

Ridge-Till and Conventional Tillage Studies: Summary

Ridge-till comparisons with conventional tillage have been conducted on the Allison Research Farm since 1996. We had 3 basic reasons for using ridge-till. One has been to see if we could significantly reduce weed populations in chemical-free fields. Secondly, we needed to elevate the seed placement site to create a dryer seed zone. The 3rd reason was to reduce number of trips over the field.

Our studies in the soybeans have shown significant reductions of grass weeds within the ridge-till system in practically all surveys and occasionally significant reductions in the broadleaves. For example, in 1997, the soybean conventional tilled field being compared to the soybean ridge-till field had 18 times more foxtail heads, 11 times more velvetleaf weeds, and 11 times more smartweeds. We have also observed less volunteer corn in the ridge-till fields. Weed reductions in ridge-till cornfields have been similar to the ridge-till soybean fields. Although weed control was often significantly better in ridge-till fields, we did not observe a consistent improvement in corn or soybean yields in the ridge-till fields.

Images of Ridge-Till Fields Below:

