



The Cross Slot® Drill Down

CROSS SLOT NORTH AMERICAN NEWS WINTER 2016

Cross Slot – The World Leader in No-Till Technology

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE – A REPORT FROM THE UK

It seems that North American farmers are not the only ones discovering the benefits of Cross Slot to their arable farming systems.

In the past 2 years there has been a significant increase in the number of UK farmers enquiring about, and buying, Cross Slot drills.

By USA and Canadian standards, the machines are small (10-20') and generally self-contained drills... but the farming systems are more intense and yields higher.

Consequently the residue management ability of Cross Slot plays an important role when seeding into the residue from 150 bu+ wheat crops.

An example are Worcestershire farmers Tim and Chris Smith who have just completed their second season drilling with a 6m (20') Cross Slot drill on 8" row spacing. *"The rape (canola) is just coming up. I cannot believe the amount and depth of rooting going on!"*

It has been in the ground just over three weeks and already roots are down at least 20cm (8"). I am very surprised how quickly worm numbers are increasing and how fast the residue is disappearing."

The Smiths used Primewest Limited, a contractor (custom seeder) using a Cross Slot drill to seed some fields for them prior to their purchasing their own drill.

It took only one season for them to be convinced this was the technology they wanted to drive their farming system forward.

They recently commented:

"You wouldn't believe how much your drill (Cross Slot) has changed things here. The last few years I have been getting fed up with farming because things were standing still, or going backwards. I know this sounds odd but the drill is going to revolutionise this farm!"

The key phrase in the UK now is...

"Regenerative Agriculture"

Soil quality has declined significantly due to a history of cultivation and "sustaining" these soils at their current state is not a solution.

The solution lies with the adoption of low-disturbance no-tillage systems together with cover crops and more diverse cropping rotations to regenerate their soils back to a more productive state.

A problem and a solution applicable in arable agriculture world-wide, including the USA!

Cross Slot can do this!

CROSS SLOT CONFERENCE 2016 – UK

This year's annual Cross Slot conference will be held in England, 19 – 24 June 2016.

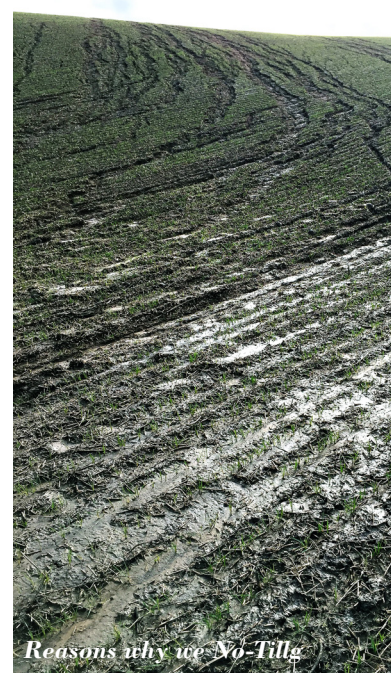
The conference will be staged out of Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, famous for Shakespearian theatre and Warwick castle (home of the Yeoman bowman). England has seen a revitalization in no-till, much of this off the back of the Nuffield scholarship program. Much emphasis is being focused on "regenerative agriculture" in order to not only stop the decline in soil degradation and soil organic matter, but also find ways of rebuilding soil organic matter. Cross Slot has started to become a major tool in this rebuilding process in the United Kingdom and we will be visiting a number of new Cross Slot owners and farmers in the region.

The adoption and understanding of the benefits of "true no-till" as a farm management tool is creating a competitive advantage for these English farmers.

It is worth noting that many English farmers are capable of producing 150 plus bushel/acre wheat and that the new world record for wheat was recently set by farmer, Tim Lamyan of Lincolnshire Wolds at approximately 245 bu/acre.

The same farmer also holds the world record for oil seed rape (canola) at yield of approximately 119 bu/acre.

For more information on the conference/tour contact us at porter@crossslot.com or ritchie@crossslot.com



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Cross Slot has updated the Frequently Asked Questions on the website – ask us any additional questions you have – we will respond to you directly and add them to the FAQ page.

Cross Slot® – Delivering and Creating Value!





WEED-SUPPRESSIVE BACTERIA RESEARCH

During a visit late last year to John Aeschliman's farm in Colfax, WA, I noticed some plot trial flags in one of his fields. John indicated that he was working with Dr Ann Kennedy of USDA/ARS/WSU research, based in Pullman WA.

The trials involve using bacteria to suppress certain weeds including problematic weeds, like cheat grass, medusahead and goatgrass found not only in the Palouse, WA but across much of North America.

The following is a brief summary supplied by Dr Kennedy of the work to date. For a full copy of the note email me at porter@crossslot.com

"These weed-suppressive bacteria:

- are applied in the in the fall and establish in the soil microbial community as weather cools;
- inhibit radicle formation, root growth and tiller initiation of these weeds;
- do not hurt native plants or crops;
- grow well in fall and spring coinciding with the early root growth of the fall annual weeds; and
- grow down roots and deliver the weed-inhibitory compound.

The bacterium used is the *Pseudomonas fluorescens* strain ACK55 (*P.f.* ACK55), it inhibits only:

- cheatgrass (downy brome, *Bromus tectorum*),
- medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*) and
- jointed goatgrass (*Aegilops cylindrica*).

Pseudomonas fluorescens strain ACK55 does not inhibit any economically important plants nor does it injure any native plant

species found in the United States.

Field studies consistently show a 50% reduction in the annual grass weed within three years of one bacterial application. Long-term field trials have resulted in almost complete suppression of these fall annual grass weeds five to 6 years after one application. These bacteria provide a novel means to reduce invasive weeds while limiting the need for tillage and chemical use for weed control.

Other weeds that we have been studying are wild oats, Ventanta grass, bulbous bluegrass, rattail fescue, annual bluegrass, and several other emerging annual grass weeds."

The following is a link published in the New York Times relating to this project.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/06/science/researcher-finds-way-to-fight-cheatgrass-a-western-scourge.html>

We look forward to seeing the results of these trials.



NB the undisturbed ground here, on the left.

Soil Erosion on a small Palouse slope.

SECTION 179 DEPRECIATION

Congress has stopped the Section 179 roller coaster of the past few years, and has made the Tax Deduction limit of \$500,000 permanent.

The Section 179 Deduction is now \$500,000 for 2016. This means businesses can deduct the full cost of equipment from their 2016 taxes, up to \$500,000, with a "total

equipment purchased for the year" threshold of \$2,000,000. Bonus depreciation kicks in at a rate of 50% once capital purchases exceed \$500,000. For example a new Combine at \$550,000 would give a first year deduction of \$530,000. This made up of S179 deduction of \$500,000, 50% bonus depreciation of \$25,000 (\$550,000 - \$500,000) and \$5000 (deemed to be 10% normal depreciation on the \$50,000 over the \$500,000 threshold).

At a tax rate of 35% this gives an equipment purchase cost of \$364,500 after the tax savings kick in.

NB: S179 and bonus depreciation are only of use if you are paying tax. If you are not paying a large amount of tax then one possibility is to lease the equipment from an entity that is a tax payer and see if you can get some of the benefit through lower lease costs. You still get to write off the annual lease payments as a cost to your operation.

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