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Delaware River WRAPS

The Delaware River WRAPS (Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy) is excited to announce a number of interconnected projects which will enable producers in and nearby the Delaware River watershed to improve their soil health, keep their valuable soil in place, and reduce nutrient levels in the Delaware River and local groundwater.

The Delaware WRAPS program, through its sponsoring organization- Glacial Hills Resource Conservation and Development, are leasing newly purchased Hagie High-Clearance self-propelled application equipment to Ag Partners Cooperative, Jackson Farmers Cooperative, and CVA Cooperative. These machines have been retrofitted with Montag Air-Delivery seeding systems to broadcast seed into standing crops, a practice known as interseeding. This innovative practice is relatively new, and last summer the Delaware WRAPS program participated in a demonstration program partnering with Hagie Manufacturing (which is partially owned by John Deere equipment) and Montag Manufacturing. One of the advantages of these interseeding systems is that they have drop-tubes that get the small cover crop seeds beneath the canopy, allowing for more even dispersal of the seed on the soil surface. Using a Montag air seeding system on a Hagie allows producers to use less seed than aerial application, saving them money and stretching payloads out further. Ground application fees are also normally less than aerial seeding, saving producers even more money. In these difficult financial times, a producer can be assured that they are getting the most for their money by utilizing these Hagie applicators with Montag air seeders.

The Delaware WRAPS and Tuttle Creek WRAPS have also joined to provide Ag Partners Cooperative with two roller-crimper units, to perform custom roller-crimping for producers that plant into standing cover crops. Planting into standing cover crops- a practice also known as "planting green" is an innovative practice that allows cover crops to get the most growth possible before termination. Planting green also maintains soil structure, allowing producers to get into the field when it would normally be too wet to plant. Also, living plants can take up excess spring moisture and help get the field into planting condition faster after a rain. When cover crops are terminated with the roller-crimper they produce a mulch. This mulch maintains moisture levels beneath the canopy, keeps the soil cooler in the heat of the summer by reflecting sunlight, and creates shade which keeps many weed seeds on the soil surface from germinating. Cereal rye, a favorite with cover croppers, also provides allelopathic properties, which are phytochemicals that work as natural herbicides and prevent weed seeds from

germinating. Cereal rye has been known to reduce Amaranthus species (such as Redroot Pigweed, Tall Waterhemp, and Palmer Amaranth) germination by 80% to 95+%. There have been situations where local producers have been able to forgo preemergence herbicide applications with solid stands of cover crops, and isolated situations where producers have also been able to forgo a post-emergence herbicide application as well.

In addition to making this equipment available in the area, Delaware WRAPS is looking to increase the number of cover crop acres in the Delaware River Watershed by introducing a program to provide financial resources to help adopt the use of cover crops. This program is redesigned to allow anyone that has used cover crops in the past, or new cover crop users, to apply for funds to aid them in their cover crop utilization. This program is currently being designed- watch out for more information this summer! If you have any questions about our programs, please call Delaware WRAPS Coordinator Ted Hinton at 785-284-3422 or contact Ag Partners Cooperative, Jackson Farmers Cooperative, or CVA Cooperative.