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## Direct Seeding into Sod 2003-2006

Project ID: 2003A

Cooperator: John Reid

### Partners:

- Reduced Tillage LINKAGES (Roger Andreiuk)
- Grey Wooded Forage Association

### 2006 Update

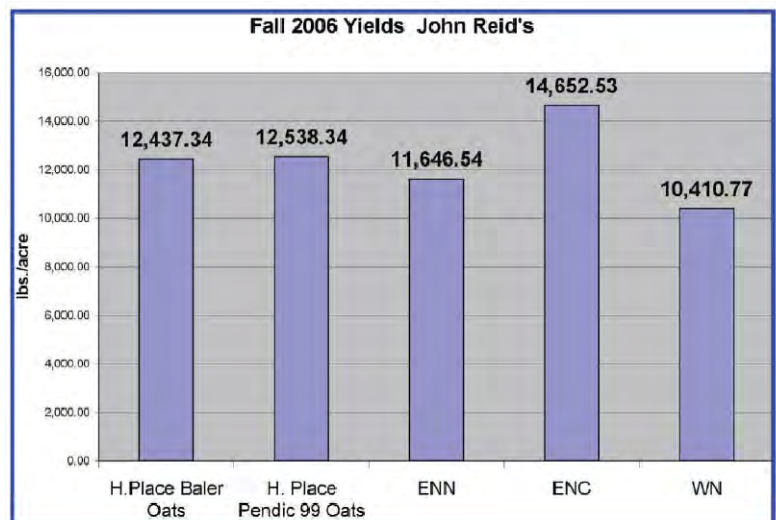
In the fall of 2005, John Reid added another 40 acres to the project, bringing the total acreage up to 114 acres. Round-Up Weathermax was sprayed on these acres to kill all the green plants on the site. Doing this fall Round-Up application allows for breakdown of the plant's roots.



A spring kill doesn't allow for much plant break down before seeding. We've found, in the past, that our tough west country sods are difficult to seed into, especially with hoe type openers. Disc openers work much better. On May 17th, 2006, all 114 acres were sprayed with Pre-Pass to knock back any spring weed growth before seeding. Seeding was done with Harald Magnus's John Deere 750 No-Till Drill with disc openers right around May 21st. Baler Oats was seeded on 104 acres and Pendic 99 Oats was seeded on 10 acres at John's home place. On June 21st, John sprayed the west field (the new 40 acres added to the project) to knock back the dandelions.

On August 27th, John sprayed again for a 'pre-harvest' burn-off, mainly to knock back the stubborn Meadow Foxtail these pastures had been plagued with. John had Harald Magnus do all the swathing right around the 1st of

September. It's always a balancing act to get the swathing done when the crop is at the desired maturity. There are also lots of differing opinions on the 'preferred' maturity at swathing time. Besides



palatability differences between species and varieties, plant maturity also affects palatability. The simplest way for us to make judgments on palatability is to watch how much the cattle are wasting. This can be kind of tricky because there can be lots of wastage simply by giving the cattle to large an area of swaths at a time. While it's often missed, feed testing of the swaths is a must! If you don't know your feed values and don't do any ration balancing, you can be setting yourself up for a wreck. In fact, we learned last fall that many crops of cereals and perennial forages (pasture, hay, haylage) were low on protein in 2006. John found it necessary to supplement the swaths with a protein supplement and some better quality hay this winter.

<b>Production Costs for Cereal Swath Grazing Crop (114 ac)</b>		
<b>Product</b>	<b>Product Cost</b>	<b>\$ per Acre</b>
fertilizer blend 18-14-14-6	\$ 6,154.00	\$ 53.98
Round-Up Weathermax	\$ 680.00	
Prepass herbicide	\$ 740.00	\$ 6.49
Oats, winter triticale	\$ 2,452.00	\$ 21.51
Direct seeding	\$ 2,260.00	\$ 19.82
Post Emergent Spraying	\$ 790.00	\$ 6.93
Pre-harvest Spraying	\$ 639.00	\$ 5.61
Field spayer rental	\$ 100.00	\$ 0.88
Crop insurance	\$ 824.00	\$ 7.23
Swathing	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 10.53
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 15,839.00</b>	<b>\$ 138.94</b>

While we have the production costs and yield clip results in this report, we don't have any of the cattle related numbers. The biggest reason is that John's cows and calves are still on the swaths. We do know at this point, that this venture will be close to break even. With the palatability issues and low protein levels in the oats, the necessary protein supplementation and reduced animal gains will have pretty much eaten up any net returns to land and management. Now that several years have gone by, John is getting ready to return some of the land used at the beginning of this project back to perennial forages. Exactly how this will happen is yet to be determined.