



Help! My weeds are out of control.

8/6/2018

If you're looking for a one-step approach to weed control, you'd better stop reading now. BUT, if you're looking for an *effective* approach, keep reading.

Weed control has been a hot topic for a lot of farmers. So hot, in fact, we created our winter seminars around this very issue. We talked about disease suppressive soils, along with mechanical and biological means of controlling weeds. One thing we learned is there are A LOT of options for both conventional and organic growers.



For Jerry and Cindy Glaser, of Spalding, Nebraska, weed control is a systems-approach that includes several options discussed at our winter seminars, including biologicals, crop rotation, cover crops, interseeding, grazing, rotary hoe, tine-harrow, flamer, cultivator, and rogueing. From the looks of their dry

edible beans on July 22 (pictured above), it appears their hands-on approach is getting the job done. The picture below was taken in front of cultivation pass; no rogueing was done.

"It's a combination of crop rotation, cover crops, calcium (lime, gypsum, liquid calcium), **Residue®**, and feeding microbes. *It all must go together to make it work*. Crop rotation is key - not just having corn and beans, but integrating cattle and the use of manure. It's about being diligent in getting out there with the rotary hoe and tine harrow. There's no silver bullet. If it was easy, everyone would be doing it," Jerry explained of their systems approach.



Here's what you need to know about this particular field. It's been certified organic for eight years and is on a 4-year rotation plan. A typical rotation includes alfalfa, popcorn, field corn, oats & peas, dry edibles, and livestock. The combination of various crops, coupled with livestock, makes it extremely difficult for weeds to thrive. The oats & peas planted in March, followed by black beans planted in June, break the weed cycle of the corn and soybean



rotation. This year, the dry edible beans were double planted on June 14 to make twin rows on 36-inch centers. They made a pass with the tine-harrow (pictured above & to the left) before and after emergence, then came in with the rotary hoe.

But their success really began 5 years ago in 2013, when the first crop of alfalfa/grass mix was planted. Here's a timeline of key events since then:

- **2013-2015** - Alfalfa/grass mix.
- **2016** - Popcorn was planted. Purchased a 20-foot, 3-point Speedtiller® by K-Line Ag (pictured below). It's used for high-speed disc tillage, and according to Jerry, is great for leveling the field (no slabs or clods),

and leaves the field free of weeds for a clean start, while mixing trash evenly throughout the disking depth. The rear packer wheels set the depth. They are 3-spring steel that flex so no plugging in wet conditions.

- **2017** - Field Corn was planted along with a fall application of **Residue®**. **Residue®** was strategically applied in the fall to help break down crop residue so that the new crop could thrive in the spring. **SP-1™** and fish were also applied. **SP-1™** supplies beneficial bacteria, fungi, and algae to the soil, while the fish helps feed the microbes, as well as the crop.
- **2018** - Oats and peas were planted using a no-till drill. On June 10, the oats and peas were baled and silage wrapped for their cattle. On June 14, the dry beans were planted.

It's important to note, the Glaser's have experienced some pretty serious rainfall much like everyone else, but have still managed to control their weeds with organic practices. They farm over 750 irrigated acres of row crops, have over 400 brood cows, and over 1,100 head of cattle on grazing land.



Needless to say, we've been continually impressed with their farming operation and are excited to see what they do in the future! The crops are not in the bin yet, but are looking good.

Is weed control one of your top concerns? Let's chat about a system-approach that makes dollars & sense for you! **815.872.1190.**