

No-till drill is very versatile

NEWARK, Del. — "I doubt if there's any farmer who hasn't been exposed to a crop of no-till corn or soybeans by now. Today just about every grain producer in this part of the country has some production in no-till," says University of Delaware extension county agent Dean Belt.

Although he still gets comments and questions about the appearance of a no-till crop, the poor stands during cold wet springs, certain weed problems, and compaction, Belt says most producers agree the system has some definite advantages.

"Moisture conservation is one no-till benefit that's obvious in a droughty year," the agent says. "But with so many farmers no-tilling for that reason, some folks may have forgotten its other benefits — the time-saving, energy-saving and, especially, the soil-saving advantages of this practice. Soil erosion has been greatly reduced in Delaware since switch-over to no-till."

Now a new piece of equipment has come along to help growers — the no-till drill. Although this machine is still far from perfect, the agent says it has been greatly improved from earlier prototypes — enough to consider using it for narrow row crops.

There are many new drills available, and some machinery dealers will rent them out, Belt says. "Renting is an ideal way to try out the practice before making

a commitment to buy. Some farmers who already own drills may also be willing to rent them, or do custom work for you." And both the New Castle County and Kent County conservation districts have no-till drills which are available on a rental basis. Such opportunities should make it very easy for any interested producer to try the no-till drill production system.

There are many ways to use this equipment. Some growers use it to establish cover crops in corn and soybean stubble in preparation for no-till corn. Belt considers this practice a great time-saver because it is possible to establish a cover crop immediately after harvest without any ground preparation.

"You won't even have to chop the stalks," he says. "In fact, it's recommended that you don't chop stalks prior to using a no-till drill. However, try to spread your stalks at harvest, if possible."

More farmers are also using no-till drills to establish double-crop and full-season no-till beans. Again, the practice saves time and moisture, and leaves more crop residue on the surface. "This mulch is critical in preventing soil erosion in soybeans," Belt says. "And most farmers are aware of how vulnerable conventionally tilled soybeans are to soil erosion on critical slopes."

For those who grow wheat and barley, the no-till drill can fit in nicely. University of Delaware

extension agronomist Frank Webb has done some in-depth work on establishing small grains with a no-till drill and has demonstrated its effectiveness. Again, says Belt, the system offers obvious savings in time and energy by reducing trips over the field.

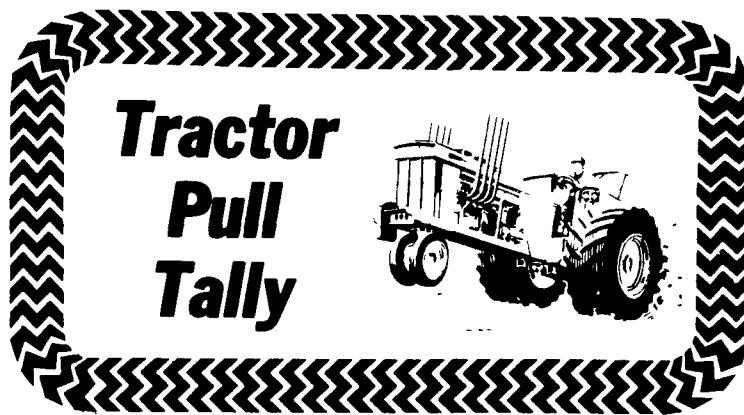
Even when they're no-tilling, some farmers like to plow their ground in the fall for wheat and barley, so that all their soil gets tilled every three or four years. "This is an excellent idea," says Belt, "if you're rotating a third or fourth of your farm to small grains every year. It's much better practice than planting soybeans into plowed ground. The winter grains will protect the soil over winter, and when they're harvested the next spring you can use a drill to no-till soybeans into the stubble. This way the soil will be protected from erosion at all times."

Most forages can be planted with a no-till drill, too. Alfalfa does well, provided it goes in under suitable soil conditions and crop residue. So do sorghum-soybean combinations. In this case, plant the sorghum and soybeans as usual, but harvest them before the sorghum goes to head and then drill soybeans into the stubble for a second crop.

"I'm sure you will find other uses for the drill," Belt adds. "Those of us in the Cooperative Extension Service are willing to work with producers in any way we

can if you need us. The drills are now available but, as with no-till corn, don't expect more than the system or the equipment can produce. Good planning and preparation are essential before

planting any no-till crop. You must know what you're doing. Any mistakes you make are likely to be costly to correct. The no-till drill is something you should try first on a few acres."



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5000 Modified

Willard Will, Central City, PA., Allison, F.P.; Zane Forry, York, PA., 427 Chev., 295.0; Craig Luckenbill, Schuylkill Haven, PA., 433 Chev., 279.2.

58 FWD Open
Howard Lewis, New Carrollton, MD., 1973 Chev., F.P.; Mark Hardisty, Easton, MD., 294.7; Bob Minnich, Winchester, VA., 1972 Chev., 292.5.

7000 Modified
Earl Howard, Taneytown, MD., Allison, 277.7; Curt Luckenbill, Schuylkill Haven, PA., 433 Chev., 256.1; Charles Brommu, Columbia, PA., 2440 Dodge, 246.11.

6200 FWD Open
Diehl Wilson, Winchester, VA., 1984 Ford, FP/275.10; Howard Lewis, New Carrollton, MD., Chev., FP/275.9; Ed Hanslovan, Morrisdale, PA., 1980 Chev., 297.1.

9000 Open
Earl Howard, Taneytown, MD., Allison, FP/235.8; Thaddeus Will, Central City, PA., Allison, FP/230.9; Earle Henderson, Baldwin, MD., Packard, FP/210.4.

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58 FWD Open
Dan Fellenbaum, Lititz, PA, 1969 Chev., 290.5; Lynda Ziegler, Bird-In-Hand, PA, 1970 Chev., 288.7; Howard Lewis, New Carrollton, MD, Chev., 279.2.

7000 Modified
Robert Wittenbraden, Lake Ariel, PA, Allison, FP; Bill Haines, Rising Sun, MD, 427 Chev., 291.1; Vernon Kourney, Fallston, MD, Packard, 288.2.

62 FWD Open
Howard Lewis, New Carrollton, MD, Chev., FP/FP; Mark Hardisty, Easton, MD, 1975 GMC, FP/296.0; Dan Fellenbaum, Lititz, PA, 1969 Chev., FP/281.10.

9 Open
Earle Henderson, Baldwin, MD, Packard, FP/296.1; Bob Brown, Hanover, PA, Detroit, FP/230.11; Richard Zimmerman, Mt. Joy, PA, 3-440 Dodge, 284.9.

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Egg Board to be reappointed

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the American Egg Board will reappoint membership on the board effective with the 1985-86 two-year appointments, a USDA official said today.

H. Connor Kennett, an official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said when USDA and the board reviewed egg production over the past three years, they found it had gradually declined in the South Atlantic and South Central areas while increasing in the East North Central and Western areas.

As a result, Kennett said, because representation is determined by the percentage of U.S. egg production in each of six geographic areas, USDA and the board will make these changes:

- Area 2 (South Atlantic) and Area 5 (South Central) will each decrease from four to three members.

- Area 3 (East North Central) will increase from two to three; and

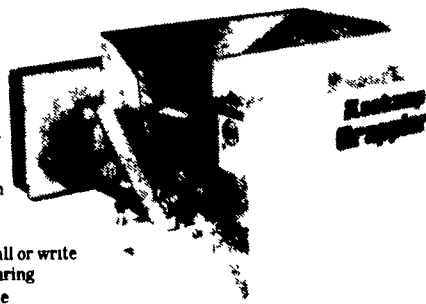
- Area 6 (Western) will increase from three to four members.

Area 1 (North Atlantic) will remain at three members and Area 4 (West North Central) will remain at two, he said.

The 18-member board administers the producer-sponsored national research and promotion program designed to strengthen the egg industry's position program authorized by the egg research and promotion order, which prescribes periodic reviews of production by geographic area to assure that representation is fair and equitable.

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