

Look for registrations in the mail for the Feb. 20-21 conference

Registration brochures will be mailed to area producers soon for the upcoming annual No-Till Winter Conference to be held Feb. 20-21 at the Civic Center in Gering.

This two-day conference, along with an experienced line-up of speakers, will provide producers with information on increasing their profitability, efficiency, and soil health for grazing while utilizing and protecting limited water resources.

Experienced no-till researchers, including Dietrick Kastens, Doug Peterson, Ken Miller, Daryl Oswald and others will share their knowledge of different aspects of continuous no-till production. In addition, Jessica Johnson and Gene Kizzire from the Panhandle Research and Extension Center will break down the economics of dry land and irrigated no till research.

The early registration fee of \$90 (if paid prior to Feb. 11) includes conference information to review the latest no-till research and information, all sessions, door prizes, catered breaks, evening social, a noon meal each day and the opportunity to interact with sponsors at their booths or displays.

In addition, 9.5 credit hours have been applied for which may help those needing CCA continuing education units. Doors will open for the two-day event at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, with sessions from 8:45 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. and the evening social sponsored by Points West Bank and Insurance at 5 p.m. Thursday's sessions will run from 8:45 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Registrations made after Feb. 11 or at the door will cost \$120.

According to NRCS no-till education specialist and event coordinator Mark Watson, the Panhandle No-Till Winter Conference will give producers an opportunity to re-evaluate their operation.

"The unusually dry and hot growing season we experienced last year has brought our groundwater and surface water resources under increased pressure from irrigated production," he said. "Many producers are looking at the water saving benefits of no till crop production systems as a way to minimize our impact on our water resources and still produce profitable crops."

"Dry land producers are also looking at no till farming practices to help better utilize the below normal amount of rainfall that we have received over the past decade. Producers are also looking at raising forages for cattle grazing on their dry land acres as a way to offset the negative effects the drought has caused on area pastures. Attending this year's winter no till conference will help educate area producers about the benefits no till crop production has to offer."

This year's conference is a cooperative effort between the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Panhandle Resources Conservation and Development, Inc. (RC&D), South Platte, North Platte and Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources Districts (NRD's).

Funding is also provided by the Nebraska Environmental Trust, the Nebraska No-Till Cadre, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln No-Till Education Fund along with sponsorship from Points West Community Bank and Insurance, Platte Valley Companies, Farm Credit Services, 21st Century Equipment, Stateline Bean Producers Cooperative, Sure Crop, High Plains Journal, Prairie States Seed, Aqua Spy, Shelbourne Reynolds and Ward Laboratories.

For information and to register for the Panhandle No-Till Winter Conference, please visit www.panhandlenotill.org, call the Upper Niobrara White NRD at (308) 432-6190 or stop by your local NRD or NRCS office.