



SOYBEAN VARIETIES' CROSS REFERENCE GUIDE

When a soybean variety is released to the public, the plant breeder or company that developed the variety names it and describes its characteristics, which likely will include its maturity designation, plant height, yield level, drought tolerance, adaptation to particular soil textures and conditions, and tolerance or resistance to known insect, disease, and nematode pests. These characteristics are important criteria that growers use to select varieties for their particular growing conditions.

A new soybean variety that is released is expected to be a new and unique genetic entity that is distinct, uniform in performance, and genetically stable. As a new release, it should also be superior in one or more traits to varieties already on the market.

Farmers may be purchasing different “brands/product numbers” of soybean seed from different companies, and assume that those different brands/product numbers are actually different varieties. But those brands/product numbers of soybean seed may be the same genetics as brands or product numbers from another company—i.e., they are the same variety.

There is a difference between brand or product number and variety, and sometimes brands or product numbers are misstated as varieties. In actuality, different seed companies may be marketing the same soybean variety under different brand names/product numbers.

In essence, soybean brand names/product numbers are arbitrarily assigned by the seller for marketing purposes. Thus, if soybean seed is sold only by brand name/product number, growers have no way to make comparisons among the brands of different selling companies. If only the brand

name/product number is provided, a grower could easily and unintentionally be buying the same variety [and thus the same genetics] as that sold under a different brand/product number assigned by another company instead of actually buying two different varieties with different genetics.

To help soybean producers navigate this possible dilemma when selecting soybean “varieties” to plant, Dr. Jeremy Ross, Extension Soybean Agronomist with the Univ. of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, has compiled a “Cross Reference Guide for Common Soybean Varieties” for the last several years. Each year’s compilation has a list of varieties under the category heading of “Variety of Interest” followed by a list of “Same Varieties as the Variety of Interest”. Click [here](#) for these compilations.

Producers are encouraged to keep these lists handy so that they will have access to them when they are selecting a “brand/product number” of soybean seed from a particular company. Thus, if the preferred brand/product number of seed is unavailable, the same variety with a different brand name/product number from another company can be substituted.

*Composed by Larry G. Heatherly, Updated Feb. 2022,
larryh91746@gmail.com*