



Real Life Conservation. One Farmer's Perspective





Why no-till and cover crops won't work?

- It won't work on my soil
- Can't get cover crops planted
- Too expensive
- I don't have a NT planter
- Yield drag
- It's ugly and lazy farming
- Too dependent on herbicides

What did we do new this year?

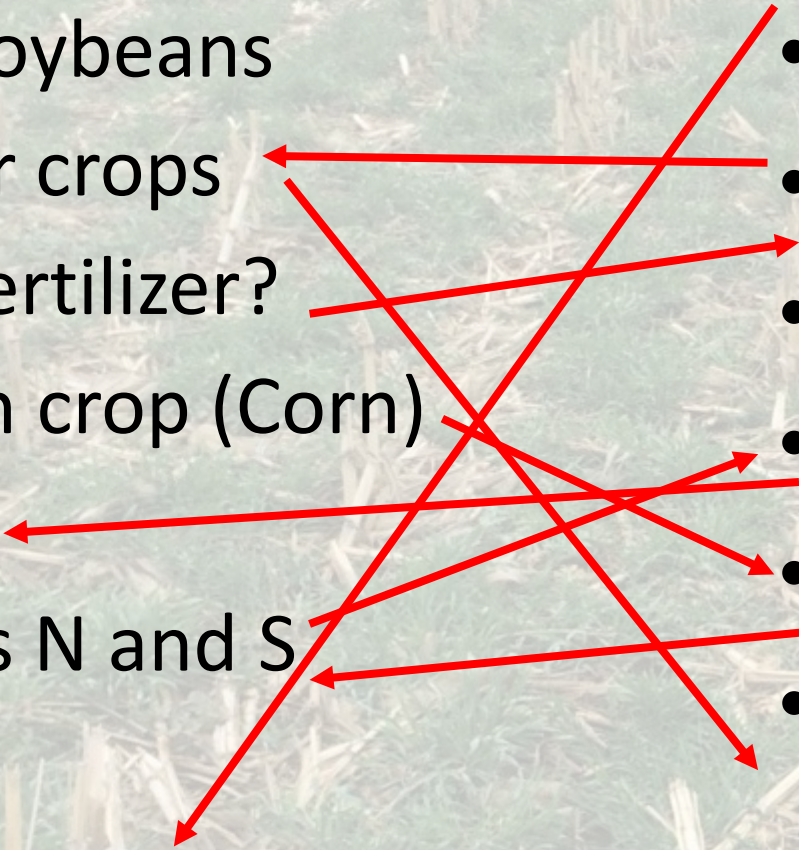
- Soybeans
 - Crimped cereal rye
 - Raising seed beans
- Corn
 - 6 way mix ahead of corn, 370 days between herbicide (6/25/18-6/29/19)
 - Planted corn into pollinating cereal rye
 - 30 lbs of cereal rye vs 15 lbs of cereal rye ahead of corn
 - Took row cleaners off
 - 200 acres with no post herbicide
 - 200 acres with no starter
 - Planted until 2 AM
- Wheat
 - Baled straw

Order of Operations Corn

- Harvest soybeans
- Drill cover crops
- VRT dry fertilizer?
- Plant cash crop (Corn)
- Spray
- Side dress N and S
- Spray?
- Harvest corn

Order of Operations Soybeans

- Plant cover crops with airplane
- Harvest corn
- VRT dry fertilizer?
- Plant cash crop (soybeans)
- Spray
- Harvest soybeans







We are harvesting in the fall of 2017 after 2.6 inches of rain. This picture is taken about 9 am the day after the rain. Neighbors were not harvesting







The background image shows a field of green grass with many dry, yellowish-brown stalks or debris scattered across it. The text "Observations during rain events" is centered in the middle of the image.

Observations during rain events

Conventional Till



6+ years No-Till



Conventional Till



7+ years No-Till, 3 cover crops



Conventional Till

7+ years No-Till, 3 CC

Fall anhydrous
100% of N

35-40 lbs of N
on planter.
Side dressing
on June 3rd















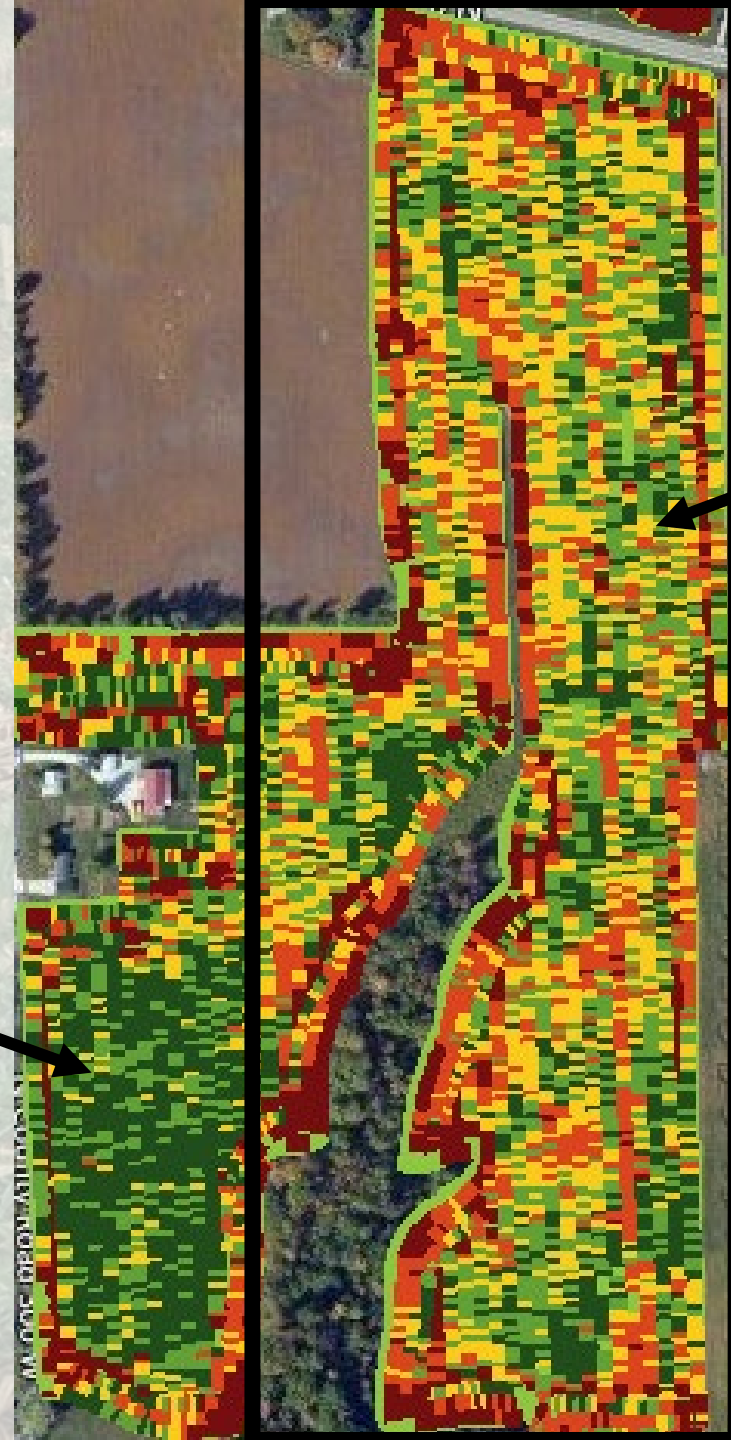







Oats, Radish, Crimson Clover
3 pass herbicide
190 bu/ac
~\$20/ac better

6 way mix
Crimped
1 pass herbicide
178 bu/ac





Black Box-
2009 0.36 acres

Red Box-
2017 0.12 acres

Google

Imagery Date: 9/9/2017 39°57'43.00" N 87°32'07.22" W elev 664 ft eye alt

Mix	Rate (lbs/ac)	Total Cost in 2016	Total Cost in 2017	Total cost in 2018	Total cost in 2019
Cereal Rye	40	\$10.46	\$10.23	\$11.03	\$12.00
Radish	1.5	\$2.39	\$1.80	\$2.10	\$2.34
Total for mix		\$12.84	\$12.03	\$13.13	\$14.34
Oats	10	\$2.80	\$3.00	\$2.90	\$3.20
Radish	1	\$1.59	\$1.20	\$1.40	\$1.56
Rapeseed	0.3	\$0.27	\$0.27	\$0.27	\$0.11
Cereal Rye	25	\$6.54	\$6.40	\$6.90	\$7.50
Total for mix		\$11.20	\$10.87	\$11.47	\$12.37


Cover Crop That Was Planted Into	Corn Yield Bu/ac	Acres	\$/ac profit vs no cover
Cereal Rye	181.44	569.91	\$93.70
6 Way Mix	174.56	60.35	\$60.14
ORC	165.36	327.06	\$25.73
Summer Mix	144.72	52.51	-\$64.29
No Cover	154.21	292.11	
All Acres	169.49	1,301.94	

How do we get better?

- Who you hang out with is reflected in your actions.
 - “Show me your friends and I will show you your future.”
- Coffee shop?
- Conservation meetings like this one to get better?
- Phone numbers of guys who are doing things you want to do?

Take Home Message

- Get a good group of people around you:
 - Agronomist, Salesman, Banker, Marketing Agent
 - Like minded farmer network to help you achieve new heights and help push you
- Try something new on your farm every year.
- Make a plan, but be flexible.
- If you want this system to work on your farm, you can make it work.
- Believe what you see, not what you know!



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