the raw cotton industry: producers, ginner, warehouse, merchant, cottonseed processor and merchandiser, cooperative, and textile manufacturer. The Cotton Council’s mission is to ensure the ability of all U.S. cotton segments to compete effectively and profitably in the raw cotton, oilseeds, and manufactured textile product markets at home and abroad. A letter sent by the NCC to EPA regarding the need for EPA to issue guidance on the use of existing stocks of the Dicamba Products is attached as Exhibit 4.

6. In 1950, a handful of wheat growers from across the country formed the National Association of Wheat Growers (“NAWG”) to work toward common

solutions and make decisions for the future of America's wheat producers. Decades later, the NAWG continues to focus on the policies of the U.S. government that affect the livelihoods of U.S. wheat producers as the primary representative in Washington, D.C. for wheat growers, working with a team of 20 state wheat grower organizations to benefit America's wheat producers.

7. Founded in 1957, the National Corn Growers Association is the trade association for U.S. corn growers. It represents the interests of more than 300,000 corn growers and works with 49 affiliated state organizations to create and increase opportunities for corn growers.

8. Founded in 1955 to increase demand for grain sorghum, National Sorghum Producers became the voice of the sorghum industry. For over 60 years, National Sorghum Producers has represented sorghum farmers nationwide on legislative and regulatory issues impacting the sorghum industry, and its mission is to lead positive change for sorghum farmers through effective policy and relationships.

9. Growers have direct and immediate interests in Petitioners' motion and the EPA's Final Cancellation Order for Three Dicamba Products, which regulates existing stocks (including farmers' use of existing stocks) of the Dicamba Products during this crucial period of this growing season.

10. Growers also have a broader interest in preserving EPA's authority to

issue cancellation orders in the first instance when a product registration is vacated or cancelled. This authority is essential for providing farmers, if circumstances so warrant, with continued access to existing stocks of cancelled products, particularly in scenarios involving mid-growing season cancellations or vacatur of registrations. Losing access to a pesticide product in the middle of a growing season could significantly limit a farmer's ability to control for weeds, insects, or other pests, resulting in potentially catastrophic economic losses on Growers.

11. The Growers' first-hand experience places them in a unique position to provide the Court with information about the importance of the Dicamba Products and EPA's Cancellation Order.

12. The Growers' amicus brief does not challenge the Court's vacatur of the existing registrations. Rather, it focuses exclusively on the relief that Petitioners' recent motion seeks, including an immediate ban on the use of the Dicamba Products, and the substantial risks that awarding such relief would pose to Growers.

13. The outcome of this motion will have a direct effect on the Growers, their productivity, their livelihoods, and their contributions to society. Further, the relief sought in Petitioners' Emergency Motion could devastate this season's plantings—already in the ground and depending on the formerly registered Dicamba Products for weed control. Growers would bear the significant costs of lesser alternative methods of weed control and yield losses if the Court grants Petitioners'

motion.

14. Accordingly, the Growers respectfully request leave to file the *amicus curiae* brief attached to this motion.

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Edmund S. Sauer

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CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that pursuant to Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure 27(d)(2)(A), Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 32(g)(1), Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 32(a)(5)–(6), and Ninth Circuit Rule 32-1, this brief has been prepared in a proportionally spaced typeface, 14-point Times New Roman font, and contains 916 words, excluding the parts of the brief exempted by Fed. R. App. P. 32(f).

Dated: June 16, 2020

s/ Edmund S. Sauer

Edmund S. Sauer

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on June 16, 2020, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to all registered CM/ECF users.

s/ Edmund S. Sauer

Edmund S. Sauer

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CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 26.1, the American Farm Bureau Federation, American Soybean Association, National Cotton Council of America, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Corn Growers Association, and National Sorghum Producers state that none of them has a parent corporation, nor does any publicly held corporation own 10% or more of the stock of any of them.

s/ Edmund S. Sauer

Edmund S. Sauer

Dated: June 16, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT	i
TABLE OF AUTHORITIES	iii
INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE.....	1
ARGUMENT	2
I. Soybean and Cotton Growers Risk Suffering Significant Harm if They Cannot Use Existing Stocks of Dicamba Products.	2
A. Soybean and cotton growers’ massive investments in dicamba- tolerant crops could be devastated if this Court forbids the use of existing stocks of the Dicamba Products.	2
B. Growers lack the tools to effectively mitigate these losses at this point in the growing season.....	5
C. Blocking the use of existing stocks risks exacerbating resistance and undermining the efficacy of existing herbicides in future years.....	6
D. Granting Petitioners’ requested relief risks returning to the uncertainty and confusion that followed this Court’s vacatur.	8
II. Growers Rely on EPA’s Orderly Regulation of Existing Stocks of Formerly Registered Products.	9
CONCLUSION.....	12
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE.....	13
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE	14

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

	Page(s)
Cases	
<i>Ctr. for Food Safety v. Vilsack</i> , Case No. 3:08-cv-00484-JSW (N.D. Cal. Apr. 9, 2010).....	7
<i>Love v. Thomas</i> , 858 F.2d 1347 (9th Cir. 1988)	11
<i>McGill v. E.P.A.</i> , 593 F.2d 631 (5th Cir. 1979)	10
<i>McKart v. United States</i> , 395 U.S. 185 (1969).....	11
Statutes	
7 U.S.C. § 136n(a)	12
7 U.S.C. § 136n(b)	11
Rules	
Circuit Rule 29-2.....	1
Fed. R. App. P. 26.1	i
Fed. R. App. P. 29	1
Other Authorities	
1972 U.S.C.C.A.N. 3993	11
American Farm Bureau Federation Letter to EPA	3
American Soybean Association Letter to EPA.....	2, 3
Bill Spiegel, <i>Now What?</i> , Successful Farming (June 5, 2020), https://www.agriculture.com/news/crops/now-what	6

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Christopher Walljasper, <i>Grains—Soybeans Fall Further on Coronavirus Demand Risks</i> , Successful Farming (Apr. 14, 2020), https://www.agriculture.com/markets/newswire/grains-soybeans-fall-further-on-coronavirus-demand-risks-0	4
Emily Unglesbee, <i>Soybean Decisions</i> , The Progressive Farmer (Oct. 17, 2019), https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/crops/article/2019/10/17/review-herbicide-tolerant-soybean	2
Emily Unglesbee, <i>The States of Dicamba</i> , https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/crops/article/2020/06/08/states-enter-uncertain-legal-dicamba	8
EPA, <i>Over-The-Top Dicamba Products for Genetically Modified Cotton and Soybeans: Benefits and Impacts</i> , 16–17 (Oct. 31, 2018), https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=EPA-HQ-OPP-2016-0187-0966	7
Eric Sfiligoj, <i>The Weed Resistance Problem: A Matter of Billions</i> , CropLife (April 1, 2014), http://www.croplife.com/crop-inputs/herbicides/the-weed-resistance-problem-a-matter-of-billions/	7
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Missouri Dep’t of Agric, <i>Statement on Dicamba Status</i> (June 5, 2020), https://agriculture.mo.gov/news/newsitem/uuid/48dc40af-e9b4-4f88-a496-879a0edfe0b8/department-of-agriculture-issues-statement-on-dicamba-status	8
Nat’l Ag. Statistics Service, <i>Crop Prod. 2019 Summ.</i> 3 (USDA Jan. 2020), https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Todays_Reports/reports/cropan20.pdf	3
National Cotton Council, <i>The Economic Outlook for U.S. Cotton</i> 41 (2020), https://www.cotton.org/econ/reports/upload/20annmtg_FullVersion_Final.pdf	4

National Cotton Council Letter to EPA	<i>passim</i>
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Robert Norris, <i>Never Let 'Em Seed</i> , http://wssa.net/wssa/weed/articles/wssa-neverletemsetseed/	7
S. Rep. No. 92-838 (1972)	11
<i>Soybeans</i> , Business Insider, https://markets.businessinsider.com/commodities/soybeans-price	3, 4
University of Georgia, <i>Cotton Budgets</i> , https://agecon.uga.edu/extension/budgets.html	3
University of Missouri Extension, <i>Southeast Missouri Crop Budget</i> <a href="http://extension.missouri.edu/scott/documents/Ag/crop-budgets/
RR-Extend-Soybeans.pdf">http://extension.missouri.edu/scott/documents/Ag/crop-budgets/ RR-Extend-Soybeans.pdf	2
USDA, <i>COVID-19 Spurs Record Downward Adjustments to Global Demand</i> (Apr. 2020), <a href="https://downloads.usda.library.cornell.edu/usda-esmis/
files/kp78gg36g/34850214n/w9505k169/cotton.pdf">https://downloads.usda.library.cornell.edu/usda-esmis/ files/kp78gg36g/34850214n/w9505k169/cotton.pdf	5
Weed Science Society of America, <i>Perspectives on Soybean Yield Losses Due to Weeds in North America</i> , <a href="http://wssa.net/wp-
content/uploads/WSSA-2016-Soybean-Yield-Loss-poster.pdf">http://wssa.net/wp- content/uploads/WSSA-2016-Soybean-Yield-Loss-poster.pdf	3

INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE¹

These *amici*—the American Farm Bureau Federation, American Soybean Association, National Cotton Council of America, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Corn Growers Association, and National Sorghum Producers (together, “the Growers”)—are national trade associations that represent farmers, ranchers, and their families nationwide. The Growers have an immediate interest in the disposition of Petitioners’ Emergency Motion, which asks this Court to immediately prohibit Growers from using existing stocks of Xtendimax, Engenia, and FeXapan (collectively, the “Dicamba Products”) on dicamba-tolerant soybeans and cotton.

Granting the Petitioners’ motion mid-growing season could have catastrophic consequences for Growers and America’s agricultural community, which depend on being able to use the Dicamba Products for the next several weeks. The Court should respect EPA’s expertise in managing existing stocks of formerly registered pesticide products and deny Petitioners’ Emergency Motion.

¹ This brief is submitted with a motion for leave under Circuit Rule 29-2. Amici affirm that no counsel for a party authored this brief in whole or in part and that no person other than amici, their members, or their counsel has made any monetary contributions intended to fund the preparation or submission of this brief. Fed. R. App. P. 29.

ARGUMENT

I. SOYBEAN AND COTTON GROWERS RISK SUFFERING SIGNIFICANT HARM IF THEY CANNOT USE EXISTING STOCKS OF DICAMBA PRODUCTS.

Granting Petitioners' request to immediately ban Growers' use of existing stocks of the Dicamba Products would put America's soybean and cotton growers at risk for financial devastation. Growers have planted millions of acres of crops that depend on the use of Dicamba Products this growing season. Because no viable alternatives exist that can be deployed immediately, banning Growers' use of existing stocks of Dicamba Products could have disastrous consequences. The Court should not interfere in EPA's decision to allow growers to use the existing stock of Dicamba Products through July 31, 2020.

A. Soybean and cotton growers' massive investments in dicamba-tolerant crops could be devastated if this Court forbids the use of existing stocks of the Dicamba Products.

America's soybean and cotton growers would risk severe financial harm if prevented from using Dicamba Products this growing season.² Soybean and cotton farmers currently have an estimated 64 million acres³ of dicamba-tolerant crops under cultivation. These farmers have invested billions in seeds⁴ and hundreds of

² American Soybean Association Letter to EPA ("ASA Letter"), Ex. 3 at 1.

³ See Emily Unglesbee, *Soybean Decisions*, The Progressive Farmer (Oct. 17, 2019), <https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/crops/article/2019/10/17/review-herbicide-tolerant-soybean> (estimating 54 million acres); National Cotton Council Letter to EPA ("NCC Letter"), Ex. 4 at 1 (estimating 9.630 million acres).

⁴ University of Missouri Extension, *Southeast Missouri Crop Budget*

millions of dollars in herbicides⁵ alone, not including labor, fertilizer, and other costs, expecting that over-the-top applications of dicamba would remain lawful during this growing season.⁶ Forbidding such use could leave soybean and cotton growers largely defenseless against weeds resistant to other herbicides, causing potentially significant financial consequences from yield losses (which, assuming the product was not available at all this season, could be 50% or more).⁷ Assuming such unavailability, overall financial losses could total: (i) for soybean growers, between \$2 and \$10 billion (assuming \$40 to \$200 in yield-loss per acre of soybeans),⁸ and (ii) for cotton growers, \$400 to \$800 million (assuming 50% yield

<http://extension.missouri.edu/scott/documents/Ag/crop-budgets/RR-Extend-Soybeans.pdf> (last visited June 16, 2020) (pricing dicamba-tolerant soybean seeds at \$62/acre); *see* University of Georgia, *Cotton Budgets*, <https://agecon.uga.edu/extension/budgets.html> (last visited June 16, 2020) (estimating costs of dicamba-tolerant cotton seeds at \$97/acre).

⁵ ASA Letter at 1; University of Georgia, *Cotton Budgets*, <https://agecon.uga.edu/extension/budgets.html> (estimating cost of Xtendimax at \$11.00/acre per application, for two applications).

⁶ ASA Letter at 1 (“Never before – at the height of growing season – have growers been immediately restricted from using hundreds of millions of dollars in legally purchased product”); *see also* American Farm Bureau Federation Letter to EPA, Ex. 2.

⁷ Weed Science Society of America, *Perspectives on Soybean Yield Losses Due to Weeds in North America*, <http://wssa.net/wp-content/uploads/WSSA-2016-Soybean-Yield-Loss-poster.pdf> (last visited June 13, 2020); NCC Letter at 1.

⁸ Based on 2019 average yields of 47.4 bushels/acre cash market price of soybeans at \$8.68/bushel from June 2020, Growers could lose \$205.72 per acre on any of the estimated 50 million acres planted with dicamba-tolerant soybeans. *See* Nat’l Ag. Statistics Service, *Crop Prod. 2019 Summ.* 3 (USDA Jan. 2020), https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Todays_Reports/reports/cropan20.pdf; *Soybeans*, Business Insider,

loss on 20% to 40% of cotton fields.⁹ To be sure, losses are difficult to predict due to the unprecedented nature of losing an over-the-top herbicide in the middle of a growing season, but it is clear that billions of dollars in farmer investments are at risk.

These potentially devastating losses would exacerbate an already tenuous economic situation for America's cotton and soybean farmers, who face depressed market prices and uncertainty in commodity markets due to ongoing trade tensions. Since 2018, loss of market access in China prompted drops in cotton futures prices (from the mid-\$0.90s in June 2018 to the upper-\$0.50s in August 2019)¹⁰ and in soybean prices (from \$10.39 per bushel in May 2018 to \$8.68 per bushel in June 2020).¹¹

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented disruptions in the supply chains and markets for the U.S. and world soybean, cotton, and textile industries. As livestock producers reduced their herd sizes, demand for soymeal fell, further depressing soybean prices.¹² The COVID-19 pandemic also caused cotton

<https://markets.businessinsider.com/commodities/soybeans-price> (last visited June 16, 2020).

⁹ NCC Letter at 1.

¹⁰ National Cotton Council, *The Economic Outlook for U.S. Cotton* 41 (2020), https://www.cotton.org/econ/reports/upload/20annmtg_FullVersion_Final.pdf.

¹¹ *Soybeans*, Business Insider, <https://markets.businessinsider.com/commodities/soybeans-price>.

¹² Christopher Walljasper, *Grains—Soybeans Fall Further on Coronavirus Demand Risks*, Successful Farming (Apr. 14, 2020),

demand to collapse, which has been felt across the U.S. cotton industry, from textile manufacturers to producers, and all segments in between.¹³

B. Growers lack the tools to effectively mitigate these losses at this point in the growing season.

Most farmers made decisions on which seed varieties to plant in late 2019. Decisions on what to plant include assessing local needs against the technology available. When selecting seed varieties to plant in 2020, some farmers who selected dicamba-tolerant crops developed an integrated pest management plan with the intention of utilizing Dicamba Products. Growers relied on the availability of the Dicamba Products and cannot pivot mid-season or go back in time to plant different seeds or adopt a different cropping system. Yield losses resulting from weed infestations would be difficult, if not impossible, to mitigate because no viable alternatives to the Dicamba Products exist.

Glyphosate and glufosinate (on cotton only) are potential alternatives. However, glyphosate will not be effective against glyphosate-resistant weeds that can be controlled by dicamba, glufosinate has limitations under the circumstances, and the use of these herbicides alone risks increasing resistance in weed species that

<https://www.agriculture.com/markets/newswire/grains-soybeans-fall-further-on-coronavirus-demand-risks-0>.

¹³ USDA, *COVID-19 Spurs Record Downward Adjustments to Global Demand* (Apr. 2020), <https://downloads.usda.library.cornell.edu/usda-esmis/files/kp78gg36g/34850214n/w9505k169/cotton.pdf>.

Dicamba Products would otherwise control.¹⁴ Moreover, the marketplace lacks sufficient quantities of Tavium to meet farmers’ immediate demands.¹⁵

For weeds resistant to glyphosate and glufosinate, often the sole remaining option is weeding by hand. But that is practically no option at all. It is extremely difficult to find labor for manual weed control, let alone on the scale and with the immediacy necessary to replace Dicamba Products this growing season. This type of labor is in short supply as a result of COVID-19, recent immigration policy, and long-term strains on the H-2A visa system. And, even where it is available, labor costs can range from \$20 to \$60 per acre.¹⁶ Given the hundreds—and in many cases thousands—of acres growers have under their individual production, coupled with limited labor availability, there is no practical way growers could acquire the workers needed to meet a hand-weeding scenario even if they could absorb the enormous additional costs—and many cannot.

C. Blocking the use of existing stocks risks exacerbating resistance and undermining the efficacy of existing herbicides in future years.

The harm from immediately banning use of existing stocks of Dicamba Products may not be limited to this year or to these fields. Dicamba Products “provide[] a long-term benefit as a tool to delay resistance of other herbicides” by

¹⁴ NCC Letter at 2.

¹⁵ Bill Spiegel, *Now What?*, Successful Farming (June 5, 2020), <https://www.agriculture.com/news/crops/now-what>.

¹⁶ NCC Letter at 2.

reducing their use and destroying resistant weeds before they can pass their traits to future generations.¹⁷ Additionally, the loss of over-the-top dicamba this growing season may result in reduced efficacy of glufosinate due to resistance development.¹⁸ Thus, weeds that would have been killed by dicamba could survive, go to seed, and pass on their resistance to seed banks that can persist in the fields for decades.¹⁹

Petitioners themselves have noted that herbicide-resistance poses significant threats to agriculture—*e.g.*, “[g]lyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth . . . can render land unusable for agriculture;”²⁰ “glyphosate-resistant weeds threaten world food production;”²¹ and “[w]eed resistance poses a serious threat to rural communities.”²² As a practical matter, the Dicamba Products are the only available short-term solution to these specific weed problems.

¹⁷ EPA, *Over-The-Top Dicamba Products for Genetically Modified Cotton and Soybeans: Benefits and Impacts*, 16–17 (Oct. 31, 2018), <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=EPA-HQ-OPP-2016-0187-0966>.

¹⁸ NCC Letter at 2.

¹⁹ See Eric Sfiligoj, *The Weed Resistance Problem: A Matter of Billions*, CropLife (April 1, 2014), <http://www.croplife.com/crop-inputs/herbicides/the-weed-resistance-problem-a-matter-of-billions/>; Robert Norris, *Never Let 'Em Seed*, <http://wssa.net/wssa/weed/articles/wssa-neverletemsetseed/> (last visited June 16, 2020).

²⁰ Pls.’ Mem. in Supp. of Permanent Inj. at *17, *Ctr. for Food Safety v. Vilsack*, Case No. 3:08-cv-00484-JSW (N.D. Cal. Apr. 9, 2010).

²¹ *Id.*

²² Center for Food Safety, *National Weed Summit Tackles Epidemic of Herbicide-Resistant “Superweeds”* (May 10, 2012), <https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/press-releases/708/national-weed-summit-tackles-epidemic-of-herbicide-resistant-superweeds>.

D. Granting Petitioners’ requested relief risks returning to the uncertainty and confusion that followed this Court’s vacatur.

Vacatur of the dicamba registrations caused widespread uncertainty and confusion in the agricultural community. For example, the Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture recognized that “farmers are in their busiest season of doing what they do best—producing food and fiber—the [vacatur] of Dicamba products brings on tremendous uncertainty and confusion at this most critical time.”²³ Other officials recognized that banning Dicamba Products in this growing season risks financially devastating Growers. Missouri’s Director of Agriculture concluded that “[a]n overnight decision making this tool illegal is not something that should be done mid-growing season.”²⁴

Nearly all states to consider the question concluded that this Court’s vacatur did not preclude continued use of the three Dicamba Products in this growing season.²⁵ The EPA’s Cancellation Order resolved much of the remaining confusion. It implements this Court’s opinion vacating the registrations, while orderly winding

²³ *Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Comments on Ninth Circuit’s Dicamba Ruling*, Oklahoma Farm Report (June 5, 2020), http://www.oklahomafarmreport.com/wire/news/2020/06/00010__BlayneonDicamba06052020_125609.php#.Xukx85NKjOQ.

²⁴ Missouri Dep’t of Agric, *Statement on Dicamba Status* (June 5, 2020), <https://agriculture.mo.gov/news/newsitem/uuid/48dc40af-e9b4-4f88-a496-879a0edfe0b8/departement-of-agriculture-issues-statement-on-dicamba-status>.

²⁵ Emily Unglesbee, *The States of Dicamba*, <https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/crops/article/2020/06/08/states-enter-uncertain-legal-dicamba> (last visited June 15, 2020).

down and authorizing limited use of existing stocks, just as FIFRA permits. There is no emergency need for this Court to undo EPA’s administrative order, nor does this Court possess the authority to do so, as explained below. The immediate and substantial risks to Growers weigh strongly against Petitioners’ Emergency Motion.

II. GROWERS RELY ON EPA’S ORDERLY REGULATION OF EXISTING STOCKS OF FORMERLY REGISTERED PRODUCTS.

The Court should deny Petitioners’ Emergency Motion for another reason. Granting Petitioners’ requested relief would short circuit the proper administrative and judicial-review framework that Congress prescribed for existing stocks under FIFRA. Farmers use countless FIFRA-regulated pesticide products, including herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides. They make planting decisions and significant, up-front financial investments, based on the rules and regulations in place at the time plans are made. Farmers depend on the rules not changing in the middle of the game—they need certainty.

Fortunately, Congress provided that certainty by equipping EPA with “existing stocks” authority that it has exercised here. EPA’s long-established policy and practice under FIFRA provides for an orderly management of the distribution, sale, and use of a formerly registered pesticide product, including in the context of vacatur. *Existing Stocks of Pesticide Products; Statement of Policy*, 56 FR 29362-01 (June 26, 1991) (“Existing Stocks Policy”). Indeed, “[FIFRA] assure[s] that the economic interests of farmers and other consumers [are] fully considered before any

pesticide [is] withdrawn from the market.” *McGill v. E.P.A.*, 593 F.2d 631, 635 (5th Cir. 1979).

EPA’s existing stocks policy is particularly important when, as here, multiple products become formerly registered in the middle of a growing season. Growers have no mechanism for returning a field to the *status quo ante* before it was planted. Neither a mid-season cancellation nor a vacatur unplants a seed, retroactively tills a field, or clears a storehouse of products purchased under the prior registration. As a result, Growers depend on EPA to make reasoned decisions about whether the risks of continuing to use existing stocks of a particular pesticide that season outweigh the risk to the supply chain for food, fuel, feed, and fiber if those supplies are not used.

Notably, EPA’s guidance and authorization to use existing stocks was unusually important here because of the scope of this Court’s opinion. As BASF Corporation (“BASF”) and E.I du Pont de Nemours and Company (“EID”) argue,²⁶ the conditional new-use registrations of Engenia and FeXapan were not squarely before the Court when it issued its Final Order, so the Growers had no notice that the Court would vacate the registration of all three Dicamba Products. The expanded scope of the Court’s Order magnified the harm to Growers, particularly if it is interpreted as precluding all use of existing stocks of the products.

²⁶ Growers support BASF and EID’s motions to intervene. Dkt. 129 & 130. BASF and EID have a unique and critical perspective regarding the harm caused by their products becoming subject to the vacatur.

Finally, Congress entrusted EPA with the responsibility for balancing the need for pesticides with the environmental risks of those products in the first instance. *See, e.g.*, S. Rep. No. 92–838, *as reprinted in* 1972 U.S.C.C.A.N. 3993, 4032. The Court of Appeals is to “affirm or set aside the order complained of in whole or in part,” 7 U.S.C. § 136n(b), without taking on tasks initially “reserved for the EPA,” *Love v. Thomas*, 858 F.2d 1347, 1364 (9th Cir. 1988). This is consistent with the general approach to agency decisions, where “it is normally desirable to let the agency develop the necessary factual background” and give the agency the “first chance to exercise that discretion or to apply that expertise.” *McKart v. United States*, 395 U.S. 185, 194 (1969).

Here, EPA had not made the decision as to existing stocks of the products at issue when the Court issued its Final Order. Amici therefore find no merit in Petitioners’ argument that the Court has already decided the existing-stock issue implicitly through its mention of the potential economic impact in the last paragraph of its decision. The Final Order does not expressly mention existing stocks or the applicable framework. But if the Court *did* intend to decide this issue, that approach would be inconsistent with FIFRA’s statutory scheme. Under FIFRA, judicial review properly occurs after a full factual record has been developed and EPA has balanced the applicable factors in the first instance. *See* 7 U.S.C. § 136n(b); S. Rep. No. 92-838 (1972), *as reprinted in* 1972 U.S.C.C.A.N. 3993. Here, EPA simply had

not yet decided the existing stocks issue, so the issue was not before the Court at the time of the Final Order. Further, EPA has now decided this issue without a hearing, so *this* Court has no jurisdiction to decide it now either. That matter should be left to a district court. 7 U.S.C. § 136n(a).

CONCLUSION

For these reasons, the Court should deny Petitioners' Emergency Motion.

Dated: June 16, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Edmund S. Sauer

Bartholomew J. Kempf

Edmund S. Sauer

Kimberly M. Ingram

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CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that pursuant to Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure 27(d)(2)(A), Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 29(a)(5), Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 32(g)(1), Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 32(a)(5)–(6), and Ninth Circuit Rule 32-1, this brief has been prepared in a proportionally spaced typeface, 14-point Times New Roman font, and contains 2,585 words, excluding the parts of the brief exempted by Fed. R. App. P. 32(f).

Dated: June 16, 2020

s/ Edmund S. Sauer

Edmund S. Sauer

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on June 16, 2020, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to all registered CM/ECF users.

s/ Edmund S. Sauer
Edmund S. Sauer

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

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The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

I write today with concern over the recent decision from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals which vacates the registration of three dicamba labels, Engenia, FeXapan, and XtendiMax. These products are critically important tools for farmers in mitigating resistant weeds.

Many farmers have already made planting decisions to use dicamba tolerant crop systems and planned to use dicamba products in the very near future. These farmers invested substantial sums in the dicamba-resistant seeds in reliance on EPA's approval of dicamba on these crops. Without these products, not only are these substantial investments at risk, but farmers do not know how they will protect their crops. It is imperative EPA provide clarity to farmers expeditiously. Additionally, EPA should issue an existing stock order to ensure this product remains available to farmers throughout this growing season. In the existing stock order, EPA should ensure access to dicamba products that have already been purchased, as well as those that remain in the supply chain to be applied by custom applicators or farmers themselves later in accordance with the current EPA label.

AFBF does not condone off-label use of dicamba or any registered pesticide. But responsible farmers that have invested in – and often taken loans out to purchase – dicamba resistant products for the current growing season should not bear the financial burden caused by this legal dispute. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Zippy Duvall'.

Zippy Duvall



12647 Olive Boulevard, Suite 410, St. Louis, MO 63141 • PHONE: (314) 576-1770

June 5, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Submitted electronically

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

The June 3, 2020, ruling issued by the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in the case *National Family Farm Coalition v. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*, regarding the use of three dicamba products for use on dicamba-tolerant (DT) soybeans and cotton, was unprecedented in its process—and the level of disruption and potential damage inflicted on America’s agriculture community. Never before – at the height of growing season – have growers been immediately restricted from using hundreds of millions of dollars in legally purchased product, abruptly exposing them to potentially billions of dollars in noxious weed damage. The American Soybean Association (ASA) urges the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to immediately issue guidance for growers and other affected stakeholders, and to include measures that will offer recourse to affected parties, such as allowing the use of existing stocks and requesting a stay of the court mandate.

While ASA was aware of the potential outcomes in the *National Family Farm Coalition* case, and even filed an *amicus curiae* brief supporting EPA’s position, we were shocked with how immediately, abruptly, and irresponsibly the Court’s mandate was issued. It is our understanding that the Court normally allows for a period of compliance with a mandate, or at a minimum, there is regularly a post-ruling procedural period for response by adversely-impacted parties before a mandate is issued. That was not the case in this instance. The immediate mandate, which ASA believes is a reckless and irresponsible action from the Court, has left many growers confused and clamoring for information about the impact this ruling has to their operations. In the hours since the ruling, confusion is still widespread.

Also of significant concern, the application windows that accompany these products are inherently narrow and quickly closing. The longer it takes for guidance to come, the greater the likelihood growers will miss their application windows for this growing season. Time is of the essence. Our agricultural communities are in great need of clarifying guidance from EPA on how best to proceed given the circumstances – ideally in the coming hours, not days.

Additionally, as you draft the guidance the agency plans to issue, please consider the impact to

EXHIBIT 3

the growers who stand to have their operations devastated by this ruling through no fault of their own. U.S. growers could suffer doubly from this ruling: first, through their investment of hundreds of millions of dollars in product which they may no longer be able to legally use; and secondly, through the potentially-billions of dollars in exposure to damaging weeds – that may have few or no other treatment options – they will now have to manage differently.

This could be a make-or-break event for many growers in a market already heavily disrupted by COVID-19 impacts and a trade war with China, soy's largest export customer. EPA has multiple options to offer recourse to growers and other impacted parties, such as allowing growers to use existing stocks. Additionally, any steps EPA can take to seek a stay to the mandate ordered by this ruling could be a valuable step in offering much need recourse to growers.

We thank you for your diligence in quickly informing impacted parties to the agency's interpretation of this ruling, and again, urge you seek ways to offer recourse to impacted growers in your forthcoming guidance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Gordon", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bill Gordon
President



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June 7, 2020

Via email: dunn.alexandra@epa.gov

Alexandra Dapolito Dunn, Esq.
Assistant Administrator
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Re: 9th Circuit Court Decision on Dicamba in *NATIONAL FAMILY FARM COALITION; et al., Petitioners v. U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY and ANDREW WHEELER*

Dear Ms. Dunn:

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' decision on dicamba announced June 3, 2020 is devastating to our nation's farmers and seeks to undermine the science-based regulatory system for pesticides established under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

U.S. cotton farmers, preliminary analysis estimates that the direct loss in value of production totals approximately \$400 million. The direct economic impact is based on USDA's current 2020 planted area estimate of 13.475 million acres of upland cotton. The analysis removes 590,000 cotton acres planted in Arkansas since the court decision came after the state-enforced cut-off date for dicamba applications. In addition, 45,000 acres of upland cotton planted in California are also not affected by the decision since there was no approval for use of dicamba in that state.

Of the 12.840 million acres planted in the remaining 15 Cotton Belt states, it is estimated that approximately 75% of those acres are planted to dicamba-tolerant varieties. The 75% adoption rate reflects the recent trends from USDA's Cotton Varieties Planted report. Of the 9.630 million acres of dicamba-tolerant varieties, the baseline assumption is that 20% of those acres (or 1.926 million acres) could be susceptible to significant yield losses due to increased weed pressures. Research conducted prior to availability of dicamba-tolerant varieties reported a minimum 50% yield-loss in fields with resistant palmer amaranth (pigweed). Using a U.S. average yield of 730 pounds per planted acre, the yield decline on the impacted acres is 365 pounds, which translates into \$208 of lost revenue based on USDA's projected cotton price of \$0.57 per pound. That lost revenue on the impacted acres totals \$401 million.

Given the prevalence of RoundUp (glyphosate)-resistant pigweed, it is important to understand the risks to U.S. cotton production. If as many of 40% of the dicamba tolerant acres suffer a 50% yield loss, the lost revenue reaches \$800 million.

In addition to the revenue losses, cotton farmers face the additional costs of switching to another herbicide product. An initial analysis suggests that switching to Liberty (glufosinate) leads to an

EXHIBIT 4

increase of \$5.00/acre but without a 100% control of pigweed. Liberty is an alternative but less effective and not as reliable as the labeled dicamba. With cool temperatures at planting in some areas, the product does not provide effective control. Additionally, with larger pigweed plants, the control provided by Liberty decreases and becomes more erratic. Liberty is an important tool but not as the only choice. The continued availability of dicamba is imperative to avoid the loss of Liberty due to resistance development. In addition, it will take multiple applications to achieve good control provided by dicamba. If done by a custom applicator, an initial cost estimate is \$7 to \$10 per acre for the applicator.

RoundUp will be applied as well but that product will not control the RoundUp-resistant pigweed that can be controlled by dicamba. Control of resistant pigweed in some areas may have to be done manually at this stage, adding to the costs. Labor necessary for manual weed control is difficult to find, and even with available labor, effective control requires the chopping of large stalks and hauling the weeds from the field. Costs estimates run from at least \$20 per acre to as much as \$60 per acre if the labor is available.

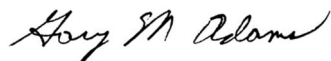
Pigweed that is resistant to RoundUp threatens the ability to farm in regions across the Cotton Belt. The fast growth of the plant, the production of about 700,000 seeds per plant, the height and density of the plants in fields without control, the costs and lack of availability of crews to hoe and remove the plants from fields, combined with the overwhelming seedbank already present would overwhelm the small profit level of production while steadily decreasing yield.

The present state of crop production requires a small window of opportunity for a series of actions that must be completed on a timely basis. Pre-plant burndown, at-planting residuals, and post-planting over-the-top applications are required to achieve effective weed management. The few herbicide Modes of Action (MOA) viable for today's weed management are at risk due to resistance development. The loss of dicamba will result in a loss of herbicide control due to the lack of a MOA that forces overuse of the remaining MOAs.

The economic damage caused by this court decision compounds an already tenuous economic situation for cotton farmers who are already facing depressed market prices due to ongoing trade tensions and the COVID-19 pandemic. Rural economies across the Cotton Belt are reliant on the direct and downstream economic benefits of a healthy cotton economy. This decision jeopardizes the farms and businesses directly involved in the production, distribution and processing of cotton that employ more than 125,000 workers and produce direct business revenue of more than \$21 billion.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments supporting this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,



Gary M. Adams
President and CEO
National Cotton Council

cc: Derrick Bolen - bolen.derrick@epa.gov
Carrie Meadows - meadows.carrievicenta@epa.gov