

Wind Erosion

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Five Ways to Reduce Wind Erosion

Keep your soil covered and reduce the wind speed to prevent wind from removing your valuable topsoil. 1. Reduce the number of tillage passes and intensity. Leaving residue on the soil surface protects the soil from blowing away. You can virtually eliminate erosion on most fields with sufficient residue levels (Figures 8 and 9).

2. Adding a cover crop after a short season crop is an excellent way to protect the soil through the winter and early spring months. Ryegrass is fairly inexpensive, easy to grow and provides excellent coverage from wind and water erosion.

3. Leave residue standing is an effective way to slow down wind speed. Examples are raising the cutting height for small grains and if chopping residue, leave alternating strips of un-chopped stalks.

4. Plant vegetative buffer strips in erosive areas to trap sediment and slow wind speeds.

5. Living windbreaks or shelterbelts are rows of trees and shrubs that effectively slow the

wind. When taking out an old windbreak or farm site, plant a new windbreak elsewhere in the field.

There are government programs available to assist with establishment costs and rental payments for these conservation practices.

Summary

Soil loss via wind erosion cuts your profits and reduces productivity by removing a nonrenewable crop production resource. Erosion is very costly in nutrient removal replacement terms. Additionally, it reduces the depth of productive soil lowering the water holding capacity. Concepts underlying reducing the impacts of wind erosion include: (1) maintaining residue to protect the soil surface, (2) reducing tillage to improve soil aggregation, (3) keeping cover for longer using cover crops and perennial crops, and (4) replacing shelter belts to reduce wind speeds. If you use practices to control wind erosion, you will inevitably control water erosion as well.





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Deadline soon for National Sunflower Association Scholarship

The National Sunflower Association is seeking applications for the Curtis Stern Memorial Scholarship. In tribute to the dedicated work of Curtis Stern, an industry advocate and former NSA board member, the NSA Board of Directors established a memorial scholarship in his name. Funds assist students who study in the field of agriculture with a special emphasis on sunflower production, promotion, or research. Application deadline is April 1, 2018. \$4,600 is available for the scholarship this

year. Preference will be given to students who are in their last two years of undergraduate studies or in graduate level studies and have maintained at least a cumulative 3.0 GPA on a 4.0=A scale. Application deadline is April 1, 2018. A total of \$4,600 is available for the scholarship this year. Applications can be submitted at ndcf.net/receive/scholarships/stern.html. Contact Tina Mittelsteadt at tinam@sunflowernsa.com with any questions.

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