

60455 U.S. 31 South * South Bend, Indiana 46614 * Telephone 291-2300

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NEWSLETTER

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The Compliance Happening

There isn't much time left. By Spring of 1993, most producers in St. Joseph County with highly erodible fields (HEL) who desire to remain eligible for USDA program benefits must not only have and use a conservation plan, but must be fully implementing the conservation systems, (practices, treatments, etc.), described in the plans. A plan is a written agreement between the Soil Conservation Service and the landowner or operator to begin erosion control measures. Items to pay close attention to in your plan include tract and field numbers, acreage, dates practices are to be installed, practice requirements, criteria S.C.S. will use to judge the successful implementation of the practice, and a signed statement of agreement. A plan basically schedules the application of all planned erosion reduction practices in an orderly manner to ensure that each practice is fully functional before December 31, 1994.

Crop residue management is the most widely used soil erosion control method in compliance plans. For most plans, a minimum of 40% bean residue and 50% corn residue is required to remain in compliance. Maintaining this amount of residue will require precision crop management. Because many factors can effect residue, it is wise to start measuring your residue, (after harvest), so that you can fine tune your planting and tillage systems to maintain as much of the cover as possible. Factors that can effect residue include: crop yield; plant fragility; row spacing; crop species and variety; planting date; soil type, moisture, and fertility; speed and depth of tillage; and type of tillage equipment used.

Table 1:

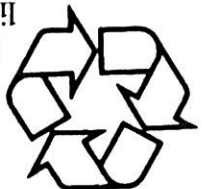
Table 1. Influence of Various Field Operations on Surface Residue Cover Remaining.	
Tillage and planting implements	Percent of residue remaining after each operation*
Moldboard plow	3 to 5%
Chisel plow (coultor chisel)	
Straight points	50 to 80%
Twisted points	30 to 60%
Knife-type fertilizer applicator	50 to 80%
Disk (random or offset)	
3 in. deep	40 to 80%
6 in. deep	30 to 60%
Field cultivator	50 to 80%
One-pass combination tool	30 to 60%
Planter	
Smooth, ripple, or no coultor	90 to 95%
Bubble or fluted/wavy coultor (less than 1" wide)	85 to 90%
Fluted/wavy coultor (1" wide or greater)	80 to 85%
Sweeps, double disks, or horizontal disks (ridge-till)	60 to 80%
Drills—conventional	
Disk openers	90 to 95%
Drills—no-till	
Ripple or no coultor	85 to 90%
Bubble or fluted/wavy coultor (less than 1" wide)	80 to 85%
Fluted/wavy coultor (1" wide or greater)	70 to 75%
Winter weathering	75 to 85%

* Use higher values for corn residue and lower values for soybean residue. These numbers apply to primary tillage operations only. Secondary tillage operations may not reduce percent cover by the same amounts on second or third passes.

Table 1 shows how using different tillage and planting equipment can effect residue. You can also use this table to get a rough estimate of the residue remaining after planting, tillage, and weathering. Multiply initial crop cover (approx. 95% for 120 bu corn, 85% for 38 bu. soybean), by winter weathering loss, (if not moldboard plowed), and then by the appropriate percentage for each operation that makes up your tillage planting system. A more accurate method for determining the amount of residue you have, (and the one used by S.C.S. employees for spot-checks), is the line-transect method. You can do this yourself by stretching a fifty foot measuring tape or rope, (knotted or marked at one foot intervals), diagonal across crop rows. Percent of cover is then determined by counting the number of foot marks that intersect or lie directly over a piece of residue and multiplying by two. Look straight down on each mark and take all readings from the same side of the tape or rope.

Please check your plans and do not hesitate to contact the S.C.S. office if you need more information on conservation plans, practices, or requirements. In addition, all S.C.S. programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

Recycling Note



Approximately 3,000 pounds of dry, absorbent material is required to bed a dairy cow per year. Other livestock require far less: beef need 600 pounds; sows, 1,300 pounds; and sheep, 120 pounds. Because it is more absorbent and cleaner than straw or corn stalks, shredded paper can be more desirable bedding material when it is properly produced and applied.

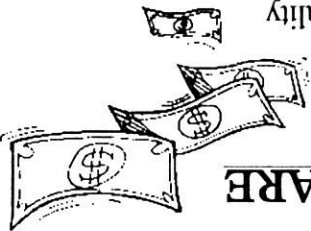
Top Conservation District Employee Honored

St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District Environmental Education Coordinator, Rick Glassman was chosen as Area Employee of the year in the education-category at a recent statewide appreciation day.

Recognition Given To St. Joseph County Conservation District Technical Employee

Jack Ruger, President of the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, congratulates St. Joseph Co. SWCD County Conservationist Christine Sholly, selected as the SWCD Technical Employee of the Year for the Area and the State at a recent statewide appreciation day for conservation agency staff and volunteers.

75% COST SHARE



Seventy-Five percent cost share is available from your ASCS office for water quality practices within the Tri-County project area. Some of the practices include integrated crop management (ICM), grassed waterways, permanent vegetative cover, WASCOR's, tree planting, stream bank stabilization, and animal waste systems.

The programs and services of the St. Joseph County SWCD and the Soil Conservation Service are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

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