

Sugar beet Planter Test Stand Clinics

Project Description:

Sugar beet planter test stand clinics are held each year at 22 locations in the Red River Valley, Southern MN, and Eastern MT. Test stand clinics offer sugar beet growers the opportunity to evaluate their sugar beet planters and identify problems before they result in crop yield loss.

Project Leader:

Norman Cattanach – Soil Science, NDSU, 701-793-8184

Amitava Chatterjee-, Soil Science, NDSU, 701-231-7858

Project Location:

22 locations throughout the Red River Valley, Southern Minnesota, and Eastern Montana

Justification for Research: Sugar beet planter test stand clinics have been an important part of pre-season field preparations of sugar beet farmers for 30 years. Dr. Joe Giles initiated the sugar beet test stand clinics in 1984 with the help of Norman Cattanach. Every year from late February through early April, test stand clinics are held at 17 locations in eastern Montana, throughout the Red River Valley, and in Southern MN. Planter maintenance is a critical factor in optimizing plant establishment with high seed cost. Research and time-tested experience indicate that high stand establishment is the most critical component in producing good yields and high sugar content. Accuracy of seed placement, which is a key factor in stand establishment, is evaluated and optimized at the sugar beet planter test stand clinics. During the planter test stand clinics, growers can discover defective planter parts and receive help repairing them. Additionally, growers can compare coated seed and pellets of different sizes, match planter plates to seed size used, evaluate vacuum settings, and get information from planter experts, seed dealers, agronomists and other growers.

From the inception of the test stand clinics, Norm has independently organized locations, dates, transportation issues, and the necessary assistance. Organizing the clinics is a major undertaking each year, requiring coordination with agronomists and machinery dealerships at each clinic location to confirm dates, adequate facilities, and sufficient advertisement. Norm attends most of the test stand clinics personally to operate the stands, trouble shoot problems with planters, and provide expert advice to growers.

Objectives: Assist growers in maintaining and correcting sugar beet planter units to obtain optimal operation for seeding activities

Materials and Methods: Clinics were held at 17 different locations in the spring of 2016. Length of stay at each location was 2-4 days. The test stand schedule begins in late February and ends the first part of April. Request for funding includes travel for vehicles to transport equipment to the locations, updating/maintaining the test stands and equipment, and technician support.

Time Line of Anticipated Accomplishments:

The continued interest of growers for this service will determine the timeline of this project.

Budget:

Items	Cost
Technician Salary	\$27,000
Fringes@42%	\$11,340
Supplies & Repair	\$5,500
Travel	
Mileage (\$0.74/ mile*1036 miles(roundtrip)*10 sites* 2 times)	\$15,332
Vehicle Depreciation cost (\$167*4 months)	\$668.00
	\$16,000
Total	\$59,840