

No-Till May Have Hidden Potential

Rice Researcher Works To Discover It

KRISTEN JOHNSON

MidAmerica Farmer Grower

STUTT GART, ARK.

Dr. Merle Anders, the Rice Systems Agronomist at the University of Arkansas Rice Research and Extension Center is focused on conservation tillage and no-till systems for rice farmers.

depends on the season.”

The biggest benefit that Anders has seen in his study is that soybean and corn yields have gone up steadily in the no-till.

“Corn yields started at about 50 bushels per acre,” said Anders, “last year we set a new record at 230 bushels on some plots. That really signifies a change.”

Photo by John LaRose, Jr.



Focusing on conservation tillage and no-till systems for rice farmers is Dr. Merle Anders, Rice Systems Agronomist at the U of A Rice Research and Extension Center.

“We have a large study underway here at the center. We are in our eighth season and have comparisons of rotations, tillage, fertility levels, and varieties,” said Anders.

“Recently we have added the component of disease monitoring to the project,” said Anders, “The study has been coming along very well and our rice yields are better in no-till one year and lower the next year. It just de-

“We know that as the frequency of rice increases in the rotation, carbon and nitrogen increase in the soil,” said Anders, “On the reverse of that, some work has just been finished saying that when we increase the frequency of rice, yields go down. So now we are looking for a balance.”

“Perhaps the no-till way will be one way of finding that balance,” said Anders. Δ