

Proceedings

1989 Southern Conservation Tillage Conference

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Foreward

Historically, the first no-till conference was hosted by the Georgia Experiment Station at Griffin in 1978, with seven southeastern states as participants. The Conference was expanded to include all 13 states in the Southern Region in 1985. In 1987, the steering committee voted to change the conference title to **Conservation Tillage Conference**. The primary objective thus became the promotion of conservation production systems, not just no-till, by providing a communication link between various agencies and personnel interested in resource conservation.

Excessive tillage and poor tillage practices are the primary cause of soil erosion from farmland and contributes to surface water pollution with soil, fertilizer, and pesticides. Agriculture is no longer exempt from accountability of actions that may degrade the environment. Conservation tillage is one way to reduce erosion, it is not new, but it was not until 1970 (sparked by the energy crunch) that minimum tillage planters were perfected to the point where they could be used successfully to perform deep tillage in the row while leaving row middles undisturbed in the compacted, sandy soils of the Coastal Plain.

The 1989 conference theme, "Conservation Farming: Preserving Our Heritage", was chosen to target the preservation of our heritage through conservation tillage and to recognize its interaction with integrated pest management. This year we are highlighting the entomological aspects of integrated pest management with six invited addresses in a mini-symposium titled "Insect Pest Management in Relation to Conservation Tillage". It seems appropriate to initiate the entomological aspects to conservation tillage in Florida because as our vice president for agricultural affairs would say, "we have less fertility and more insects in Florida than any other state in the Union". We suggest that for the next two years the conservation tillage meetings could be expanded to highlight weed-herbicide management practices and plant diseases.

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