

## **Conservation Agriculture Systems Alliance**

Conference Call

Tuesday, Sept 7

at 11 a.m. (eastern)

### **Participants:**

Sjoerd Duiker, PANTA

Tim Healey, Agrotain International

Susan Winsor, Corn and Soybean Digest

Karen Scanlon, CTIC

### **AGENDA**

#### Other proposals including support for CASA

Jason Bergtold, Kansas State University, will not be submitting a proposal to NIFA on sustainable bioenergy.

#### **CIG**

Cover crop demonstration projects in 10 different PA counties. Focus on planting cover crop after corn silage. Look at mix of cover crop seed and multiple uses of cover crops (soil improvement, forage, fall grazing, reduce N application) for immediate economic returns. Educational program, web site, field days, demonstration areas, blog, articles in Field Crop News. Extension works with producer already using cover crops to be local champion. Monitor adoption rate. Manure injection also a small part of the project.

#### **Farm Progress Show**

Agrotain and USDA had demonstration of benefits of enhanced efficiency fertilizers.

TJH: how do we start a new CASA group in an area? Where do we see opportunities to expand CASA network.

KS: CTIC's effort a few years ago, called alliance building, where we provided facilitation services to help get groups started.

SW: social networking may be new way to build coalitions.

SD: what social networking do

SW: Talk.newagtalk.com under crop forum – ask if farmers interested in starting new conservation group.

TJH: develop a written plan for starting new groups. If we seek funding to grow CASA, will need written plan for how we plan to expand the organization.

SW: John Rodecap, Iowa, facilitated farmer groups and provide technical expertise, but put leadership in hands of farmers

Why do we want to grow CASA?

TJH: to promote conservation in agriculture. There are barriers to adoption of no-till, and CASA can be a resource to farmers who are considering the practice for answering questions and managing through the transition.

SW: conservation tillage conferences may be another venue for starting groups. Yahoo interest groups are another way to interact on common interests.

#### Topics for future CASA teleconferences

Cover crop cocktails and how to use within crop rotations – 20 different species mixed together; grazed but left with enough cover for winter; yield benefits; fewer disease problems. Ask different regions about how using cover crops, challenges and benefits.

New equipment innovations for no-till operations (how to plant through residue) – Dawn Equipment; John Deere drill closing wheels

What are major barriers to adopting no-till?

Nitrogen management – when to apply, broadcast vs sidedress, fall vs spring; products that increase efficiency

#### Member Update

Pennsylvania No-Till Alliance: Starting new CIG project to demonstrate cover crops on small dairy farms without subsidies or legal enforcement. Group trip to South Dakota and met with Dwayne Beck. Working on professional crop producers conference for next year. Joint event with corn, soybean and forage producers in Feb. 2011.

Susan: going to No-Till on the Plains field day; writing story on farmer in SE Iowa seeding rye while harvesting corn

CTIC: survey of cover crops and fall application of N in partnership with Howard G. Buffett Foundation; Indian Creek watershed project starting in Illinois; Great Lakes Restoration Initiative new grant to get 15,000 acres of cover crops in IN, OH, MI; become a friend of CTIC on Facebook, go to [www.ctic.org](http://www.ctic.org) and click on Facebook and Twitter links at the bottom right corner

#### **What's next?**

Brian Lindley to share information about CA certification project when available.

Karen draft proposal template and send for review.

#### **Next call:**

Tuesday, Oct 5, 2010 at 11 am (eastern)