

Camden Farm Hosts 2002 Va. Corn, Soybean Exposition

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was immediately attracted to the John Deere 8400 tractor everyone was talking about. A global positioning system had been installed on it. The fellows ascended the track and ensconced themselves inside the 'jolly' green giant, fairly overwhelmed. It was their turn for a few glorious minutes of air conditioned luxury, but the GPS was the best part.

"Its fun, all you gotta do is push a button," said the awed young Stover, doing his best to describe the earthen "orbit" guided by a satellite thousands of miles out in the wild blue yonder.

Terrell, who works for his grandfather near Richmond, was most interested in the light bar. "I like nice straight rows and I don't like skip spots," he said. "I already have a light bar. I have to look at it to know," he said, reporting how much he relies on it.

Davis, himself, upon exiting the same machine was duly impressed after having gone tooling across the field with the GPS guiding the Deere effortlessly.

It was fun while it lasted but the here and now reality — extremely dry conditions — caused Davis to report that the bushels of grain he normally would expect to be harvested, in actuality this year, are fewer than half of what is considered typical output.

"There are a lot of ups and downs in farming business. You have to save for dry years," he said. "One thing, farm prices have gone up because its dry."

Ashe stood chatting, volleys of dust were seen rising on the farm track as another yellow school bus hauling tour passengers from place to place approached. Those aboard prepared to disembark at the starting point when the vehicle, in sandy depths that almost tugged the tires, of course, churned its way back to the loading and unloading zone.

The tours, nevertheless, were extremely informative. From site to site, the crops and soil being researched were observed first-hand and participants came away having gleaned much helpful information from the presenters.

The evaluation of cropping systems in the research at Camden Farm includes (3 crops/2 years) no-till corn, conventional till wheat — no-till double crop soybeans; (4 crops/3 years) no-till corn, no-till full season soybeans, no-till wheat — no-till double crop soybeans; and finally, (4 crops/2 years) no-

till barley — no-till double-crop corn, no-till wheat — no-till double crop soybeans.

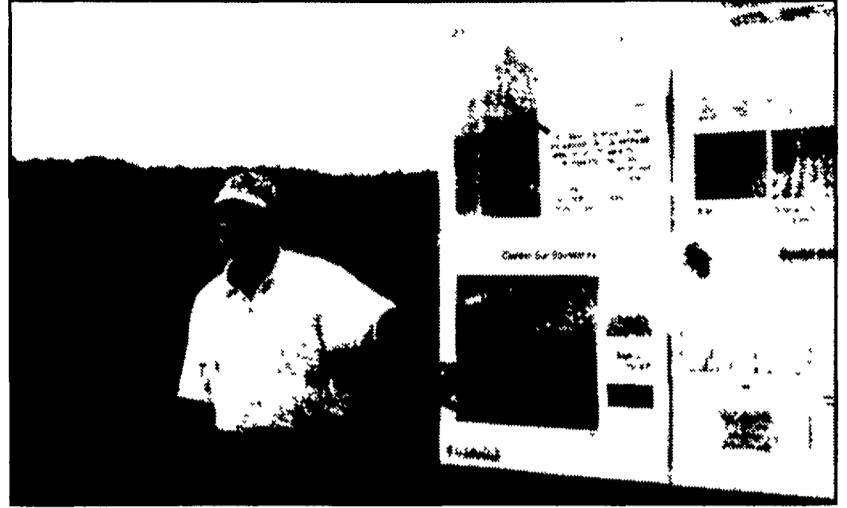
The above cropping systems have been conducted on the same 3-acre strips (of both highly productive and extremely sandy soils), with three replications of each treatment for five years.

Also, variable rate seeding of corn and soybeans, variable rate nitrogen on corn, and yield mapping at harvest are incorporated into the studies, officials said.

Yield results over the last five years for wheat, barley, corn, and soybeans for each cropping system were discussed, along with soil differences, cropping system differences, and how what has been learned can be applied to other farms in the region.

Corn and wheat were discussed by Dr. Mark Alley, Virginia Tech, who is directing the project. Dr. David Holsouser addressed

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Here an on-site display board, among other things, shows the boundaries of different soils to persons on a cropping tour at the Corn and Soybean Expo at Camden Farm. Hearing about what is happening in the Regional Cropping Systems project, now 5 years old, gives them research information to consider with regard to their own operations.



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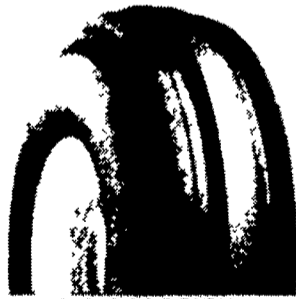
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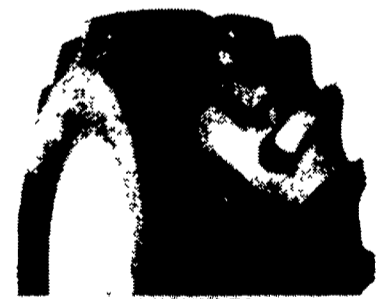


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A cropping tour group looking over an open ditch examines unproductive soil in the specimen prepared for the corn and soybean expo held Aug. 15 at Camden Farm, Caroline Co. It is evident in cropping systems project that's been under way for five years that organic buildup is already being seen.