

Strip-till On Corn Featured At Greenley Center Field Day Aug. 7

COLUMBIA, MO.

Strip-tilling corn is not a common practice in Missouri, but growers who adopt the method can save time and money through more efficient planting, reduced fuel consumption and labor, and efficient placement of fertilizer, said a University of Missouri specialist.

In strip-tillage, farmers till only narrow strips of ground rather than the entire field. "Strip-till loosens up soil and helps dry it out faster in the springtime, which helps get the crop into the ground a little quicker," said Kelly Nelson, MU research agronomist at the MU Greenley Memorial Research Center near Novelty, Mo., east of Kirksville.

"You also reduce the amount of fuel consumed, because you're only tilling a small amount of ground compared to conventional tillage, and you may have more efficient nutrient uptake by the plant," Nelson said.

Nelson will demonstrate strip-till on corn during the crops tour at this year's MU Greenley Center Field Day, Aug. 7. Current research is comparing strip-till and no-till corn practices.

"My main focus at the field day will be to demonstrate strip-till in the field," he said. "We have some wheat stubble; we're going to make a couple passes if the weather is favorable and show what some of the attachments provide.

"We've also started new research on fall-applied nitrogen fertilizers, specifically on corn, and have been comparing fall and spring strip-tilling. Strip-till, which is usually done in the fall, looks really positive when it comes to getting corn into the field a little quicker because it

allows the soil to dry faster."

The demonstration will be timely due to the wet spring, which caused widespread planting delays.

Producers may also save time in the field with strip-till by applying fertilizer at the same time that crop residue is cleared, Nelson said.

"You get the tillage and fertilizer done in one pass, so it doesn't have to be done in the spring," he said. "That cuts your fuel use and saves time in the spring."

The crops tour will also feature research on the cost-effectiveness of variable-source nitrogen applications in corn. Jim Woods of Woods Flying Service will give an overview of aerial applications in today's production systems.

A pest-management tour will feature new herbicide management options in corn; new research on volunteer corn control; and soybean aphid management research.

On the beef-and-forage tour, attendees will hear an adapted-forage update and learn about strategies to manage feed costs; cattle temperament and its relation to growth; and short-term CIDR-based protocols used to synchronize estrus in beef cows.

During lunch, Mick Martin, co-owner of Four Winds Energy in Camp Point, Ill., will discuss one way producers can add value to their farms in a talk titled "Is Small Wind for You?"

After lunch, Nelson will lead a tour of the MU Drainage and Subirrigation (MUDS) project at the nearby Ross Jones Farm.

For more information about the field day, visit <http://aes.missouri.edu/greenley/> or call the Greenley Center at 660-739-4410. Δ