

Secondary tillage tools help stop spring erosion

KEWANEE, Illinois — Proper selection and use of secondary tillage tools in the spring can go a long way toward controlling the soil erosion caused by spring rains.

"Farmers are becoming accustomed to the idea of reduced fall primary tillage programs to stop winter wind erosion," says Howard Hadler, division engineer for Kewanee Machinery Division. "Now they need to consider how they select and use secondary tillage tools in the spring to cut down on water erosion."

Maximum rainfall is almost always in the spring. Spring is actually when most water erosion occurs. This was proven in sections of Pennsylvania this spring when torrential rains washed from 5 to 35 tons of top soil from each acre. Erosion that serious needn't

have occurred, Hadler believes.

"Ground that has been chisel plowed or turned with a plowing disk in the fall has had valuable crop residue left on the surface to retard wind erosion," notes Hadler. "Too many passes with tillage tools in the spring can eliminate that residue and allow soil to wash with each rain."

Used correctly, with a minimum number of trips across the field, however, either field cultivator or disk will leave a significant amount of crop residue on the surface.

On sloping ground, farmers should consider using a field cultivator instead of a finishing disk, since by comparison, a field will leave more residue on the surface, Halder says.

On level ground, a disk will

do an acceptable reduced tillage job. Disks leave some residue on the surface but often chop it up finer.

"In working the soil, farmers need to remember that each trip over the field with a cultivator or disk reduces the amount of crop residue on the surface and increases the erosion risk," he says.

In selecting secondary tillage tools for a reduced tillage program, Hadler advises farmers to look for heavier, more durable implements.

"These implements need to do more work in one pass across the field. The primary tillage operation will have left the ground rougher so the secondary tillage tool will need to be heavier and more aggressive than in the past," he states.

Moldboard plowing has almost become a practice of the past in many areas, notes Hadler, with chisel

plowing, disk chiseling, or plow disking taking its place. But, farmers need to plan

wisely spring use of their secondary tillage tools if they want to be sure they're

really stopping erosion and conserving soil, Hadler concludes.



Soybean crop planted this spring takes maximum advantage of crop residue from the previous year to prevent erosion from spring rains. Reduced fall tillage hinders winter wind erosion, but proper use of secondary tillage tools in the spring is necessary to cut water erosion.



This soybean field was planted in a conventionally prepared seedbed, and it washed severely under 1980's torrential spring rains. Used correctly, field cultivators and disks can prepare seedbeds and still leave a protective cover of crop residue on the surface to retard erosion.

Carter accepts farm policy debate offer

WASHINGTON — The Carter for President campaign has accepted the National Farmers Union's invitation to participate in a U.S. farm policy debate, George W. Stone, president of the Denver-based family farm organization, announced at a news conference Monday.

Stone released copies of a letter from Don Tyson, chairman of the Farmers for Carter Committee, accepting the invitation and naming U.S. Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland as the campaign's representative for the proposed debate.

"We are pleased that the Carter campaign is willing to debate farm policy issues. We now look forward to hearing from the Reagan campaign," Stone said.

The National Farmers Union had first invited the Presidential candidates to

debate farm policy but changed the format when Ronald Reagan turned down the invitation. Then, the family farm group offered to sponsor a debate between the farm spokesmen for the two campaigns.

"Farmers and consumers have a right to know what to expect on food policy in the next four years. The best way is to air these issues in the bright light of a debate," Stone said.



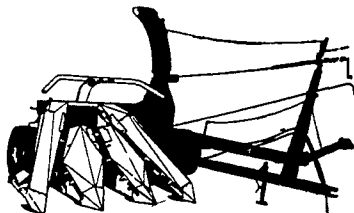
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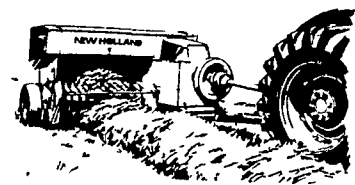


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