

U.S. leads world in no-till farming

GETTYSBURG, Pa. — "It's no surprise that the U.S.A. leads the no-till commercial acreage league tables and acreages everywhere else appear small," David A. Harris, Plant Protection, Fernhurst England, told the Third Annual Mid-Atlantic No-Tillage Growers Convention during their recent meeting here.

Attendance totaled 1,025 farmers and other businessmen from Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia. The conference was sponsored by agribusiness industries and

the Cooperative Extension Services in the Mid-Atlantic States.

The no-tillage concept involves applying seed to the soil by specially-designed planters, eliminating plowing and harrowing.

"In Europe the United Kingdom is the only country so far to get No-till off the ground in a big way, and about 1/2 million acres of a variety of crops have been established this year. In Australia special techniques have been developed for their local conditions and New Zealand is making excellent use of No-till in brassicas and pasture

programs," continued Harris.

"The tempo of No-till development is quickening, not just because of the weight of the external pressure on the farmer or the gradual accumulation of research data, but particularly because the equipment needed for efficient employment of the technique is now becoming available in commercial quantities for the first time.

"Round the world a number of special techniques have been developed to suit local

conditions. Many of these should be considered reduced cultivation systems rather than the ultimate No-till, but they are important stages in the development and acceptance of No-till.

"For example, in Western Australia, a technique known as Spray-Seed has been used to establish wheat in the fall using chemicals and a cultivator drill together to obtain weed control. The technique employs a mixture of Paraquat and Diquat to control the locally important weed flora and conventional

Australian drills which have four rows of spring cultivator tines, two of which have seed boots.

"There is no doubt that the triple-disc coulters and the Bettinson 3-D and other drills which have been developed to use it, have already had a major impact upon the establishment and growth of No-till in crops other than corn. This simple device has not been surpassed as a means of inserting seed and fertilizer into undisturbed soils with the minimum of soil movement.

"One of the earliest adaptations of existing equipment for No-till work was the Howard 'Rotaseeder', which was made by modifying the rotor of a rotary tiller so that it cut 1" wide slots at 5" spacing, into which seed is sown. This machine has a lot of useful features, particularly where heavy trash is present and small steep pastures are to be re-seeded. It is not suitable for large acreage use, but is still in production for custom applicator use on small acreage work," said Harris.

Grange publishes songbook for deaf

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The only songbook ever written for the deaf has been published by the National Grange, the country's oldest farm organization and rural family fraternity. Entitled "Lift Up Your Hands," the book contains 10 patriotic and inspirational songs illustrated in sign language with accompanying music for the guitar.

The book was created as part of an ongoing national health project sponsored by the women's activities department of the National Grange to aid the deaf and hard of hearing. Grange staff members worked with personnel at Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C., the country's only college for the deaf, in the development of the book.

John Scott, Master of the National Grange, said the book is available for purchase by the general public at a cost of \$2.00 per copy. It can be ordered from National Grange headquarters, 1616 H St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006. Scott said many local Granges across the country

are distributing the book to libraries, social service agencies and schools that have special courses for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Tax revised

HARRISBURG, Pa. - The Internal Revenue Service has advised the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service of a revision in tax law which could affect farmers who receive disaster payments under the Wheat and Feed Grain Program.

Under the revision, there are certain cases in which a producer who receives a disaster payment in 1976 may defer declaring the payment as income until the 1977 tax year. Any farmer who wishes further information on this matter should contact the Internal Revenue Service and ask about Section 451(d) of the Internal Revenue code, as amended by 1976 legislation.

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