



August 11, 2020



### **Perry County Conservation District Hosts Equipment Demo and Soil Health Meeting**

Forty attendees from the Perry County No-till Group and members of the local agricultural community gathered for coffee and doughnuts at the farm of Dennis Weller, a dairyman of Elliottsburg, on August 7 from 9a.m. to 11a.m. to discuss and evaluate how different types of no-till and vertical till equipment interact with the soil. Funding for this event was granted by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts.

The Conservation District ran one of the John Deere 1590 no-till grain drills currently available for rent through the District's program while four local farmers, Steve Adams, Dave McLaughlin, Nevin Hurst, and Dennis Weller each brought a different piece of their own equipment to participate in the demo featuring a Krause 5200, a Great Plains 1510 HD, a Case IH 330 Turbo, and a Great Plains Turbo Max. Questions like 'How does a single disk opener compare to a double disk opener? What do coulters do? How does the seed depth compare for each model of drill and what are the levels of disturbance? How do the levels of disturbance also compare with the tillage implement equipment?' were all part of the conversation. The networking and discussion among the participants were the overall goals of the event.

Charles Martin, local equipment enthusiast and soil health advocate, spoke to the advantages and disadvantages of each piece and relayed several strategies on how to get the most out of these tools while maintaining quality cover crops. District staff also took soil samples from separate field sections where two very different pieces of equipment had just been ran, the District's no-till drill and the Turbo Max tillage implement with a 6% offset. A table-top demonstration was performed with the Rainfall Simulator that exemplified how water infiltration and run off was affected within each sample. District staff also highlighted the Soil Health Bucket, also previously obtained by PACD mini-grant funding, which is designed to be loaned out to local farmers so they may use specialized tools to evaluate their fields.

Sincerely,  
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