

PREFACE

J. T. TOUCHTON AND G. CUMMINS

No-tillage crop production has received much attention throughout the Southeast during the past few years. Possible advantages of no-tillage farming compared to conventional-tillage farming often cited include: improved erosion control, improved moisture conservation, fewer man-hours required to produce a crop, less time loss between harvesting and planting crops, and energy conservation. These advantages often lead to higher crop yield, improved double-cropping systems, utilization of land once considered unsuitable for row crop production and higher net returns per unit of land area.

Past research on no-tillage farming leaves many questions unanswered. Some of the most common questions asked about no-tillage systems include 1) what is the impact of no-tillage farming on the environment, 2) what type of mulches should be used and what are their values, 3) is soil compaction a problem in these systems, 4) is in-row subsoiling beneficial, 5) are insects more of a problem than in conventional-tillage systems, 6) what is the impact of continuous no-tillage on weed populations, and 7) what are the best methods of weed control?

The increased farmer interest in no-tillage cropping systems common to the southeastern states, and the importance of no-tillage farming to agriculture, have created a need for a joint southeastern conference. The objective of this conference is to promote no-tillage systems by providing a means of communication between research, extension, conservation, and industry personnel, and farmers from Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The conference will be rotated annually among the seven states involved. Information presented will be of a practical, non-technical nature that should be of value to farmers utilizing no-tillage management systems.

Trade names and company names are included in this publication for the benefit of the reader and do not infer any endorsement or preferential treatment of the product listed by the University of Georgia.

J. T. Touchton is Assistant Professor, Soil Fertility, and D. G. Cummins is Professor, Crop Management, Department of Agronomy, University of Georgia, Georgia Station, Experiment, Georgia.