

Soil Conservation Award

The Final award I would like to mention is the Soil Conservation Award, being given to the Cartmill and Riley Joint Venture, for the work Travis Cartmill and Gerald Riley have done on their acreage.

The basis of selection of individual awardees will be determined on the following points:

- a. Use of land according to its capabilities.
- b. Completeness of conservation plan.
- c. Balance of farm enterprise.
- d. Quality of conservation work completed and maintenance of practices.
- e. Special Practices: In addition to traditional practices, special practices such as grassland development, forestry, pollution abatement, riparian management, water quality, and residue management should be considered.

According to Gerald, their operation began doing minimum till when he started farming for himself, and converted the corn acres into no-till roughly 10 years ago.

Currently, they are using their practices on roughly 6,000 acres, with the minimum till on wheat and no-till on corn as I previously mentioned. The wheat acres are typically rotated from wheat to summer fallow and back to wheat, while occasionally throwing in a couple years of continuous wheat on some acres when moisture cooperates. When it doesn't cooperate there are some years when grain sorghum is brought into the system. The irrigated acres where no-till is being done, corn is the number one rotation, with wheat and the occasional soybeans being added.

They began using these practices to try and cut down on production costs and to conserve moisture.

The biggest benefits they have seen from these practices has been of course moisture conservation, soil protection, as well as improved soil health, and an increase in yield.

Gerald mentioned that their operation has tried their best to keep up on innovations in no-till, minimum tillage and strip till practices. Their main goal obviously is to sustain profitability. He also added that it makes a world of difference to have good partnerships.

Unfortunately Gerald Riley could not be with us tonight, as he is down in Arizona, but will you please welcome Travis Cartmill to accept their award.