

Implementing no-till and cover crops in Texas cotton systems

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Healthy soil leads to productive and sustainable agriculture. Farmers who work with, not against, the soil can improve the resiliency of their land. Because of this, practices such as no-till and cover crops and topics such as regenerative agriculture and soil biology have become increasingly important in the agricultural conversation.

While producers of many major [crops](#) in the United States have adopted conservation agriculture practices, cotton producers have lagged behind. In 2018, conservation tillage (which includes no-till, strip-till, and mulch tillage) was used in 70% of soybean acres, 67% of wheat acres, and 65% of corn acres but only 40% of cotton acres.

Many cotton producers are interested in conservation agriculture but question how conservation agriculture practices will fit into their farming operations. Paul DeLaune, of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, addresses these concerns in the webcast "[Implementing No-Till and Cover Crops in Texas Cotton Systems](#)." The webcast is directed specifically at stakeholders who are considering adopting practices such as no-till and [cover crops](#).

DeLaune outlines the impact of [conservation tillage](#) and cover crop practices on cotton yields, economic returns, soil water storage, and soil health in dryland and irrigated cotton systems. He concludes that no-till with cover crop or no-till produces much higher net returns than conventional till and that over the long-term, no-till systems have produced improved yields. He also offers advice on which cover crops

are most effective and how higher seeding rates don't necessarily translate to higher biomass production.

This 40-minute presentation is available through the "Focus on Cotton" resource on the Plant Management Network. This resource contains more than 75 webcasts, along with presentations from six conferences, on a broad range of aspects of cotton crop management: agronomic practices, diseases, harvest and ginning, insects, irrigation, nematodes, precision agriculture, soil health and crop fertility, and weeds. These webcasts are available to readers open access (without a subscription).

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