

Ohio No-Till News

Randall Reeder, OSU Extension Agricultural Engineer (retired), writes this page, with input from the Ohio No-till Council members.



No-till and Cover Crop Tips from CTC



Fred Yoder spoke at CTC. He and his son Josh will host a no-till "field morning" Aug. 20

CTC in March had several speakers and panels on no-till and cover crops topics.

In the session "Managing Cover Crops in Spring 2020, Sarah Noggle moderated a Panel of seven experts. They shared several tips. When planning for cover crops, be aware of herbi-

cide carryover. Select herbicides knowing you will plant cover crops into the cash crop or after harvest. Planting into a cover crop, there are advantages to planting green. If you kill the cover crop, do it before it gets too massive and at least 2 weeks before planting. In a wet year, a growing cover crop helps

dry out the soil and can help the soil support tires.

In the "Building on Ohio No-till Success" session, Fred Yoder said the FAO and other international ag leaders do not like our modern farming systems. They prefer farming like it was 60 or 70 years ago, mostly organic. But every time you plow you release carbon. With no-till, cover crops and other practices agriculture could be "carbon negative" in 10 years. On the Yoder farm, data shows that cover crops add 2 or 3 bu./ac advantage for soybean yields and 8 bu. for corn.

In the same session Warren Dick shared information from 57 years of continuous no-till at the OSU-OARDC research plots at Wooster and Hoytville (Wood County). Do you know how long earthworm holes last in no-till? Warren measured channels that had been there 15 years and he expects they will still be there for another 15 years. This gives better aeration and water infiltration, and the soil has a lower bulk density (#/cu. ft) compared to plowed. The firm soil provides bet-

Upcoming No-Till Events

- Aug. 19, 2020
Ohio No-till (Summer) Field Evening, Nathan Brown Farm, Hillsboro
- Aug. 20, 2020
Ohio No-till (Summer) Field Morning, Fred Yoder Farm, Plain City
- Aug. 20, 2020
Ohio No-till (Summer) Field Evening, Keith Kemp Farm, W. Manchester
- Dec. 3, 2020
Ohio No-till Conf., Der Dutchman, Plain City

ter support for heavy axle loads. Carbon sequestration is greater with no-till. In early years organic matter increases only near the surface. But long-term, these research plots show higher levels down to 3 ft deep. These historic research plots are continuing with the guidance of Steve Culman.

Conservation Tillage Conference Videos

We recorded the CTC presentations, as we have done the past 3 years. The videos are on the website: ctc.osu.edu. On the left side,

click on "CTC 2020 Archive." All are posted except for a couple of speakers who asked not to be recorded.

eFields and Soil Health

The eFields program is kicking off an effort to help better understand how management practices influence soil health and water quality. If you are interested in participat-

ing in eFields trials focused on soil health, ask your local Extension Educator, or email digitalag@osu.edu. More information is at: go.osu.edu/MeasureSH

Skip planting corn?

With commodity prices low, you might be considering leaving a poor field bare instead of planting corn or soybeans that would likely

lose money. But do not leave it bare! Plant a cover crop blend that will improve soil quality. A good mix can cost as little as \$25 per

acre and will be a good investment. Contrast that to unplanted ground that would need to be tilled two or three times or sprayed to reduce

weeds. Planting sorghum-sudangrass is another choice if grazing or harvesting for forage is an option.

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