

Milan No-Till Field Day Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Field Day Demonstrates No-Till Techniques And Fuel Savings

KNOXVILLE, TENN.

The latest developments in no-till crop management will be showcased during the No-Till Crop Production Field Day on July 24 at the University of Tennessee Research and Education Center at Milan. Known the world over for its prominence in the research and development of no-till agricultural practices, the UT Research and Education Center at Milan this year presents its 25th no-till field day.

Thousands of farmers, agribusiness representatives, and interested participants are expected to turn out for the field day and for the associated community activities including the No-Till Antique Tractor and Engine Show and the National Cotton Women's Committee cotton fashion show and luncheon.

In addition to the usual discussions of advancements in row crop production, the featured topic will be the production and management of switchgrass as an energy crop. University of Tennessee experts from a variety of departments, including biosystems engineering and plant pathology and soil sciences, will be on hand to explain the latest information and technologies.

Sponsored by the University of Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station, the event will feature at least 12 in-depth tours of active research plots and projects, covering topics involving soybean and corn production, to weed control, switchgrass storage and more. An overview tour of the Center will also be available to visitors during the field day. This riding tour will highlight the various research projects being completed at the Milan Research and Education Center.

"The Milan No-Till Field Day is an opportunity to showcase a portion of the work we are doing. It allows crop-growers and community members to learn how to use the no-till method," said

Center Director Blake Brown. "There are many benefits to no-till, the main one being a decrease in rates of soil erosion. But the most recently recognized benefit is the decrease in fuel usage. Not tilling the soil allows crop growers to make fewer trips across the land, which ultimately decreases the amount of fuel they use each season. And, because of the price increase of fuel over the past few years, the no-till method can save growers money," says Brown.

The UT Research and Education at Milan was at the center of the development of no-till technology. No-till was started during the 1960's, during a time when West Tennessee had the highest rate of soil erosion in the country. Crop-growers lost tons of top soil annually, and they needed a way to keep topsoil in the field, instead of allowing it to be carried off into streams and rivers. After the no-till technique was established, other benefits were discovered. Growers spend less time in the fields, and there is not as much wear and tear on equipment.

The Milan No-Till Crop Field Day allows people to see how the no-till technique began, and what researchers are doing to make it even better for today's growers.

The Research and Education Center at Milan is one of ten outdoor laboratories operated by the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station system as part of the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. In addition its agricultural research programs, the UT Institute of Agriculture also provides instruction, research and public service through the UT College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, the UT College of Veterinary Medicine, and UT Extension offices in every county in the state.

For more information about the field day and associated community events, visit the Web site: <http://milan.tennessee.edu/> or call (731) 686-7362. Δ