



## Welcome to Ground Work

### Take Time to Evaluate

10/21/11

Fall is an extremely busy time of year with the rush to complete harvest and tillage before bad weather sets in. Sometimes in the rush, the best laid plans (and plots) go by the wayside.

Before even heading to the field, it would be a great idea to **look back at your notes from planting time** as a reminder of what comparisons you have in your fields. Then take the time to gather data on those comparisons.

In this day and age when a high percentage of combines have yield monitors, it should be easy to **gather valuable yield data**. However, from conversations with many farmers, we know that often times, even with the yield monitors, yield comparisons are not made.

**There is too much riding on the outcome to rely on visual observation** when evaluating comparisons between hybrids, fertility, tillage treatments or pesticide applications.

It has often been said that even with yield differences of 10% there is often no visible difference in crop appearance. The same can be said about making yield comparison by trying to observe how full the grain tank is.

The experience of one grower illustrates the point that sometimes **more than casual field observation is needed to make a correct judgment about a comparison**. The grower applied **Residue™** in October on some areas of a field of corn stalks, then no-tilled soybeans the following spring. During the growing season he was not able to observe differences between areas that received **Residue™** and the areas that did not. However, when he observed the cornstalks in December, after harvesting his soybeans, and 14 months after the **Residue™** application, he did see a notable difference in the decomposition of the corn stalks.



The stalks were mostly hollowed out in the treated area while the pith of the cornstalks was mostly intact in the untreated area. On observing this, he went back and took a closer look at combine yield monitor data and decided that the **Residue™** treatment may have generated up to an 8 bushel per acre increase in his soybean crop.

What is the value of a 10 bushel yield increase in corn, or 4 bushels of soybeans? Even if you spend \$25 per acre to achieve those yield increases, with today's crop prices you could still net \$25-35 per acre. On a 1,000 acre farm with a 50/50 corn-bean rotation that means an extra \$30,000 in your pocket at the end of the year. That means you get paid rather well for your extra effort!

But you can't make these decisions if you don't have good yield data to base them on.

***Even though time is at a premium in the fall, there is a chance to be paid well for taking the time to weigh comparisons or make sure your yield monitor is accurate and that it is properly recording the data.***

**Please pass on your yield comparisons to your AgriEnergy representative!**

- We certainly appreciate feedback on our products and how they performed in the field. It helps us in our continual quest to improve our products and their placement in your fertility programs.
- We are always interested in yield comparisons even if it is not directly related to our products. This information adds to the agronomic knowledge we are able to share with our customers, and better equips us to be of more help to you in the future.
- We also appreciate general observations, even if there is no yield data to go along with the observations.

***We consider it a privilege to partner with you in the rapidly growing trend toward biological farming.***