vol. 36 February 2015

The Seed Consultant

A BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

Helpful Tips for Reducing Soil Erosion

Soil erosion is an annual problem throughout the Eastern Corn Belt. Recent research estimates that farmland across the Corn Belt loses close to 4 tons of soil/acre each year due to erosion. In addition, even under the best conditions topsoil buildup is very slow, if it occurs at all. Soil particles can be detached and moved out of a field by both wind and water. Wind can pick up small soil particles, transporting them long distances. Water moving along the ground surface can remove a thin sheet of soil, create small channels, or wash out large gullies.

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Simply, the Best Value in the Seed Industry™

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Potential for a 400% return

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FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO EROSION

Rainfall:
Soil erosion increases as length or intensity of rainfall increases.

Slope Length/Grade:
Soil erosion is worse on longer/steeper slopes because water moves faster across the soil.

Vegetation/residue:
Growing plants and residue protect the soil from rain impact, slow down flowing water and increase infiltration of water into the soil, as well as protecting the soil from wind erosion.

Soil Texture/Structure:
More course soils (sands) with larger pores allow for faster infiltration (less erosion) of water than soils with finer textures (clays). Soil structure is the arrangement of sand, silt, and clay particles into aggregates. Good structure at the soil surface will also allow for increased infiltration, poor structure leads to more runoff and erosion. Poor structure is associated with low organic matter, equipment traffic on wet soils, and exposure of disturbed soil to adverse weather.

THE COSTS

Yield Potential:
Soil erosion removes topsoil, which is high in organic matter and contains the nutrients essential for crop growth. Erosion generally decreases yield potential.

Nutrients:
Nutrients needed for crop growth are located in the topsoil where fertilizers, crop residues, and manure are applied; soil erosion will decrease the nutrient content.

Water Holding Capacity:
Loss of topsoil organic matter can change the overall texture of a soil and result in lower water holding capacity.

Organic Matter:
Topsoil is high in organic matter where crop residues and manure have been added to the soil. Erosion usually results in decreased organic matter.

The Environment:
Water quality in streams, lakes, etc. can be greatly negatively affected by sediment and nutrients that are brought in by soil erosion. Wind erosion can result in reduced air quality.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Reduce Tillage:
Tillage exposes soil to the environment and makes it more likely to be eroded by wind or water.

Manage Crop Residue:
Keeping crop residues on the soil surface helps protect soil from wind, rain, and running water. Residue can protect soil from erosion when crops are not growing in a field.

Grass Waterways:
Maintaining grass waterways in low areas where a high volume of runoff is possible will slow the speed of running water and allow for sediment to be kept in the field.

Cover Crops:
Cover crops allow protection for a field during times of the year when crops are not growing. Cover crops protect the soil from wind, rain, and running water.

Row Width/Direction:
Narrower crop rows will canopy sooner and allow for better protection of the soil. Crop rows that are planted perpendicular to slopes will decrease runoff and increase infiltration vs. rows that are planted in the same direction as the slope.

How to Stay Ahead of the Game

No two farms are alike. Each farm is unique not only because the soils may be different but also how you treat them every year. Everything you do on your farm with chemicals, cultural practices and cover crops plus weather conditions are constantly changing them. How do you measure what changes have occurred and how should you make adjustments? Soil and tissue tests can be helpful but they are just one of the tools.

On the other hand, genetics of seeds are also changing constantly by the release of new varieties every year. How do you keep up with these changes? I recommend that every grower should plant at least one test plot on his farm every year. You don't have time to test every treatment you use on your farm but seed genetics is one of the most important inputs in your control and it is important that you make the right choices. The following guidelines for a test plot may be helpful:

• For reducing the variability in the test and improving reliability of the data, pick out the most uniform piece of ground on your farm.

• Plant the varieties you intend to use plus some newer varieties adapted to your area. Check with your Seed Rep for the availability of seed of Pre-commercial or Experimental varieties.

• Your Seed Rep can be an important part of your operations because he / she gets to know your management style, your soils, fertility, disease and insect issues, the micro-environment of your farms and equipment better than most advisors. This allows him to make better recommendations for your farm.

• Single strips of varieties are OK for observations but replication or repetition can measure variability on your farm and provide more dependable data. You may also use a check variety for measuring soil variability in the plot to get dependable data.

• If you are going to use replications, try to change the order of the varieties to allow every variety an equal chance of being on a certain piece of ground or next to a certain treatment as any other. Randomization tends to remove our personal biases and helps us find the real differences.

• Plant the test plot first. Remove any kinks in your planter and use this test as a window to the rest of your farm. These plots are great to observe emergence, plant and ear height, disease tolerance, husk cover and rate of dry down in corn hybrids.

• One location or test is not enough but it is a lot better than not planting any test plot at all.

• When combined with information from other unbiased sources such as University tests, your own plots become powerful tools for the selection process, especially, when you start accumulating data for several years.

• Before starting a test you must assume that all varieties are equal and let the data guide you towards the truth rather than have preconceived notions and try to change or justify the data to get the results you want.

Combine these data with other sources and other farms or independent test plots, plus the advice from your Seed Rep and you will have an effective variety selection method for a successful growing season. You cannot control all variables on your farm but a test plot combined with soil and tissue tests should keep you ahead of the game!

By Dave Nanda, Ph.D.,
Director of Genetics and Technology
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2014 Yield Contest Winners

2014 Project 300 Corn Yield Contest

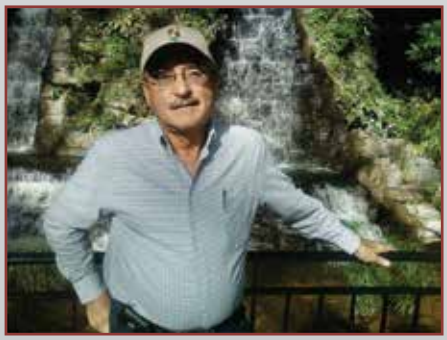
Rank	Customer	Brand	Yield	City	State
1	Tim Bishop	SC 11AQ03™	292.19	Queenstown	MD
2	Triple K Farms	SCS 1083AMXT™*	275.09	Maria Stein	OH
3	Matt Milless	SCS 11HQ33™*	256.4285	Amanda	OH

2014 Project 100 Soybean Yield Contest

Rank	Customer	Brand	Yield	City	State
1	Nathan Philips	SCS 9328RR™*	84.94	Gambier	OH
2	David Fisher	SCS 9314RR™*	82	London	OH
3	Marlon Corwin	SCS 9328RR™*	69.406	New Palistine	IN

2014 Corn Test Weight Contest

Rank	Customer	Brand	Test Weight	City	State
1	James Berger	SCS 11HXX19™*	64.8	Hagerstown	IN


Tim Bishop


Nathan Philips


James Berger


Triple K Farms


Matt Milless

David Fisher


Marion Corwin

CONGRATULATIONS

to Our 6 State Winners in the 2014 NCGA Yield Contest

MATT MILLESS
SCS 11HQ33™* brand
256.4286 Bu/Ac
2nd Place Ohio
No-Till/Strip-Till Irrigated

C & G FARMS
SCS 11RR31™* brand
288.7991 Bu/Ac
2nd Place Missouri
No-Till/Strip-Till Irrigated

DILLON MILLESS
SC 11AGT43™ brand
252.6987 Bu/Ac
2nd Place Ohio
Irrigated

HINKEBEIN FARMS
SC 11AGT43™ brand
287.8442 Bu/Ac
3rd Place Missouri
No-Till/Strip-Till Irrigated

MICHAEL DAHLKE
SCS 11HQ31™* brand
256.4072 Bu/Ac
1st Place Alabama
No-Till/Strip-Till Non-Irrigated

NELSON EBERLY
SCS 11HR63™* brand
231.7143 Bu/Ac
3rd Place Virginia
No-Till/Strip-Till Non-Irrigated

Since 2008, SCI is the only eastern Corn Belt based seed company with 4 National and 31 State Winners in the NCGA Yield Contest.

SEED CONSULTANTS, INC.

Call Today! **800-708-2676** www.seedconsultants.com

Successfully Producing NON-GMO Corn Premiums

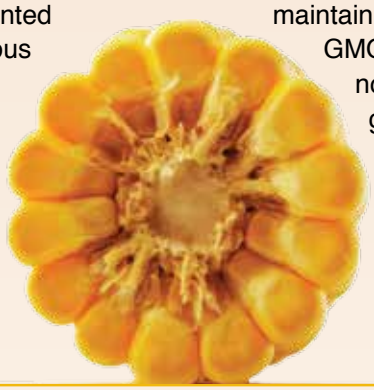
With the quickly declining commodity price for corn, we are receiving a lot of inquiries about NON-GMO hybrids. Some growers in our marketing area are even attempting to capture an additional premium for growing NON-GMO corn. With that in mind, here are a couple items to remember if you are considering raising NON-GMO corn for a premium.

• Depending upon the contracting elevator, standard GMO contamination allowances are typically from 0% - 1%.
• Planting a NON-GMO hybrid does not necessarily mean the harvested shelled corn will be free from GMO's.
• Test's used by elevators to determine if GMO's are present are not 100% accurate, but they are the determining factor as to whether your load is acceptable to them.
• With the immense amount of crop land planted to genetically modified corn, it is a tremendous undertaking for a farmer to grow 100% pure NON-GMO corn.

We have witnessed situations where a grower had a bin completely full of NON-GMO corn. One load within that bin failed to pass the NON-GMO test at the elevator, yet the balance of the corn delivered from that bin passed GMO testing.

GMO contamination can come from a significant number of possible culprits.
• Contaminated planting equipment.
• Contaminated harvesting equipment.
• Contaminated bins, augers, grain carts and trucks.
• Adventitious GMO-pollen from neighboring fields. This problem is even more prevalent in years when we have dry weather and/or stress at pollination time.
• Contaminated seed.
• Mistakes made by the farmer during record keeping where GMO hybrids were not correctly identified at planting or harvest, thus contaminating NON-GMO corn.

The key is to take extra precautions throughout your production of NON-GMO corn to ensure you have minimized your chance of contamination. Even some of the most detailed oriented growers have found it hard to maintain NON-GMO purity with the large amount of GMO corn grown by their neighbors. SCI does not warrantee or guarantee 100% purity at the grain elevator of our NON-GMO hybrids. SCI works diligently to provide our customers with the purest seed possible. We take every precaution in seed production we can to ensure the purest and highest quality of NON-GMO hybrids for our customers.



CONGRATULATIONS

2014 Ohio Soybean Yield Contest Winner

DON JACKSON

Preble County, Ohio

SCS 9363RR™* brand

86.1 bu/ac

SCI's Grower Seed Treater BuyBack Program

Potential for a 400% return on your investment!

Soybean inoculation research conducted at Michigan State University showed that inoculation increased soybean yields on average by 1.3 bushels per acre in fields having a history of previous inoculation use. Similar results have been documented in long-term soybean inoculation trials conducted in Ohio (two bushels per acre), and Indiana (one bushel per acre).

So, why doesn't Seed Consultants offer commercially applied inoculants?
After inoculants are applied, their viability starts to diminish (depending on temperatures, humidity, etc.); of all the inoculants offered in the industry, six months is the longest shelf life offered. SCI starts delivering beans in November, December, January, etc.; if we were to have a wet spring, delayed planting; there would be no guarantee on viability of the bacteria for a yield response.

SCI's Solution is the Grower Seed Treater BuyBack Program

• Grower purchases Seed Treater (through SCI or another retailer, must submit copy of invoice to SCI)

#1 GST
• 2.5 gallon container
• mounts on seed tender
• conveyance system
applies to beans ($675)

#2 CST
• 10 Gallon
• complete slurry treater
• mounts on seed tender
• conveyance system
applies to beans ($1,325)

#3 CST
• 30 Gallon
• complete slurry treater
• stationary
• conveyance system
applies to beans ($1,950)

Based on yearly purchases of inoculants or biological from SCI, growers can earn up to 10% of the total cost of inoculates purchased from SCI per year over a five year period towards the seed treater purchase price. Accounts will be credited in November based on inoculate and biological purchased from SCI.

NO RETURN ON ALL INOCULANTS & BIOLOGICALS

PRODUCT	Competitive Product		Package Size	Price per	UNITS TREATED	GROWER CASE RETAIL PRICE *AFTER 3/1/2015*		*PRICE WITH 10% DISCOUNT if ordered by 3/1/15*	
N-Force Liquid with 120+ days on seed	Replaces Cell-Tech; Vault NP; & Optimize	Liquid	15 gal keg	1,920/keg	1,920	**$3,340.80**	**$1.74**	**$4,008.96**	**$2.09**
N-Force Liquid with 120+ days on seed	Replaces Cell-Tech; Vault NP; & Optimize	Liquid	2 X 2.5 ga.	640/case	640	**$1,113.60**	**$1.74**	**$1,336.32**	**$2.09**
N-Force Keg Pump	^^	^^		^^		**$385.70**	**^^**	**$462.84**	**^^**
DEI 15 gallon Poly with special pump and meter	^^	^^		^^		**$2,102.50**	**^^**	**$2,523.00**	**^^**
Maximizer (TerraMax Product)	Replaces Cell-Tech; Vault NP; & Optimize	Liquid	4 X 100 unit bag	400 units/case	400	**$783.00**	**$1.96**	**$939.60**	**$2.35**
TerraMax Dry + AZO (2 year dated dry)	Replaces N-Dure, ABN Peat; Vault SP; RhizoStick	Dry	12 X 1	10 units/bottle	10	**$11.75**	**$1.17**	**$14.09**	**$1.41**

NO RETURN ON ALL INOCULANTS & BIOLOGICALS

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Between the Rows

Updates from Chris Jeffries, general manager

Thank you to the more than 1,300 customers, who attended SCI's 19 Winter Agronomy Meetings and to SCI's outstanding agronomy staff (Matt Hutcheson, Mike Earley, & Bill Mullen). Their studies continue to reinforce to me -- "the more I know, the less I know."

From SCI's trials:
• *Fungicide advantage on brands:*
SC 11AQ43™ - 00.0 bpa; SCS 1093A™* - 27.0 bpa; and the surprise, SCS 1131™* - 40.0 bpa.
• *Dextrose advantage on:*
Corn (2 years data) - 3 bpa
• *RyzUp advantage on:*
Corn (2 years data) - 4 bpa

Contact the office or your Area Seedsman/woman and we will send you a hard copy of the results.

Additionally, thank you to Mike, Bill and Matt for a grain bin safety reminder. A 10-14" auger moves grain four times faster than a 6" auger. Once an auger starts, you have 2-3 seconds to react and in 4-5 seconds you are trapped. Please exercise caution while moving grain this winter and spring.

On another note, I had the opportunity to attend a conference where Dr. Mike Boehlje, Purdue Ag Economist, shared some strategies for managing in our current environment that I believe are worth sharing:
1. Lock in margins - anything positive
2. Crop insurance
3. Fix interest rates (rates may go up)
4. Deleverage (pay down debt)
5. Hold financial reserves (set on cash)
6. Conservative bidding/buying inputs (buy right)
7. Slow growth/fund with equity
8. Make investments in operational excellence:
   - Push costs down
   - Produce more bushels
   - Winner = the lowest cost per bushel produced

I am fully aware that SCI doesn't win every yield contest; but ultimately, the "Winner is the lowest cost per bushel producer."

Finally, thank you for allowing SCI to be your seed provider.

Chris Jeffries

DON'T MISS OUR WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER!
The SCI free e-newsletter comes via e-mail every Monday. The newsletter is packed full of current agronomic topics. Subscribe by sending your e-mail address to matt@seedconsultants.com or by signing up on our website at www.seedconsultants.com.