

# Indirect Reduction of Ear Molds and Associated Mycotoxins in *Bacillus thuringiensis* Corn Under Controlled and Open Field Conditions: Utility and Limitations

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J. Econ. Entomol. 93(6): 1669-1679 (2000)

**ABSTRACT** In 1995, ears of a experimental inbred (CG59-2) containing a synthetic *Bacillus thuringiensis* Cry IA(b) gene driven by PEPC, pith and pollen promoters and artificially infested with *Ostrinia nubilalis* (Hübner) larvae in small plot studies were free from insect damage, whereas 40–50% of the corresponding non-Bt inbred ears were damaged. Bt inbred ears that were inoculated with *Aspergillus flavus* Link and *Fusarium proliferatum* T. Matsushima (Nirenberg) or exposed to natural mold inoculum after infestation with *O. nubilalis* were free of visible signs of mold, as compared with ≈30–40% of the non-Bt ears similarly treated. Results in 1996 using the same inbred with a single allele dose of the Bt gene showed similar trends. Mean total fumonisin levels for non-Bt versus Bt inbred ears were not significantly different (2.8 versus 0.5 ppm, respectively) in 1996. In paired hybrid studies run in 0.4-ha (1-acre) fields, an event 176 Bt hybrid had significantly lower amounts of damage and signs of *Fusarium* spp. mold, but not fumonisin, compared with a corresponding non-Bt hybrid from 1996 to 1998. However, two hybrid pairs that contained either MONS10 or Bt11 constructs examined in similar fields at the same site had lower levels of fumonisin in both 1997 (30- to 40-fold) and 1998. High intrafield variability in insect infestation and presence of *Helicoverpa zea* (Boddie) in Bt hybrids was apparently responsible for fewer significant differences in fumonisin levels in 1998. Similar trends for all three hybrid pairs were noted in small plot trials at another site. Incidence of other ear pests or insect predators varied as much among non-Bt hybrids as they did for Bt/non-Bt hybrid pairs.

**KEY WORDS** *Bacillus thuringiensis*, maize, *Zea*, *Ostrinia*, *Helicoverpa*, *Carpophilus*

MYCOTOXINS PRODUCED BY corn ear mold fungi cause hundreds of millions of dollars of direct and indirect costs per year in the United States (CAST 1989, USDA-ARS 1999). In corn destined for human consumption, acceptable levels for aflatoxins are from 0 to 20 parts per billion (ppb), whereas the proposed level for fumonisins in Europe is one part per million (ppm) (van Egmond 1998). It is well documented that ear feeding insects can significantly increase the incidence of these molds and associated toxins (for a review see Dowd 1998). Both insecticide treatments and use of tight-husked varieties of corn resistant to insects can significantly reduce the incidence of the molds and their toxins (Dowd 1998). However, current insecticide formulations usually cannot be applied economically to control insects well enough to reduce mycotoxin levels to acceptable levels as a result of the number of treatments required (for a review, Dowd 1998). Southern-adapted, tight husked germplasm does not yield as well as corn belt adapted germplasm (Jenkins 1947), and has increased susceptibility to

temperate ear molds caused by the extended drydown period in the field (Dowd 1998, Trenholm et al. 1989).

Recent genetic engineering technology has produced maize with near immunity to the European corn borer, *Ostrinia nubilalis* (Hübner), in tissue expressing 1,000+ ppm of Bt crystal protein in the soluble protein fraction (Kozel et al. 1993). Expression of high levels of the *Bacillus thuringiensis* protein in the silks and ears of maize can greatly reduce damage by *O. nubilalis*. The reduced *O. nubilalis* damage should also reduce mold on the respective ears, as has been reported previously in small plot studies (Dowd et al. 1995, 1996; Munkvold et al. 1996, 1997, 1999; Munkvold and Hellmich 1998). Use of the Bt hybrids thus may not only help with insect management, but also with ear mold and mycotoxin levels. However, the number of other ear feeding pests that may be involved in mycotoxin production (Dowd 1998) and the potential concerns of Bt hybrid effects on nontarget and beneficial insects prompted comprehensive studies in Illinois. This report describes experiments in both small plot and in ≈0.4-ha (1-acre) fields that demonstrate reductions in the incidence and amount of ear damage caused by target caterpillars in Bt versus non-Bt inbreds or hybrids. These reductions in cater-

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pillar damage were often associated with both reductions in signs of mold and associated mycotoxins, such as fumonisins. This report also describes incidence and damage caused by nontarget insect pests of ears, and incidence of insect predators. Summaries of these studies have been reported previously (Dowd et al. 1995, 1996, 1997a, 1998a, 1999a).

### Materials and Methods

**Inbred Study.** *Insects.* The *O. nubilalis* were obtained from either J. White, of Ciba Seeds (now Novartis), Bloomington, IL, or M. R. McGuire (USDA-ARS, National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research, Peoria IL). The colony obtained from M. R. McGuire was originally obtained from L. C. Lewis (USDA-ARS, Iowa State University). The Bloomington *O. nubilalis* were used for initial tests of seedlings in growth chambers in 1995, and the other *O. nubilalis* were used in all other studies.

*Plants.* Elite inbred seed (experimental inbred CG59-2 produced by Ciba Seeds [now Novartis]) segregating 1:1 for a Bt gene was used to obtain Bt corn in 1995. The construct in this inbred had a CryIA(b) synthetic Bt gene driven by PEPC, pith and pollen promoters, thus expression of the Bt protein was at high levels throughout most of the plant. A corresponding non-Bt inbred was used for comparative purposes. Because of unavailability of the same Bt seed in 1996, seed produced from the Bt  $\times$  non-Bt (pollen source) inbreds in 1995 was used. Seed was germinated in soil mix (Dowd 1994) and seedlings were grown in plant growth chambers (Dowd and Lagrimini 1997) at 27:21°C, 50% RH, and a photoperiod of 16:8 (L:D) h. Plants were transplanted into the field after three leaves were present. Initial fertilizer applications were the same as described previously (Dowd 1994), but were supplemented with Miracle-Gro lawn food (Stern's Miracle-Gro Products, Port Washington, NY) (33% N, 6% P, 6% K) when pale leaves indicated signs of nitrogen stress. There were two supplemental treatments with fertilizer in 1995, and four in 1996. Flooding in 1996 killed most of the initial transplants, so new plants were started and transplanted.

*Bacillus thuringiensis* Determination Assays for Experimental Inbreds. In 1995,  $\approx$  2 cm of the oldest leaf tip was removed from  $\approx$ 150 of the 1:1 segregating Bt seedlings and 75 of the non-Bt inbreds. Each leaf section was put in a Falcon 1006 petri dish (Becton Dickinson, Franklin Lakes, NJ) along with 10 neonate *O. nubilalis* larvae. The leaf sections were examined after 1 and 2 d for dead larvae and the degree of feeding damage. The source plants corresponding to leaf sections producing mostly dead larvae and almost no feeding after 2 d were considered Bt protein positive and were transplanted into the field. Of the seedlings tested, 50.3% were Bt protein positive.

*Bacillus thuringiensis* protein positive plants used in 1995 and 1996 were further checked for Bt protein expression just before field assays by collecting 2 by 2-cm sections of the terminal leaf tip of each plant in

the field. These leaves were evaluated Bt protein presence as just described.

*Molds Used for Inbred Inoculation.* The *Aspergillus flavus* Link strain used, NRRL 3357, was obtained from S. W. Peterson at the USDA-ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research, Peoria, IL. This strain is a reliable aflatoxin producer often used in evaluating maize resistance to *A. flavus* and aflatoxin (Norton 1995). The *Fusarium proliferatum* (T. Matsushima) Nirenberg strain used, M-5991, was obtained from G. A. Bennett (USDA-ARS National center for Agricultural Utilization Research, Peoria IL). This strain originally came from the Fusarium Research Center at The Pennsylvania State University. This strain is a reliable producer of fumonisins and moniliformin and was originally isolated from corn in Iowa (Javed et al. 1993). A separate spore suspension of each mold species was prepared at a concentration of  $10^6$  colony forming units per milliliter of 0.01% Triton  $\times$  100. The spore suspensions were mixed 1:1 for application to ears.

*Inbred Field Assays.* Bt plants were detasseled during both 1995 and 1996 because of other corn being grown in the area, and pollen from the corresponding non-Bt inbred was used for all pollinations. Time of silking varied enough so that two series of ears were available each year, with pollination dates for each series varying by no more than 3 d. The most numerous plants (first series of pollinations in each case) were used in studies where both *O. nubilalis* and mold inoculum were added. Seven days after median silking of each series, 10 neonate *O. nubilalis* were individually transferred to the silks of each ear by using a probe. The caterpillars were confined to the ear tip by covering the ear tip with a 10 by 20-cm muslin bag, secured by a rubber band. One upper corner of the bag was cut off so an opening 1 cm wide was available. The open corner was folded over and held closed with a small binder clip.

Mold inoculum was added to the first series of ears 7 d after the caterpillars were added. The binder clip was removed and 0.5 ml of inoculum was added to the silks at the ear tip with an automatic pipet. The corner of the bag was folded back over and resealed. Bags remained on those ears in the mold inoculation series until harvest. In the uninoculated series of experiments, the muslin bags were removed 1 wk after the *O. nubilalis* were added to permit naturally occurring molds to interact with the ears.

*Evaluation of Inbred Ears.* Ears were removed after black layering of kernels had occurred. Ears were examined for caterpillar damage and position of the damaged kernels on the ear. The number and type (filled or unfilled) of kernels damaged was also noted. Ears were also evaluated for signs of mold presence. The number and type of kernels, and the type of mold (if determinable) was recorded. Mold type was determined using guidelines provided in a corn disease manual (Shurtleff 1980) as described previously (Dowd et al. 1999). The association of mold with insect-damaged kernels was also recorded. Examinations for mold were done both by eye and under 40 $\times$

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d inoculation. The *Aspergillus* strain L3357, was obtained from USDA-ARS National Center for Research, Peoria, IL. This organism is a producer often used in research to *A. flavus* and aflatoxin *sarum proliferatum* (T. Matin used, M-5991, was obtained from USDA-ARS National center for Research, Peoria IL). This strain is from the Fusarium Research Center, Virginia State University. This center of fumonisins and moniliform disease isolated from corn in Iowa. A separate spore suspension of *A. flavus* was prepared at a concentration of 10<sup>7</sup> spores per milliliter of 0.01% Tri-sil. Suspensions were mixed 1:1 for

t plants were detasseled during the harvest of other corn being grown from the corresponding field for all pollinations. Time of that two series of ears were harvested on different dates for each treatment. The most numerous limitations in each case) were both *O. nubilalis* and mold. Several days after median silking, ears of *O. nubilalis* were individually isolated from each ear by using a sharp knife. Ears were confined to the ear tip by a 10 by 20-cm muslin bag. The upper corner of the bag 1 cm wide was available. The bag was held closed with a

clip to the first series of ears were added. The binder clip of inoculum was added to the automatic pipet. The corner of the bag was clipped. Bags of the mold inoculation series were removed 1 wk after the inoculation. Ears were removed after harvest had occurred. Ears were labeled and position of the ear was noted. The number and type of ears damaged was also noted. For signs of mold presence, ears were examined and the type of mold was noted. Mold type was determined in a corn disease laboratory as described previously. The association of mold with ears was also recorded. Examination was by eye and under 40X

using a stereomicroscope. Ears were also examined under long wave (345 nm) UV light for the presence and numbers of kernels with bright greenish yellow fluorescence (BGYF) which is an indicator of *A. flavus* kernel invasion (e.g., Norton 1995).

**Hybrid Studies. Hybrid Culture.** Field scale experiments involved planting non-Bt/Bt pairs of Ciba 4494 and Max 454 (event 176) from 1996 to 1998, Pioneer P3394 and P33V08 (event MON810) and NK6800 and NK 6800 Bt (event Bt 11) from 1997 to 1998 at a research site near Kilbourne, IL (Dowd et al. 1998b). Each hybrid pair was planted in  $\approx 0.4$ -ha (1-acre) fields in four row alternating strips, with at least six strips of each hybrid type. Planting density and cultural conditions were the same as those described previously (Dowd et al. 1998b). Smaller paired experiments were also set up in Peoria, IL, in the same years, with at least 20 plants of each hybrid present and grown as described for inbreds.

**Evaluation of Hybrid Ears.** In fields near Kilbourne, IL, samples for first-generation *O. nubilalis* were taken once damage was noted in all 3 yr in the V9 to V12 stage. Sampling was performed as described previously (Dowd et al. 1998b) with about every fourth plant sampled in a center row of each strip, for a typical total of 25 plants. In 1996, an adjacent field of P3394 was also sampled in the same manner. In 1996 and 1997, the two axils below the ear axil of 25 plants in each row were sampled for insects (including predators), insect damage, and molds. Twenty-five milk stage ears per row were removed for evaluation in the laboratory for type and degree of insect damage as described previously, which included insect species present and numbers of kernels damaged by respective insects (Dowd et al. 1998). Harvest stage ears were sampled in the same manner as milk stage ears, and evaluated for amount and type of insect damage, numbers of kernels discolored, and numbers of kernels symptomatically molded.

During milk stage sampling in 1996, unexpectedly smaller *O. nubilalis* larvae were found on the Max 454 versus 4494 ears, so ear tissue from collected ears was tested for effects on *O. nubilalis*. For this experiment, 30 ear tips of each hybrid,  $\approx 2$  cm long, were removed from each ear and placed in 28-ml plastic cups. Five neonate *O. nubilalis* were added to each cup. Cups were held at  $27 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ ,  $40 \pm 10\%$  RH, and a photoperiod of 14:10 (L:D) h for 7 d, after which both mortality and weights of survivors were determined. The experiment was run in duplicate.

**Mycotoxin Analyses.** Insect-damaged kernels were separated from other kernels and both were analyzed separately for aflatoxins and fumonisins to increase the accuracy of the analysis. Data were recombined by weight for final mycotoxin level calculations. Prior work has indicated that insect-damaged kernels can comprise most of the source of fumonisin in an ear, in some cases having  $>1,000$  ppm of fumonisins (Dowd et al. 1999). Samples were stored at  $-20^\circ\text{C}$  until mycotoxin analysis for fumonisins and aflatoxins was performed by Romer Laboratories (Union, MO), using previously described procedures (Dowd et al. 1999).

Table 1. Effect of Bt gene in maize inbreds on *O. nubilalis* infestation, damage and mold in 1995

| Parameter           | Mold inoculum added |       | No mold inoculum added |      |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------|------------------------|------|
|                     | Bt-                 | Bt+   | Bt-                    | Bt+  |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i> |                     |       |                        |      |
| % infestation       | 53.2a               | 0.0b  | 41.5a                  | 0.0b |
| % w/ kernel damage  | 51.1a               | 0.0b  | 39.0a                  | 0.0b |
| Mold                |                     |       |                        |      |
| % w/ mold           | 38.3a               | 0.0b  | 29.3a                  | 0.0b |
| % w/ sporulation    | 0.0a                | 0.0b  | 0.0a                   | 0.0a |
| % w/ fluorescence   | 46.5a               | 10.0b | 29.3a                  | 3.2b |

Mold inoculum was *A. flavus* and *F. proliferatum*. Respective number of ears are 47 and 30 for Bt- and Bt+ ears with inoculum added, and 41 and 31 for Bt- and Bt+ ears with no inoculum added. Values in rows of the same column grouping followed by different letters are statistically different at  $P < 0.05$  by chi-square analysis.

High-performance liquid chromatography analysis detection limits were 1 ppb for aflatoxins B1, B2, G1, and G2; and 0.1 ppm for fumonisins B1, B2, and B3. Individual ears from inbred studies were tested for mycotoxins, whereas groups of three to five ears for small plot hybrid studies in Peoria were combined for analysis. All ears from each sampled row in hybrid studies at Kilbourne were pooled as an individual sample used for mycotoxin analysis.

**Statistical Analyses.** Significant differences in percent insect infestation and percent infection (molds) were determined by chi-square analysis due to non-normal distribution of some data, as has been described previously (Dowd et al. 1998b, 1999) using SAS PROC FREQ (SAS Institute 1987). Significant differences in numbers of kernels per ear that were insect-damaged or molded, and mycotoxin levels (after log transformation) were determined by analysis of variance (ANOVA) (PROC GLM, SAS Institute 1987). Correlation analysis was used to determine the degree of association between the insect damage, mold presence, and mycotoxins (PROC CORR, SAS Institute 1987).

## Results

**Inbred Studies.** There was no indication of presence or ear damage by *O. nubilalis* larvae when they were added to the Bt inbred in 1995 (Table 1). Incidence of *O. nubilalis* on the non-Bt inbred ranged from  $\approx 40$  to 50%, with approximately the same percentage of ears sustaining *O. nubilalis* kernel damage whether they were inoculated with mold or not. None of the Bt ears had visible mold hyphae or sporulation regardless of whether they were inoculated with mold or not (Table 1). Although no visible mold was seen, 10% of the inoculated Bt ears had visible bright greenish yellow fluorescence (BGYF), typically on only one or two kernels per ear. In contrast,  $\approx 30$ –40% of the non-Bt ears had visible mold and up to 47% had BGYF, which was again limited to a few kernels per ear. Mold was associated with *O. nubilalis* damage 78% of the time when mold inoculum was added, and 94% of the time



Table 2. Effect of Bt gene (half level) in maize inbreds on *O. nubilalis* infestation, damage and mold in 1996

| Parameter                           | Mold inoculum added |             | No mold inoculum added |       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------|
|                                     | Bt-                 | Bt+         | Bt-                    | Bt+   |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i>                 |                     |             |                        |       |
| Tip/early damage                    |                     |             |                        |       |
| % infestation                       | 96.9a               | 33.3b       | ND                     | ND    |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 9.4 ± 0.9a          | 9.3 ± 1.5a  | ND                     | ND    |
| Late damage                         |                     |             |                        |       |
| % infestation                       | 3.1a                | 19.0a       | ND                     | ND    |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 6.0                 | 8.8 ± 2.2   | ND                     | ND    |
| Side damage                         |                     |             |                        |       |
| % infestation                       | 31.2a               | 23.8a       | ND                     | ND    |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 16.9 ± 4.8a         | 6.4 ± 3.1a  | ND                     | ND    |
| Overall                             |                     |             |                        |       |
| % infestation                       | 96.9a               | 52.4b       | 72.2a                  | 0.0b  |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 9.3 ± 0.9a          | 9.1 ± 4.5a  | 19.0 ± 2.7             | —     |
| Mold                                |                     |             |                        |       |
| Tip mold on filled kernels          |                     |             |                        |       |
| % incidence                         | 46.8a               | 9.5b        | ND                     | ND    |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 11.5 ± 2.5a         | 5.5 ± 1.5a  | ND                     | ND    |
| Tip mold on all kernels             |                     |             |                        |       |
| % incidence                         | 70.6a               | 28.6b       | ND                     | ND    |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 12.2 ± 1.5a         | 14.5 ± 2.9a | ND                     | ND    |
| Mold on total ear on filled kernels |                     |             |                        |       |
| % incidence                         | 44.1a               | 19.0a       | 33.3a                  | 0.0a  |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 11.3 ± 2.2a         | 6.8 ± 2.1a  | 11.2 ± 3.0             | —     |
| Mold on total ear on any kernels    |                     |             |                        |       |
| % incidence                         | 88.2a               | 38.1b       | 60.0a                  | 20.0a |
| No. kernels/ear                     | 8.0 ± 0.6a          | 8.6 ± 1.2a  | 11.4 ± 2.5             | 4.0   |
| Fumonisin, ppm                      | 2.8 ± 1.3a          | 0.8 ± 0.3a  | ND                     | ND    |

Mold inoculum was *A. flavus* and *F. proliferatum*. Respective number of ears are 32 and 21 for Bt- and Bt+ damage on inoculated ears. 5 and 18 for Bt- and Bt+ damage on noninoculated ears. Values reported for numbers of damaged kernels per ear are based only on ears where damage occurred. Values in rows for like column groupings followed by different letters are significantly different for incidence (chi-square analysis) and number of kernels/ear or fumonisin (ANOVA) at  $P < 0.05$ . ND, not determined due to low or no occurrence.

when no inoculum was added. Because ear fill was poor (apparently because of hot weather, which also adversely affected fill of other varieties being grown in the same location), no samples were submitted for mycotoxin analysis.

Heavy and repeated natural infestation by *O. nubilalis* in 1996 complicated interpretation of experi-

ments. Because of this natural infestation, location and type of infestation is distinguished in reported results. Early tip damage, as indicated by browning of the pericarp on damaged kernels, is attributed to those *O. nubilalis* specifically added to the ear tips and then covered by cloth bags. For those ears that had mold inoculum added, nearly 100% of the non-Bt ears had *O. nubilalis* damage at the tip, as compared with 33% of the Bt ears (Table 2). When caterpillar damage was present, the number of kernels damaged per ear at the tip was approximately the same for both inbreds. There was no significant difference in incidence of *O. nubilalis* that invaded through the ear side (which may result in higher rates of mold, Dowd et al. 1999) or invaded late (which typically results in little mold, Dowd et al. 1999) for the Bt versus non-Bt inbreds, and incidence was lower than for ear tips of the respective inbreds. Although when ear side damage occurred and the number of damaged kernels per ear was reduced by more than twofold for the Bt versus non-Bt corn, the differences were not significant. A more limited number of plants had natural mold invasion, but the amount of *O. nubilalis* infestation of all ear location types was still significantly less for the Bt compared with non-Bt corn (Table 2).

In 1996, the incidence of mold on the inbred ear tips where mold inoculum was purposely added was  $\approx 4.5$ -2.8-fold less for the Bt compared with non-Bt inbred, depending on whether only filled kernels or all kernels are considered (Table 2). When mold was present, the number of moldy filled kernels per ear was reduced by twofold for Bt versus non-Bt ears, but differences were not significant. At least a twofold reduction in the incidence of mold for Bt versus non-Bt ears was seen regardless of the location of the *O. nubilalis* damage on the ear (Table 2). Again, when mold was present, the number of filled moldy kernels per ear was reduced by twofold for the Bt compared to non-Bt corn over the entire ear. Similar trends were noted for the ears where mold inoculum was not added in 1996. Although mean total fumonisin levels were about threefold lower in Bt versus non-Bt ears, the differences were not significant. No ears had BGYF in 1996.

**Hybrid Studies in 0.4-ha Fields.** Control of first generation *O. nubilalis* by Bt hybrids was highly effective in all 3 yr at Kilbourne, IL (Table 3). When examined, a significantly higher percentage of non-Bt versus Bt plants had both mold and *O. nubilalis* larval

Table 3. Incidence of first-generation European corn borer-like damage at Kilbourne site on Bt and non-Bt hybrid pairs

| Year | % infestation by <i>O. nubilalis</i> |             |          |           |          |            |
|------|--------------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
|      | Ciba                                 |             | Pioneer  |           | NK       |            |
|      | 4494 Bt-                             | Max 454 Bt+ | 3394 Bt- | 33V08 Bt+ | 6800 Bt- | 6800Bt Bt+ |
| 1996 | 16.0a                                | 0.0b        | 36.5     | NA        | NA       | NA         |
| 1997 | 86.0a                                | 1.6b        | 82.4a    | 1.6b      | 80.0a    | 0.7b       |
| 1998 | 5.6a                                 | 0.0b        | 12.0a    | 0.0b      | 3.6a     | 0.0b       |

Number of ears for 1996 was 200. Number of ears for 1997 was 250 for Pioneer and Ciba series hybrids, 175 for NK6800 and 150 for NK6800Bt. Number of ears for 1998 was 150 and 160 for 4494, max454; 200 and 225 for 3394 and 33V08; 250 and 225 for NK6800 and NK6800Bt. Values in rows of like hybrid pairs followed by different letters are significantly different at  $P < 0.05$  by chi-square analysis. NA, not available for the year.

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s natural infestation, location and distinguished in reported results. s indicated by browning of the l kernels, is attributed to those O added to the ear tips and then gs for those ears that had mold arl 100% of the non-Bt ears had at the tip, as compared with 33% 2). When caterpillar damage was of kernels damaged per ear at the el the same for both inbreds cant difference in incidence of O d through the ear side (which may s mold, Dowd et al. 1999) or a typically results in little mold. the Bt versus non-Bt inbreds. and than for ear tips of the respective he ear side damage occurred and age kernels per ear was reduced ld for the Bt versus non-Bt corn. e not significant. A more limited ad natural mold invasion, but the ali infestation of all ear location ficantly less for the Bt compared Table 2).

en of mold on the inbred ear tips im as purposely added was  $\approx 4.5$  Bt compared with non-Bt inbred her only filled kernels or all kernels ple ). When mold was present, the le kernels per ear was reduced by s non-Bt ears, but differences were least a twofold reduction in the for it versus non-Bt ears was seen at on of the *O. nubilalis* damage on Again, when mold was present, the ldly kernels per ear was reduced by compared to non-Bt corn over the t and were noted for the ear ilum was not added in 1996. Al- fumonisin levels were about three- er s non-Bt ears, the differences it. o ears had BCYF in 1996.

in 0.4-ha Fields. Control of first ilalis by Bt hybrids was highly ef- at ilbourne, IL (Table 3). When cally higher percentage of non-Bt d both mold and *O. nubilalis* larva-

Table 3. Distribution of insects and mold for axil samples (7-10 after pollination) at Kilbourne site in Bt and non-Bt hybrid pairs.

| Organism                              | Pioneer  |           | Ciba     |             | NK       |            |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------|----------|------------|
|                                       | 3394 Bt- | 33V08 Bt+ | 4494 Bt- | Max 454 Bt+ | 6800 Bt- | 6800Bt Bt+ |
| 1996                                  |          |           |          |             |          |            |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i>                   | 2.5      | ND        | 26.0a    | 35.0b       | ND       | ND         |
| <i>Fusarium</i>                       | 58.0     | ND        | 57.5a    | 56.0a       | ND       | ND         |
| 1997                                  |          |           |          |             |          |            |
| Sap beetles                           | 8.8a     | 13.6a     | 1.6a     | 4.8a        | 3.4a     | 2.7a       |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i>                   | 6.8a     | 10.0a     | 3.2a     | 3.6a        | 3.4a     | 5.0a       |
| Lady beetles                          | 2.8a     | 1.6a      | 7.2a     | 9.6a        | 1.7a     | 2.0a       |
| Aphids                                | NR       | NR        | 20.4a    | 42.4b       | 8.0a     | 14.0a      |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i>                   | 36.8a    | 0.0b      | 42.8a    | 0.4b        | 29.1a    | 0.0b       |
| <i>Fusarium</i>                       | 75.2a    | 56.0b     | 74.0a    | 56.0b       | 70.9a    | 62.7a      |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i> + <i>Fusarium</i> | 33.2a    | 0.0b      | 35.2a    | 0.4b        | 27.4a    | 0.0b       |

Table 4. Distribution of insects and mold for axil samples (7-10 after pollination) at Kilbourne site in Bt and non-Bt hybrid pairs.

| Organism                              | Pioneer  |           | Ciba     |             | NK       |            |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------|----------|------------|
|                                       | 3394 Bt- | 33V08 Bt+ | 4494 Bt- | Max 454 Bt+ | 6800 Bt- | 6800Bt Bt+ |
| 1996                                  |          |           |          |             |          |            |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i>                   | 2.5      | ND        | 26.0a    | 35.0b       | ND       | ND         |
| <i>Fusarium</i>                       | 58.0     | ND        | 57.5a    | 56.0a       | ND       | ND         |
| 1997                                  |          |           |          |             |          |            |
| Sap beetles                           | 8.8a     | 13.6a     | 1.6a     | 4.8a        | 3.4a     | 2.7a       |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i>                   | 6.8a     | 10.0a     | 3.2a     | 3.6a        | 3.4a     | 5.0a       |
| Lady beetles                          | 2.8a     | 1.6a      | 7.2a     | 9.6a        | 1.7a     | 2.0a       |
| Aphids                                | NR       | NR        | 20.4a    | 42.4b       | 8.0a     | 14.0a      |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i>                   | 36.8a    | 0.0b      | 42.8a    | 0.4b        | 29.1a    | 0.0b       |
| <i>Fusarium</i>                       | 75.2a    | 56.0b     | 74.0a    | 56.0b       | 70.9a    | 62.7a      |
| <i>O. nubilalis</i> + <i>Fusarium</i> | 33.2a    | 0.0b      | 35.2a    | 0.4b        | 27.4a    | 0.0b       |

ND, not determined; NR, less than 1% and not reported. Values in rows of like column groups followed by different letters are significantly different at  $P < 0.05$  by chi-square analysis.

entry holes at the same axil in 1997 ( $P = 0.000$ ,  $\chi^2 = 99.520$ ). There were typically no differences in incidences of beneficial insects for Bt versus non Bt hybrids. However, there were several cases where the differences in incidence of predators were greater between different non-Bt hybrids than between Bt and non-Bt hybrid pairs (Table 4). The presence of lady beetles was relatively independent of aphid presence.

At milk stage, as expected, the Pioneer and NK Bt hybrid ears had no *O. nubilalis* damage, although damage by sap beetles (Coleoptera: Nitidulidae) and *Helicoverpa zea* (Boddie) did occur (Table 5). In 1998, it appeared infestation by second-generation *O. nubilalis* occurred later than normal. They were present fairly commonly in the Ciba series plants, but not the Pioneer or NK series plants. The environmental conditions apparently delayed development of the Ciba

Table 5. Distribution of insects for milk stage samples at Kilbourne site on Bt and non-Bt hybrid pairs.

| Organism                      | Pioneer         |                | Ciba            |                 | NK              |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                               | 3394 Bt-        | 33V08 Bt+      | 4494 Bt-        | Max 454 Bt+     | 6800 Bt-        | 6800Bt Bt+      |
| 1996                          |                 |                |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| % ECB                         | 13.2b           | ND             | 28.9a           | 21.8a           | ND              | ND              |
| ECB kd/ear                    | 6.2 $\pm$ 1.5   | ND             | 8.9 $\pm$ 0.8a  | 1.3 $\pm$ 0.2b  | ND              | ND              |
| % CEW                         | 4.9             | ND             | 8.2a            | 7.4a            | ND              | ND              |
| CEW kd/ear                    | 43.5 $\pm$ 6.1  | ND             | 40.6 $\pm$ 4.6a | 33.7 $\pm$ 4.9b | ND              | ND              |
| % <i>O. nubilalis</i>         | 14.2            | ND             | 20.6a           | 18.8a           | ND              | ND              |
| % Aphids                      | 0.0             | ND             | 15.5a           | 10.4a           | ND              | ND              |
| 1997                          |                 |                |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| % ECB                         | 76.8a           | 0.0b           | 79.3a           | 76.8a           | 80.6a           | 0.0b            |
| ECB kd/ear                    | 7.0 $\pm$ 0.4   | —              | see below       | —               | 10.5 $\pm$ 0.8  | —               |
| % CEW                         | 1.4a            | 3.5a           | 1.5a            | 0.5a            | 0.6a            | 0.0a            |
| CEW kd/ear                    | 15.3 $\pm$ 5.9a | 3.0 $\pm$ 0.4b | 17.3 $\pm$ 7.9  | —               | 23.0            | —               |
| % SB                          | 5.3a            | 2.5a           | 8.4a            | 4.4a            | 6.9a            | 8.0a            |
| SB kd/ear                     | 3.7 $\pm$ 1.6a  | 3.0 $\pm$ 0.5a | 3.8 $\pm$ 1.2a  | 2.7 $\pm$ 0.9a  | —               | 7.0 $\pm$ 2.3   |
| % <i>O. nubilalis</i>         | 37.2a           | 53.2b          | 44.8a           | 50.7a           | 40.6a           | 50.0a           |
| % lady beetles                | 2.4a            | 3.0a           | 5.4a            | 2.5a            | 7.4a            | 1.3b            |
| % carabid larva               | 7.7a            | 8.0a           | 4.9a            | 9.9a            | 1.7a            | 0.7a            |
| % spiders                     | 14.0a           | 12.4a          | 12.3a           | 14.3a           | 12.0a           | 8.0a            |
| Ciba specific                 |                 |                |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| % recovery ECB from ears      | —               | —              | 73.9a           | 53.2b           | —               | —               |
| % ears with 2 or more ECB     | —               | —              | 30.4a           | 14.5b           | —               | —               |
| Mean ECB size, mm             | —               | —              | 9.5 $\pm$ 0.4a  | 5.5 $\pm$ 0.3b  | —               | —               |
| No. kernels damage by ECB/ear | —               | —              | 10.1 $\pm$ 0.8a | 1.3 $\pm$ 0.2b  | —               | —               |
| 1998                          |                 |                |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| % ECB                         | 0.0a            | 0.0a           | 38.8a           | 24.8b           | 0.0a            | 0.0b            |
| ECB kd/ear                    | —               | —              | 10.9 $\pm$ 0.9a | 7.0 $\pm$ 0.9b  | —               | —               |
| % CEW                         | 2.0a            | 0.0a           | 0.0a            | 0.0a            | 7.4a            | 12.4a           |
| CEW kd/ear                    | 12.5 $\pm$ 2.5  | —              | —               | —               | 29.3 $\pm$ 2.2a | 10.7 $\pm$ 1.7b |
| % SB                          | 10.0a           | 8.0a           | 30.8a           | 23.2b           | 3.4a            | 2.5a            |
| SB kd/ear                     | 4.2 $\pm$ 1.0a  | 3.8 $\pm$ 1.1a | 3.4 $\pm$ 0.5a  | 3.5 $\pm$ 0.5b  | 2.0             | 4.0 $\pm$ 2.5   |

ECB, *O. nubilalis*; CEW, *H. zea*; SB, sap beetle; kd, kernels damaged. Values in rows of like column pairs followed by different letters are significantly different at  $P < 0.05$  by analysis of variance (number of kernels damaged) or chi-square analysis (incidence).

cyb, 175 for NK6800 and 150 for NK6800Bt. 10 and 225 for NK6800 and NK6800Bt. Value chi-square analysis. NA, not available for the

series plants by about a week, despite being planted on the same day. This difference in developmental rate contrasted with what was seen in 1997 for this same group of hybrids, because silking occurred on approximately the same days. When corresponding values were present (one instance each in 1996, 1997, and 1998), the numbers of kernels damaged by *H. zea* larvae were significantly less for Bt versus non-Bt hybrids. Again, when beneficial insects were monitored, their incidence was typically very similar for Bt and non-Bt pairs, and varied more between different hybrids of the same Bt type than for Bt and non-Bt pairs. At milk stage, the numbers of Max 454 kernels damaged per ear by *O. nubilalis* was 6.5 (1996) to eightfold (1997) less than the 4494 non-Bt hybrid. The dramatic reduction in *O. nubilalis* damage on Max 454 compared with 4494 ears at milk stage was unexpected, based on the low level of Bt protein previously reported for the silk and kernels. Laboratory studies of ear tips from ears sampled in 1996 without filled kernels (the state they were in when ears were sampled at milk stage), indicated higher mortality of *O. nubilalis* larvae after 1 wk for those fed on the Bt ear tips compared with the non-Bt ear tips (34.4 and 1.5% for set 1, and 25.7 and 0.78% for set 2, respectively). The Bt ear tips also caused significant reductions in growth rates of *O. nubilalis* larvae compared with non-Bt ear tips as reflected by weights of survivors ( $0.53 \pm 0.06$  versus  $5.89 \pm 0.24$  mg,  $P = 0.000$ ,  $F = 221.246$ ,  $df = 1$ , 192 for set 1; and  $0.78 \pm 0.08$  versus  $4.52 \pm 0.26$  mg,  $P = 0.000$ ,  $F = 134.423$ ,  $df = 1$ , 183 for set 2, respectively).

At harvest, kernels damaged by *O. nubilalis*, whether early (discolored pericarp) or late in occurrence, were typically lower in number for Bt versus non-Bt hybrids (Table 6). When primarily *H. zea* damage was present, there was no significant difference in numbers of kernels damaged by *H. zea* in Bt versus non-Bt ears, even in the Bt hybrids that expressed the protein throughout the plants. Incidence of ears with sap beetle damage was significantly higher on the Pioneer ( $P = 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2 = 11.083$ ) and Ciba ( $P = 0.004$ ,  $\chi^2 = 8.189$ ) Bt compared to non-Bt hybrids in 1997. In 1997, at milk stage, sap beetles were frequently found feeding on caterpillar damaged kernels (which occurred at a high rate) in the non-Bt ears. In the milk stage Bt ears, which had much lower caterpillar damage, it was more common to see sap beetle adults and larvae causing the initial damage of the kernels. This trend was apparently reflected at harvest, as well. There was a higher incidence of stink bug (Hemiptera: Pentatomidae) damage for some Bt hybrids compared with non-Bt hybrids in 1997 but not 1998. However, stink bug incidence of damage varied as much between different non-Bt hybrids as for Bt/non-Bt hybrid pairs. Ears with "popped" kernels (kernels with split pericarps and visible expanded endosperms) were more common for all hybrids in 1997 than 1998, but incidence and degree of damage between different Bt/non-Bt hybrid pairs was not significantly different for any year/hybrid pair combination.

At harvest, significant reductions in incidence of visibly molded kernels damaged by caterpillars was

noted for Ciba Max 454 versus 4494 ears in all 3 yr at Kilbourne, but fumonisin levels were only reduced significantly for Bt versus non-Bt hybrids in 1998 ( $P = 0.025$ ;  $df = 1$ , 11;  $F = 6.228$ ) (Table 6). Significant reductions in mold incidence and fumonisin levels were noted for Bt versus non-Bt P3394 ( $P = 0.001$ ;  $df = 1$ , 14;  $F = 20.458$ ) and NK6800 ( $P = 0.000$ ;  $df = 1$ , 11;  $F = 40.090$ ) pairs in 1997, but differences were less dramatic in 1998, and fumonisin levels were not significantly different between Bt and non-Bt hybrid pairs. When all three fumonisins were detected, total fumonisins were generally comprised of  $\approx 75\%$  fumonisin B1, 20% fumonisin B2, and 5% fumonisin B3. When present, caterpillars were the major contributors of visibly molded kernels, but when *H. zea* were absent in 1997, sap beetle-damaged kernels and popped kernels could contribute the major amount of visibly molded kernels for the Bt hybrids. No aflatoxins were detected from the Kilbourne samples in any years.

Both incidence of visibly molded kernels and fumonisin were typically significantly correlated with numbers of insect-damaged kernels in all years, although higher correlations were typically noted between numbers of visibly molded and insect-damaged kernels. (Table 7). Correlations between insect damage and fumonisins were typically not significant for small plot studies (data not shown).

**Hybrid Studies in Small Plots.** The same trend in fumonisin levels noted at Kilbourne for the Ciba hybrid pairs was seen in small plot studies in Peoria. In 1996, total fumonisin levels for non-Bt versus Bt hybrid ears were  $8.8 \pm 6.0$  ppm (two pooled samples) versus 2.0 ppm (single pooled sample) for ears inoculated with caterpillars and spore suspensions (as for inbreds), and  $<0.35$  ppm fumonisin for either type when uninoculated. In 1997, total fumonisin levels for non-Bt versus Bt ears were  $4.8 \pm 1.9$  versus  $2.8 \pm 1.5$  ppm, respectively ( $P = 0.555$ ). Fumonisin levels were not determined in 1998 because of low incidence of insect damage for both hybrids. Results for small plot trials in Peoria with the NK and Pioneer hybrid pairs generally reflected the trends noted for the larger area trials in Kilbourne. Total fumonisins were eightfold higher in the non-Bt versus Bt NK6800 hybrid pairs in 1997 ( $1.3 \pm 0.3$  and  $0.16 \pm 0.13$  ppm, respectively,  $P = 0.012$ ;  $df = 1$ , 6;  $F = 12.699$ ), and a similar effect was noted in 1998 ( $0.22 \pm 0.08$  and  $0.03 \pm 0.02$  ppm, respectively,  $P = 0.001$ ;  $df = 1$ , 14;  $F = 17.024$ ). The Pioneer pair was not planted at Peoria in 1997, and for 1998 fumonisin levels were  $0.055 \pm 0.025$  and  $0.256 \pm 0.147$  ( $P = 0.503$ ) for the non-Bt/Bt hybrid pairs, respectively. For the 1998 Pioneer samples, *H. zea* was more common on the 33V08 than 3394, and a few ears of the 33V08 additionally had symptomatic infected kernels not associated with insect damage. Total fumonisins were typically composed of the same percentage of the three fumonisins as found for samples from the Kilbourne site. Aflatoxin was rarely encountered, and only occurred for a few ear groups at Peoria in 1998. There were no significant differences in at-

Table 6.

| Organism       |  |
|----------------|--|
| % early CAT kd |  |
| % >10 kd/ear   |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % late CAT kd  |  |
| % >10 kd/ear   |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % cat + mold   |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % SB kd        |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % SB + mold    |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % STB kd       |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % pop kd       |  |
| No. pop kd/ear |  |
| % pop + mold   |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % mold kd      |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % >10 kd/ear   |  |
| Fumonisin, ppm |  |
| % early CAT kd |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % late CAT kd  |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % total CAT kd |  |
| % CAT + mold   |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % SB kd        |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % SB + mold    |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % STB kd       |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % pop kd       |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % pop + mold   |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % insect kd    |  |
| % mold kd      |  |
| Fumonisin, ppm |  |
| % early CAT kd |  |
| % ECB kd       |  |
| % CAT kd       |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| Type kd        |  |
| % CAT + mold   |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % SB kd        |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % SB + mold    |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % STB kd       |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % pop kd       |  |
| No. kd/ear     |  |
| % insect kd    |  |
| % mold kd      |  |
| Fumonisin, ppm |  |

In 1998, essentially 11.5 and 44.4 versus  $\approx 0.0$  *O. nubilalis*; SB, sap beetle; like column pairs follow incidence).

Table 6. Distribution of insect damage, mold and mycotoxins for harvest samples at Kilbourne on Bt and non-Bt hybrid pairs

| Organism       | Pioneer        |                | Ciba         |              | NK             |                |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
|                | 3394 Bt-       | 33V08 Bt+      | 4494 Bt-     | Max 454 Bt+  | 6800 Bt-       | 6800Bt Bt+     |
| 1996           |                |                |              |              |                |                |
| % early CAT kd | 4.1            | ND             | 50.5a        | 26.4b        | ND             | ND             |
| % >10 kd/ear   | 1.7            | ND             | 31.8a        | 9.3b         | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | 10.6 ± 4.3     | ND             | 15.3 ± 1.1a  | 9.5 ± 1.0b   | ND             | ND             |
| % late CAT kd  | 40.7           | ND             | 63.5a        | 61.7a        | ND             | ND             |
| % >10 kd/ear   | 29.1           | ND             | 41.2a        | 19.7b        | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | 19.6 ± 1.6     | ND             | 17.4 ± 1.2a  | 9.5 ± 0.7b   | ND             | ND             |
| % cat + mold   | 0.6            | ND             | 37.0a        | 15.0b        | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | 3.0            | ND             | 8.4 ± 1.0a   | 3.2 ± 0.4b   | ND             | ND             |
| % SB kd        | 0.6            | ND             | 7.2a         | 6.2a         | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | 1.0            | ND             | 2.1 ± 0.5a   | 1.8 ± 0.4a   | ND             | ND             |
| % SB + mold    | 0.0            | ND             | 5.2a         | 2.6a         | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | —              | ND             | 2.5 ± 0.5a   | 2.4 ± 0.9a   | ND             | ND             |
| % STB kd       | 1.2            | ND             | 1.6a         | 4.2a         | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | 19.5 ± 8.5     | ND             | 5.3 ± 3.4a   | 4.5 ± 1.6a   | ND             | ND             |
| % pop kd       | 3.5            | ND             | 0.0a         | 0.0a         | ND             | ND             |
| No. pop kd/ear | 3.7 ± 1.2      | ND             | —            | —            | ND             | ND             |
| % pop + mold   | 0.6            | ND             | —            | —            | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | 1.0            | ND             | —            | —            | ND             | ND             |
| % mold kd      | 1.2            | ND             | 37.0a        | 20.2b        | ND             | ND             |
| No. kd/ear     | 2.0 ± 1.0      | ND             | 8.4 ± 1.0a   | 3.2 ± 0.4b   | ND             | ND             |
| % >10 kd/ear   | 0.0            | ND             | 8.9a         | 0.5b         | ND             | ND             |
| Fumonisin, ppm | ND             | ND             | 0.59 ± 0.28a | 0.52 ± 0.20a | ND             | ND             |
| 1997           |                |                |              |              |                |                |
| % early CAT kd | 80.0a          | 0.0b           | 90.5a        | 58.5b        | 64.0a          | 0.0b           |
| No. kd/ear     | 13.7 ± 0.6     | —              | 15.0 ± 0.7a  | 7.9 ± 0.5b   | 7.1 ± 0.4      | —              |
| % late CAT kd  | 73.5a          | 7.5b           | 92.5a        | 78.5b        | 66.9a          | 2.0b           |
| No. kd/ear     | 18.5 ± 1.0a    | 10.6 ± 2.4b    | 25.8 ± 1.2a  | 13.2 ± 0.8b  | 9.5 ± 0.7      | —              |
| % total CAT kd | 91.0a          | 7.5b           | 96.5a        | 84.0b        | 84.0a          | 2.7b           |
| % CAT + mold   | 1.8a           | 0.01a          | 3.7a         | 0.8a         | 1.7a           | 0.0a           |
| No. kd/ear     | 3.4 ± 0.2      | 2.0            | 5.4 ± 0.4a   | 2.6 ± 0.3b   | 4.3 ± 0.3      | —              |
| % SB kd        | 14.0a          | 27.5b          | 14.5a        | 26.0b        | 10.9a          | 18.0a          |
| No. kd/ear     | 1.6 ± 0.2a     | 2.5 ± 0.2a     | 2.4 ± 1.0a   | 1.7 ± 0.2a   | 1.7 ± 0.3a     | 2.2 ± 0.3a     |
| % SB + mold    | 3.0a           | 8.5a           | 5.0a         | 3.5a         | 4.0a           | 6.0a           |
| No. kd/ear     | 1.2 ± 0.2a     | 1.8 ± 0.2a     | 3.0 ± 1.7a   | 1.7 ± 0.2a   | 1.7 ± 0.3a     | 1.4 ± 0.3a     |
| % STB kd       | 24.0a          | 46.0b          | 14.0a        | 25.5b        | 46.9a          | 40.7a          |
| No. kd/ear     | 8.1 ± 0.9a     | 6.5 ± 0.6a     | 6.1 ± 1.1a   | 5.8 ± 0.7a   | 7.2 ± 0.6a     | 5.8 ± 0.7a     |
| % pop kd       | 22.0a          | 27.0a          | 12.5a        | 13.0a        | 33.1a          | 33.1a          |
| No. kd/ear     | 3.5 ± 0.5a     | 2.7 ± 0.3a     | 2.0 ± 0.3a   | 2.1 ± 0.3a   | 3.5 ± 0.4a     | 3.0 ± 0.3a     |
| % pop + mold   | 2.5a           | 2.5a           | 1.5a         | 1.5a         | 3.0a           | 3.5a           |
| No. kd/ear     | 1.2 ± 0.2a     | 1.0 ± 0.0a     | 1.3 ± 0.3a   | 2.0 ± 0.0a   | 1.5 ± 0.3a     | 2.4 ± 1.0a     |
| % insect kd    | 97.5a          | 74.0b          | 98.5a        | 92.5a        | 95.4a          | 68.0b          |
| % mold kd      | 58.0a          | 8.5b           | 72.0a        | 38.5b        | 42.3a          | 11.3b          |
| Fumonisin, ppm | 1.1 ± 0.3a     | 0.028 ± 0.034b | 2.6 ± 0.5a   | 3.5 ± 0.7a   | 1.4 ± 0.4a     | 0.049 ± 0.025b |
| 1998           |                |                |              |              |                |                |
| % early CAT kd | —              | —              | 43.7a        | 31.8b        | —              | —              |
| % ECB kd       | 17.0a          | 0.0b           | 74.7a        | 56.3b        | 20.5a          | 0.0b           |
| % CAT kd       | 31.5a          | 12.5b          | 74.8a        | 56.3b        | 45.0a          | 6.0b           |
| No. kd/ear     | 8.0 ± 1.3a     | 8.9 ± 2.4a     | 12.4 ± 1.1a  | 9.9 ± 2.1a   | 6.7 ± 0.6a     | 6.8 ± 1.6a     |
| Type kd        | early and late |                | early only   |              | early and late |                |
| % CAT + mold   | 2.5a           | 0.0b           | 18.5a        | 7.3b         | 10.5a          | 2.0b           |
| No. kd/ear     | 2.4 ± 0.8      | —              | 4.0 ± 0.6a   | 3.2 ± 1.0a   | 4.0 ± 0.6a     | 3.2 ± 1.0a     |
| % SB kd        | 8.5a           | 6.5a           | 13.9a        | 7.9a         | 11.0a          | 4.5b           |
| No. kd/ear     | 1.4 ± 0.1a     | 1.3 ± 0.1a     | 1.6 ± 0.4a   | 2.4 ± 0.7a   | 1.8 ± 0.5a     | 2.2 ± 0.4a     |
| % SB + mold    | 1.0a           | 0.5a           | 6.0a         | 2.0a         | 3.0a           | 2.0a           |
| No. kd/ear     | 1.5 ± 0.5a     | 1.5 ± 0.5a     | 1.0 ± 0.0a   | 1.1 ± 1.1a   | 1.0            | 2.2 ± 0.6      |
| % STB kd       | 18.5a          | 14.0a          | 4.5a         | 1.3a         | 7.0a           | 4.0a           |
| No. kd/ear     | 4.4 ± 0.5a     | 4.7 ± 0.6a     | 9.0 ± 1.0a   | 4.8 ± 1.5a   | 4.2 ± 1.0a     | 4.7 ± 1.0a     |
| % pop kd       | 12.0a          | 11.5a          | 4.0a         | 1.3a         | 1.5a           | 4.0a           |
| No. kd/ear     | 2.8 ± 0.4a     | 2.9 ± 0.5a     | 1.5 ± 0.5a   | 2.0 ± 0.8a   | 1.1 ± 0.1a     | 1.3 ± 0.3a     |
| % insect kd    | 65.5a          | 38.5b          | 82.8a        | 62.2b        | 54.5a          | 15.0b          |
| % mold kd      | 3.5a           | 1.0a           | 18.5a        | 7.3b         | 12.0a          | 3.0b           |
| Fumonisin, ppm | 0.02 ± 0.03a   | 0.01 ± 0.03a   | 1.4 ± 0.4b   | 0.4 ± 0.1a   | 0.2 ± 0.1a     | 0.05 ± 0.1a    |

In 1998, essentially all damage was late for NK6800 series and P3394 series, but values for 4494/max 454 early and damage are 43.7 versus 31.8, and 44.4 versus 35.1, respectively, with only early damage significantly different at  $P < 0.05$ . kd, kernel damage; CAT, caterpillar; ECB = *O. nubilalis*; SB, sap beetle; STB, stink bug (Pentatomidae); pop, popped kernels; mold, *Fusarium*. ND, not determined. Values in rows of like column pairs followed by different letters are statistically different at  $P < 0.05$  by ANOVA (kernel numbers) or chi-square analysis (percent incidence).

rsus 4494 ears in all 3 yr at le ls were only reduced for Bt hybrids in 1998 ( $P = .28$ ) (Table 6). Significant ence and fumonisin levels on t P3394 ( $P = 0.001$ ;  $df = 38$ ) ( $P = 0.000$ ;  $df = 1, 11$ ), but differences were less onisin levels were not sig- ee Bt and non-Bt hybrid on ns were detected, total / comprised of  $\approx 75\%$  fumo- B2, and 5% fumonisin B3. s re the major contribu- ne, but when *H. zea* were etle-damaged kernels and tribute the major amount of th Bt hybrids. No aflatoxins k bourne samples in any

bly molded kernels and fu- ig icantly correlated with ge kernels in all years. alns were typically noted be- molded and insect-damaged la ns between insect dam- t ically not significant for ot shown). all Plots. The same trend in t l bourne for the Ciba hy- na plot studies in Peoria. In ls for non-Bt versus Bt hybrid (two pooled samples) versus sa ple) for ears inoculated o suspensions (as for in- monisin for either type when total fumonisin levels for er  $4.8 \pm 1.9$  versus  $2.8 \pm 1.5$  ). Fumonisin levels were because of low incidence of hybrids. Results for small plot N and Pioneer hybrid pairs re ns noted for the larger area al fumonisins were eightfold sus Bt NK6800 hybrid pairs in  $\pm 13$  ppm, respectively,  $P = 69$ ), and a similar effect was : 0.08 and  $0.03 \pm 0.02$  ppm;  $df = 1, 14$ ;  $F = 17.024$ ). The un l at Peoria in 1997, and for e:  $0.055 \pm 0.025$  and  $0.256 \pm$  the non-Bt/Bt hybrid pairs. 98 Pioneer samples, *H. zea* was 3V 8 that 3394, and a few ears lly had symptomatic infected with insect damage. Total fu- y composed of the same per- misins as found for samples a. latotoxin was rarely encoun- ed for a few ear groups at Peoria o significant differences in af-





Fumonisin levels at Kilbourne

| Total fumonisins levels, ppm |       |
|------------------------------|-------|
|                              | 0.50  |
|                              | 0.44  |
|                              | ND    |
|                              | ND    |
| Both 4494 Max 454            |       |
| 0.10 0.87* 0.75*             |       |
| -0.34                        |       |
|                              | 0.81* |
|                              | 0.75* |
|                              | 0.71* |
|                              | 0.69* |
|                              | 0.60* |
|                              | 0.61* |
|                              | 0.54* |
|                              | 0.50* |
|                              | 0.66* |
|                              | 0.59* |

**Environmental Influences on Efficacy of Insect Control in Indirectly Reducing Mycotoxins.** Environmental conditions, interacting with hybrid type, can also apparently mitigate the efficacy of the Bt resistance in indirectly reducing mycotoxins. In studies using insecticides, insect damage was significantly correlated with fumonisins for the same hybrid in some years but not others, and two different hybrids varied in the strength of the correlation in the same year (Dowd et al. 1999). Efficacy of Bt hybrids in indirectly reducing fumonisins was also severely affected by large numbers of *H. zea* present in commercial fields evaluated in 1998 and 1999, with little effect on incidence and numbers of damaged kernels and fumonisin levels only reduced by approximately twofold (Dowd et al. 1998a, 1999; P.F.D., unpublished data). However, high and significant correlations between numbers of insect-damaged kernels and fumonisin levels still occurred (Dowd et al. 1998a, 1999; P.F.D., unpublished data). Damage by *H. zea* and *Carpophilus* sap beetles also appeared to contribute some kernels high in fumonisin in the current study. Event 176 hybrids tested against *H. zea* were not effective in significantly reducing ear damage (Pilcher et al. 1997b). Those hybrids expressing the gene throughout the plant, such as MONS10 or Bt 11 events, have provided nearly complete control of *H. zea* in ears in some cases (Rice and Pilcher 1998), but <90% control has been reported in other cases (Gould 1998). More than 10-fold variations in susceptibility of *H. zea* to *B. thuringiensis* has been reported for different geographic populations (Stone and Sims 1993), which may explain the differences in reported efficacy of Bt hybrids against *H. zea*.

**Comparison of Methods of Insect Control and Associated Reductions of Mycotoxins.** Insect facilitation of mycotoxigenic fungal invasion is well established for several different crops, including corn, and can involve several different insect species (Dowd 1998). All insects associated with ear mold in the current study have previously been reported in the same role (Dowd 1998). There have been reports of stink bug (Pentatomidae) associations with mycotoxigenic fungi in some cases in the past (Dowd 1998), but there was no obvious association in the current study.

Although several applications may be needed, insecticide treatments have generally reduced both insect damage and associations of mycotoxigenic fungi (Smeltzer 1959, Anderson et al. 1975, Lillehoj et al. 1976, Smith and Riley 1992, Dowd et al. 1995). An exception to this trend occurred when very low levels of mycotoxins were present (Widstrom et al. 1976). Tight husks with long silk channels can also significantly reduce insect damage, *Aspergillus flavus*, and aflatoxin in corn (McMillian et al. 1985, 1987, Barry et al. 1986). However, germplasm from which these lines were derived is typically lower yielding (Jenkins 1947). Slower drydown rates can promote incidence of *Fusarium* molds in more northerly corn growing areas (Trenholm et al. 1989), and presumably fumonisin as well.

*Bacillus thuringiensis* corn is reportedly more effective in controlling *O. nubilalis* than are conventional insect sprays (Mycogen Plant Sciences 1996), and also has higher yields (because of yield protection) than corresponding non-Bt lines (Ciba 1995). Yields ("yield protection") can surpass the highest yielding unrelated non-Bt lines (Mycogen Plant Sciences 1996). Bt corn seed costs from \$5 to \$12 more per acre, but economic benefits can be seen if there are one or more corn borers per plant (Rice and Pilcher 1998). Although there are concerns for insect resistance development (Roush 1997, Gould 1998) adoption of Bt corn, while not a cure-all for mycotoxigenic ear molds, should at least not increase, and is likely to significantly decrease, the incidence of mycotoxins in corn. Although nontarget effects on other insects in laboratory studies have generated some concern (Losey et al. 1999), results of past (Pilcher et al. 1997a) and the current study indicate limited effects of Bt corn on beneficial insects. Relative levels of efficacy of Bt corn in indirectly reducing mycotoxins will, however, depend on the composition of ear damaging insect species present, and other hybrid-environment interactions that may undermine potential advantages achieved by reduction of insect damage in Bt hybrids. Although some hybrids that express the Bt crystal protein throughout the plant have thus far had significant correlations between numbers of insect-damaged kernels and fumonisin levels, others have not (P.F.D., unpublished data). Where colonization by mycotoxigenic fungi is primarily insect dependent, similar decreases in mycotoxin levels would be expected for other crops, such as cotton seed, peanuts, and tree nuts (Dowd 1998). Reductions of aflatoxin levels in cotton seed from Bt versus non-Bt cotton have already been demonstrated (Kishore 1995, Cotty et al. 1997). Further development of crops that are highly insect resistant because of other mechanisms would also be expected to significantly reduce associated mycotoxin problems when fungal invasion is primarily dependent on insect damage, and the environment favors plant health over fungal inoculum.

#### Acknowledgments

I thank D. A. Dornbos, Jr., D. A. Kendra, and G. W. Warren (Novartis Seeds) for providing seed and paying for some of the mycotoxin analysis; C. M. Anderson and D.B.C. Hansen for technical assistance; F. W. Simmons and R. Stahl for assistance with plantings at Kilbourne, IL; M. R. McGuire for providing *O. nubilalis*, S. W. Peterson, and G. A. Bennett for providing fungal isolates; T. C. Nelsen (Midwest Area biometrician) for suggestions on statistical analyses, and R. L. Hellmich II, G. P. Munkvold, and G. W. Windham for comments on prior versions of the manuscript.

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Among non-Bt hybrids significant reductions of ear molds appears concentrated in one or location (although relative reductions in depended on the degree of mold) and existing trends for plants throughout the plant versus ear noted for fumonisin although in several cases differences in fumonisin levels and *O. nubilalis* were noted in fumonisin levels compared to non-Bt hybrids (Dowd et al. 1999). Fumonisins in Bt corn have also been reported (van Duyn 1998). A Bt hybrid was not greatly different from non-Bt hybrid in Mississippi in a significant insect (Windham et al. 1999) presence). Although of current study, signs of A. mold similar between Bt and non-Bt fumonisin. Overall, reduction in mycotoxins in Bt corn is essentially free of insect damage, if molded, can pose a source of mold to the ears.

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- Received for publication 15 February 2000; accepted 7 August 2000.

Received for publication 15 February 2000; accepted 7 August 2000.