

## **Field Day Sept. 3rd**

By Mark Watson

Panhandle No-Till Educator

Across the state of Nebraska the NRD districts and NRCS offices along with the Nebraska Environmental Trust have been actively involved in promoting the benefits of no till farming. Our local Upper Niobrara White, South Platte, and North Platte NRD's and county NRCS offices are no exception. The local offices see the benefits of soil and water conservation that no till farming practices provide. Another educational opportunity to learn more about no till farming practices will be coming on September 3, 2008 at the Watson Brothers farm located at 1561 CR 61, Alliance, Nebraska.

No Till On The Plains will be hosting this no till field day. NTOTP is a nonprofit organization which promotes no till farming. They have hosted field days and winter conferences across Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Oklahoma.

NTOTP has invited a group of speakers to this field day who have a wealth of knowledge on all aspects of no till farming practices. I would encourage everyone who is interested in the benefits of no till farming practices to attend this field day. This will be a great opportunity to learn from the very best.

Dr. Ray Ward, founder of Ward Laboratories is well know across the state as a premier soil scientist when it comes to the benefits of no till crop production systems. Ray has been to our area on several occasions and is well versed in the challenges we face in western Nebraska when it comes to our soils and how to manage them.

Dr. Kris Nichols is a soil microbiologist from North Dakota. Kris has been very active in studying no till farming and how this practice benefits the soil microorganisms. Kris will talk at length about the benefits to crop production by increasing the activity and diversity of these organisms in our soils.

Dr. Paul Jasa works with UNL extension as a no till specialist when it comes to production systems and no till machinery. Paul has studied no till farming at the Roger's Memorial farm east of Lincoln for the past 26 years. He brings a wealth of knowledge on the problems producers face with no till and how to solve these problems.

Kathy Buttle and Stephanie King, NRCS soil conservationists will demonstrate how residue and soil structure can enhance the amount of moisture you can capture and store in your soils with no till farming practices.

I will also have a presentation on our water management on our farm. I plan to show you how we have used only 7 inches of water on our irrigated corn and 4.5 inches on our edible beans, and I feel we have over watered both crops! We did receive another .5 inch of rain last night, so our total for August is 2.05 inches, about .3 of an inch above

normal for August. Our total for the year is 8.62 inches, a deficit for the year of 3.84 inches.

I would encourage everyone who has an interest in agriculture to come to this field day and learn more about no till farming practices. This is an exceptional opportunity to educate yourself about no till farming and how this system can improve your soil, conserve our water, and improve the profitability of your farming operation.

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