

Subsoiling helps yields

NEWARK, Del. — Does subsoiling make a difference in no-till corn and soybeans? University of Delaware extension crops specialist Frank Webb thinks it might, so this year he planted several demonstration plots around the state, using a machine that not only subsoils directly beneath the row, but also works about a four-inch wide band along the seedbed, exposing the soil to sunlight. This warms the soil, speeding germination and growth in the spring. At the same time, the machine allows the dense mulch cover associated with no-till to remain between rows.

Webb says he's seen a clear growth response to the treatment, and the practice may affect yields, too. The specialist is using equipment produced by the Brown-Harden Manufacturing Company of Georgia. The machine is on loan from the Southern States regional office in Richmond, Virginia.

In previous Delaware studies involving subsoiling, Webb says



University of Delaware extension crops specialist Frank Webb compares growth of two no-till corn treatments. Taller plot on left was subsoiled in the row.

drawbacks were found, especially after hard rain when seed sometimes fell through the channel cut by other types of subsoilers and was thus lost. In spite of the 16-inch slot it cuts, that does not appear to be a problem with this particular machine, he says.

One demonstration plot using the Brown-Harden subsoiler was located at the University of Delaware Substation near Georgetown.



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