

Guide no-till corn on corn

By TOM J. BECHMAN

GROWING corn after corn can be a sizable challenge. Add in no-till or reduced tillage and the challenge level goes way up. But if you've got highly erodible land and you grow corn after corn, it may be your best option.

Here are suggestions from five agronomists that increase your odds for successfully no-tilling corn after corn. Don't mistake their comments for recommendations to try it. But if you're doing it, here are ideas that might help:

Manage corn rootworm. This insect is a potential threat in any corn-corn field. "Using a hybrid with *Bt* rootworm protection or a triple stack would be a good choice," says Jeff Nagel, a certified crop adviser and

Key Points

- Step up management for no-tillage corn after corn.
- Scout to see if foliar fungicides might be needed after tasseling.
- Rotate hybrids and select one with a good disease package.

agronomist with Ceres Solutions LLP, West Lafayette, Ind. "These hybrids also come with seed-coated insecticide to provide protection against other insects like white grub and wireworm. If rootworm corn isn't an option, go with a good soil-applied insecticide."

Start weed-free. If you applied herbicides last fall, you're a step ahead, says Andy Awald, another CCA, Farm Fertilizer & Seeds Inc., Hamlet, Ind. "If

not, do it in early spring," he says. "This will eliminate early weed competition, help the field dry and warm as much as possible, and eliminate the potential for attracting black cutworm moths."

Step up management. "Pest concerns in no-till continuous corn aren't all that different from pest concerns in conventional continuous corn," Awald says. "Management is the difference. Scout more aggressively during the season to keep on top of potential surprises."

Hit secondary pests. Wireworms and grubs won't seem secondary if they riddle your corn. Since corn grows slower in high-residue fields, pests have more time to work. Using a granular or liquid soil insecticide rather than a seed treatment normally will give you a higher dose available to control them, Awald says.



MANAGE CLOSELY: Extra residue in corn-after-corn situations increases the need for scouting.

Select the right hybrid. "Start managing for no-till continuous corn by finding a hybrid with good early vigor and good early-season stress ratings," says Danny Greene, CCA, Greene Consulting LLC, Franklin, Ind. "Without rotating your crops, plan on at least rotating hybrids. Look at the weaknesses of last year's hybrid in that field and fill the gaps. Solutions may include a seed treatment for early-season disease protection, a stronger-traits hybrid or budgeting for an in-season fungicide application should disease threshold levels be reached."

Get a good disease package. Start with a hybrid with good protection against foliar diseases, including gray leaf spot, northern corn leaf blight and anthracnose, Nagel says. Like Greene, he suggests a foliar fungicide applied at tasseling through silking if weather conditions are favorable for disease development. Note that the label for Headline fungicide was adjusted for 2008 to discourage application with adjuvant before tasseling.

Boost nitrogen rate. This applies whether it's corn after corn in reduced or conventional tillage, says Jim Camberato, Purdue University Extension soil fertility specialist. He suggests about an extra 30 pounds of commercial N for corn after corn vs. rotation corn.

■ **Bob Nielsen, Purdue University Extension corn specialist, assembled a publication focused on reducing the potential for yield drag in corn after corn in any tillage system. Find it online at www.kingcorn.org/news/timeless/CornCorn.html.**

Bobcat launches compacts

By DAN CRUMMETT

BOB-CAT, the company that created the skid-loader industry 50 years ago and expanded that market worldwide with its concentration on loader attachments, has launched a compact tractor line.

The CT120, CT225 and CT230 four-wheel-drive tractors are the first of a nine-model line the company plans to bring to showrooms in 2008. All feature hydrostatic transmissions.

Built by Daedong of Korea, the new models all feature glow-plug heated diesel engines with 100-hour service intervals and engineered maintenance accessibility. Creature comforts and safety features include a suspension seat and retractable seat belt, a folding Rollover Protective System, hydraulic controls built close to the operator seat, a cup holder, horn, brake lights, a single-pedal hydrostatic transmission control, tool box, and cruise control.

The CT120 is a 20 hp tractor that weighs in at 2,055 pounds and measures only 46.5 inches wide with agricultural tires. It comes with a two-speed hydrostatic transmission. Like the other two new tractors, the 120 is available with an angle blade, box blade, finish mower, post-hole digger

and tine rake, as well as a front-end loader and attachments.

The CT225 has 27 hp and a three-speed hydrostatic transmission. It and the CT230 share similar frames, which measure 56 inches wide with ag tires and 118 inches long. The 225 weighs 3,021 pounds. The CT230 has a 30 hp engine, a three-range hydrostatic transmission and weighs 3,055 pounds.

■ **For more, visit www.bobcat.com.**



CT230: The largest of Bobcat's new tractors, to date, is the 30-hp CT230. Six more models ranging up to 50 hp will be introduced this year.



CT120: The 120 offers a tight 89-inch turning radius and a working width of less than 4 feet. The 20-hp model is available with a variety of attachments.



CT225: The new 27-hp CT225 compact tractor features a three-range hydrostatic transmission.

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