

Solid seeding success hinges on management

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Market demand and efficient production are key to producing a profitable crop.

Strong international demand for soybeans has encouraged farmers to double production of the golden bean in the last ten

years. As a result, acreage devoted to soybeans has increased over one and one half times.

The future is bright for soybean demand and farmers are looking for ways to reduce ever-rising production costs. Many are taking a closer look at solid seeding as one way to boost production efficiency.

Growing soybeans in 7-10 inch drilled or narrow rows has been tried for years but, until recently, getting adequate weed control without cultivating was risky if not impossible.

Advances in herbicides, particularly for annual broadleaves, have made control without cultivating more feasible for rising numbers of Midwest farmers.

To help growers answer some of their questions

about solid seeding, the American Soybean Association with the support of eight product and equipment manufacturers, sponsored the Solid Seeded Soybean Conference in Indianapolis.

The program teamed researchers from all areas of soybean production with soybean farmers and industry representatives to detail production systems that work and didn't work for them. Representing a cross section of soybean producers, the speakers focused on three areas of solid seeding — management systems, on-farm evaluations and economic considerations.

All agreed that solid seeding is for soybean growers who already have excellent soil and crop management practices. Two

factors were deemed for essential for solid seeding success.

WEED CONTROL. Although research has proven that the more equal spacing of soybean plants created by solid seeding helps maximize yields, weed problems must be under control before tackling solid seeding.

Proper incorporation of preplant herbicide is necessary for early control. If weeds are controlled during the first four to five weeks, the soybean becomes very competitive and the canopy will shade out most late-emerging weeds.

Well-timed application of a post-emergence herbicide may be necessary to control broadleaves.

Fields with perennial weed problems, such as johnsongrass, that require

cultivation are not candidates for solid seeding.

STAND ESTABLISHMENT. The experts say it's easy to get a good stand — just plant seed one inch deep in firm, moist, nutrient-rich soil.

The challenge comes in modifying secondary tillage operations to have consistent depth control, seed distribution and soil firming. Equipment is available to achieve good results, but each farmer must match the machinery to his situation and get it properly calibrated.

Upping seeding rate slightly when going from 30 inch to narrow rows is often recommended to make up for less uniform planting depth and crusting.

Overseeding can encourage lodging and plant stress but a thin stand closes canopy more slowly and invites weed growth. Experiments with several varieties.

Results seem to show that early maturing area adapted varieties respond best to solid seeding. New semi-dwarfs appear promising for solid seeded, high-yield environments.

Proceedings of the Solid Seeded Soybean Conference are available March 1. For this detailed conference summary, send your name and address to: Solid Seeded Soybeans, American Soybean Association, Box 27300, St. Louis, Missouri 63141.

Garden Spot FFA chapter reports activities

LAMPETER — Garden Spot FFA started its Winter season with its annual FFA citrus sale. Members took orders for ten days, selling 1,080 cases of citrus fruit.

The second big event of the Winter was its tobacco sale. The chapter received seventy cents per pound for its tobacco, with the chapter now in the process of stripping it.

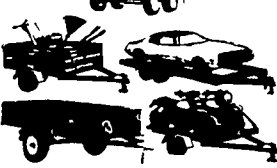
The chapter had several award winners this season. Four members, Darrel Dombach, Gerald Garber, James Meck and Fred

Musser, received Red Rose degrees. Darrel Dombach also received the Star Agribusinessman award for the county. Two Garden Spot FFA members received the Keystone Degree. They were members Donald Brubaker and Jerry Myer.

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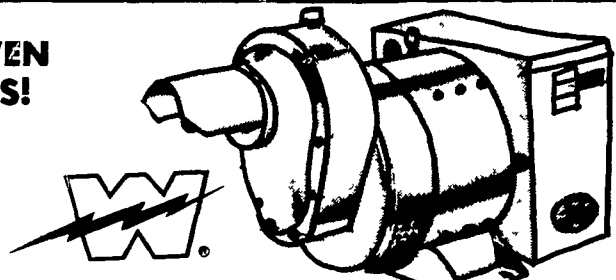
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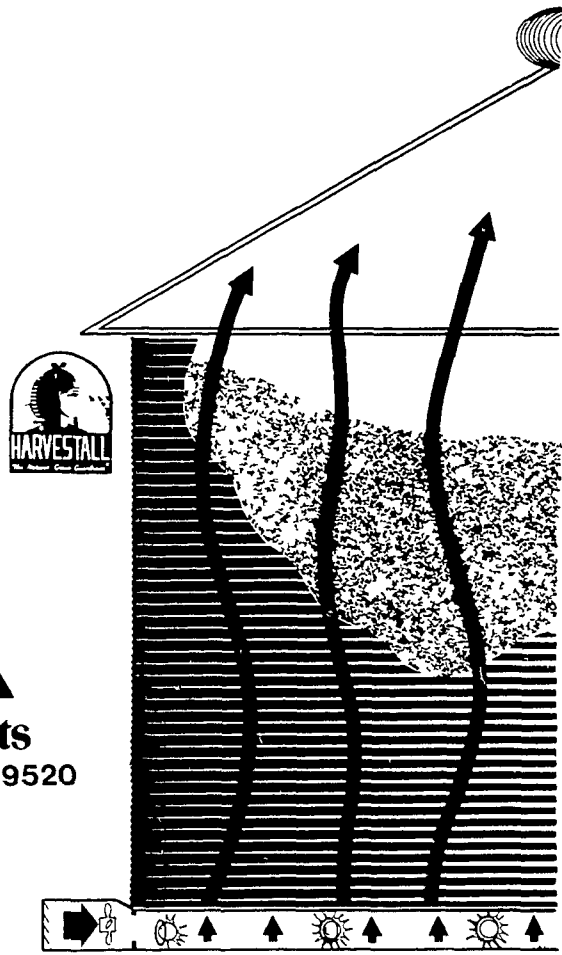
Fans force air under the floor. Rising through the grain, this dry outside air carries away moisture and heat.

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