



Quick Facts

The implementation of no-till corn and soybeans has increased by 17% and 49%, respectively since 1990.

Upcoming Events

Steering Committee Meeting

Date: September 30th, 2016
Time: 10:30 am
Location: Plymouth Public Library

The Draft Headwaters Yellow River Watershed Management Plan is currently available for review. Please contact the Marshall County SWCD for a copy of the document.

For more information on the Headwaters Yellow River Project feel free to contact:

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Headwaters Yellow River Watershed Planning Project

Fall 2016

Conservation Cropping Systems

Conservation cropping systems are a systematic approach to production agriculture that protects natural resources, while simultaneously improving soils. This system allows producers to efficiently produce food, feed, and fiber in an environmentally sound manner. Conservation cropping systems accomplish these feats through the implementation of long-term continuous no-till, cover crops, nutrient and pest management, precision farming technology, and conservation buffers.

No-till farming is a production method that seeks to limit soil disturbance. This method leaves crop residues on the surface year after year, which increases water infiltration, reduces surface runoff, reduces herbicide use, reduces fuel costs, and increases beneficial soil organisms. Strip-till farming is a system that uses limited tillage in the seed zone, while leaving the rest of the field in no-till. Generally, strip-till farming does not provide same magnitude of benefits provided by no-till farming.

The benefits of cover crops vary according to the species that is selected. Common benefits include reduced soil erosion, increased water infiltration, increased soil organic carbon, reduced soil compaction, nutrient recycling, nitrogen fixation, improved weed control, and improved soil characteristics.

Precision farming is a system that uses modern technology to manage different sections of the same field based on their specific needs. This management strategy save producers time, chemicals, and other

production costs. Most precision farming techniques use Global Positioning Systems to tie specific field information to specific location in that field. When paired with nutrient and pest management practices the benefits of precision farming are maximized to increase profitability, while also reducing impacts to the environment.

As part of the Headwaters Yellow River Watershed project there are now funds available to assist farmers with the implementation of conservation cropping systems practices.

Anyone interested in participating please contact the Marshall County Soil and Water Conservation District or Matthew Linn with Cardno at (574) 586-3400.



Photo Courtesy of NRCS 2016