



# Test Strips for On-Farm Demonstrations

Tips &  
Facts  
Sheet

## What is a test strip?

Test Strips are a type of field demonstration involving a narrow band of land running across a farmer's field where:

1. (Typically) a single treatment is applied – such as a factor added (e.g., herbicide), omitted (e.g., no early spray) or modified (e.g., different variety), and
2. The farmer manages the strip along with the rest of the field.



Include a sign so the treatment difference is obvious.

## Why have a test strip?

Test strips are easy to implement and offer a simple way to assess and demonstrate a treatment under farmers' current practices.

## To establish test strips

**Note:** Test strips are easiest to interpret when just a single factor is changed in each strip. They are superimposed on what the farmer is already doing.

1. **Representative.** Make sure the test area is representative of the rest of the field (and other fields in the district).
2. **Believable.** Mark out a test strip area wide enough to be believable (4 to 5 m width is generally adequate).
3. **Visible.** Place test strip plots for high visibility (e.g., near a road), and such that easy side-by-side comparison with current farmers' practices is possible.
4. **Collaborative.** The test strip is established with the farmer. If it is a new variety, it may be established at planting. Other treatments (e.g., herbicide) may be applied later.
5. **Management.** Except for the factor being demonstrated, the farmer manages the whole field including the test strip with their usual practices.
6. **Promotion.** Place a sign indicating the treatment and whom to contact for more information.

## Limitations of Test Strips

1. Test strips are best to highlight the effect of just one treatment at a time.
2. If the part of the field used is not typical of the rest of the field or region, then any conclusions on treatment effects may be incorrect.



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