Shriver Organic Farms

Scott Shriver
Shriver Farms, LLC

• Jefferson, Iowa
• Family Farm, Since 1867
• 1800 acres
• Started organic in 1998
• 10 years to transition all acres
• Engineering background
Equipment & Labor

• Labor
  • 2 Full-time, year round
  • 1 seasonal (May through October) Full-time
  • 1 part-time during busy times

• Equipment
  • 4 Row Crop Tractors
  • 16 Row Equipment

About 450 acres per man/machine
Raising High Yielding Corn

1. Plan
2. Execute the Plan
3. Pay Attention to the Details!
Planning & Execution

**Planning**

- Rotation – including cover crops
- Inputs
- Equipment
- Manpower

**Execution**

- Follow the plan
- Be Ready & Flexible to the change plan
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Sweat the Details

• Same as Conventional Farming x 2
  • Seed-bed preparation
  • Planting depth, population, & spacing
  • Hybrid selection
  • Disease recognition and control

• Organic Considerations
  • Timing & timeliness is critical
  • Planting & Re-planting
  • Weed control
Mechanical Weed Control

• Pre-Plant – No Weed Left Behind
  • Good Sweeps
  • Properly Spaced
  • No Skips
  • Complete Coverage – 12” Sweeps at 9” o.c.
  • Wipe the ends
Mechanical Weed Control

Post Planting – Early Weed Control is Critical

Blind Harrow (Tine Weeder or Hoe)

Rotary Hoe

Tined Weeder

Einbock Rotation

Buffalo Cultivator

Glencoe Cultivator

IH 1830 Cultivator

Flamer
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Fertility

• Soil Testing
  • Every 4 years
  • Grid Sampling or Management Zones
  • PH – Lime First
  • Gypsum on High Mag Areas

• Primary Fertilizer
  • Animal Manure – Most bang for buck
  • Hog Manure +/- 6,000 gal/acre
  • Chicken Manure – 3 ton/acre

• Starter – In Furrow
  • With biologicals
  • With insect control and cover crop on ground

• Foliar Spray
  • With biologicals
  • With organic fungicides (if needed)
  • With insect control (if needed)

• Biologicals
  • Seed treatments
  • In starter
  • In foliar
  • Fall corn stalk treatment
2017 PFI Conference

Growing High-Yielding Organic Corn
Darren Fehr, ScatterSeed Farms
January 21, 2017
ScatterSeed Farms

- Mallard, IA - NW Iowa
- 1350 Acres
- Certified Organic - 1998
- Primary Crops
  - Corn
  - Edible Beans
  - Oats
Growing High-Yield Organic Corn
Growing High-Yield Organic Corn
Growing High-Yield Organic Corn
Field History

2010  2012
Field History

2014

2016
Field History

2016
Factors Influencing Organic Corn Yield

1. Weather  -- Factor outside of my control
2. Drainage - Factor within my control
3. Soil Fertility
4. Weed Control
5. Genetics
6. Planting
7. Tillage & Cultivation Practices
Water management
- More oxygen in soil
- Less compaction
- Timely field operations
- Better root development
- Less weeds
Drainage
Drainage
Drainage
Drainage
Drainage
Soil Fertility

- Manure/Compost
- Previous Crop
- Timing of Application
- Healthy Soil = Healthy Crop
- Feed the soil to feed the crop
- Soil Test!
Weed Control

- Crop Rotations
- Cover Crops
Planting Practices

- PATIENCE!!
- Not ahead of rain storm
- 2” Deep
- Mellow seed bed
- Warm Soils
- May 1-15th
- 30-35,000 Population
- Seed Treatment
- Uniform Emergence!!
Genetics

- Full-Season Corn
- Early Emergence and Vigor
Tillage Practices

- Field Cultivation - 2X
- Tine Weeder - 1X
Tillage Practices

- Rotary Hoe - 1-2X
- Cultivation - 3X
Deep Tillage - Minimum Disturbance

- Improved Water Infiltration
- Increased Deep Root Development
Questions??