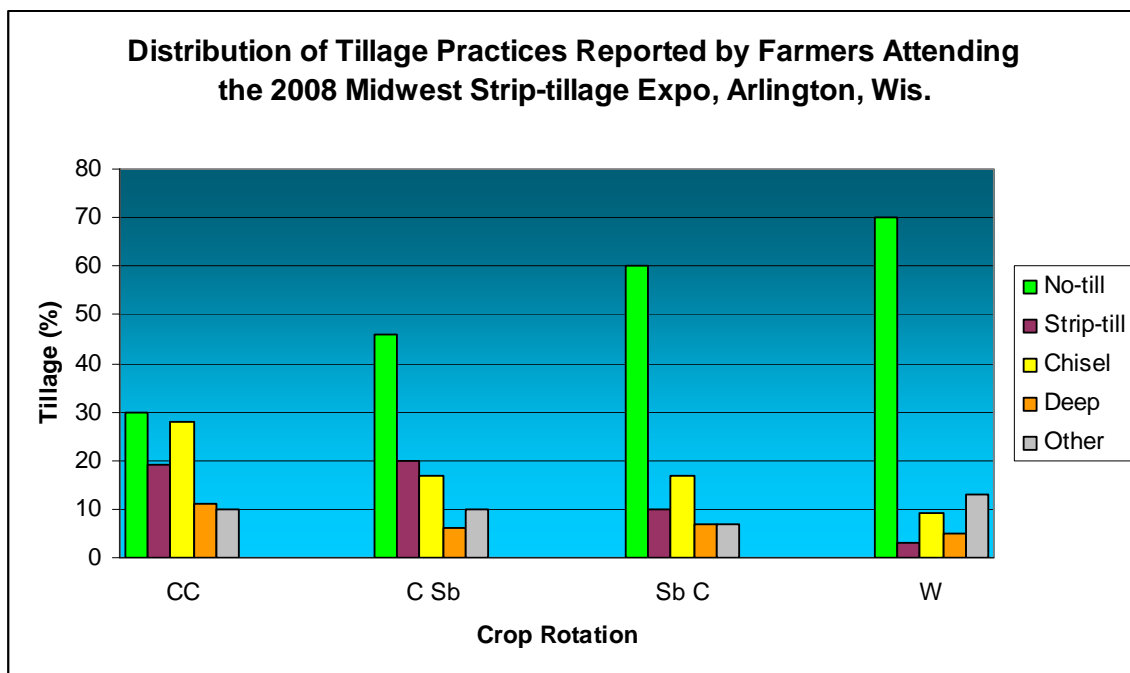


Review of the 2008 Midwest Strip-tillage Expo
Dick Wolkowski, Extension Soil Scientist
University of Wisconsin
Expo Program Coordinator

The 2008 Midwest Strip-tillage Expo was held at the University of Wisconsin, Arlington Agricultural Research Station on August 12. The format for the day was similar to the strip-tillage expos held in Iowa and Minnesota in 2006 and 2007. The program consisted of concurrent in-field demonstrations and indoor educational sessions held in the morning and afternoon, a noon farmer panel, and indoor commercial exhibits. Seven companies demonstrated their strip-tillage tools, including Dawn, Remlinger, John Deere, Case IH, Hiniker, Environmental Tillage Systems, and Blu-Jet. Educational speakers were Tony Vyn of Purdue University, Joe Lauer of the University of Wisconsin, Jodi DeJong-Hughes of the University of Minnesota, and Nyle Wollenhaupt of AGCO. Exhibitors included Sunco, Ag Leader, Crop IMS, Farm Tech, Red Ball/Wilrich, Contree, Montag Mfg., the Wisconsin Farmers Union, the Wisconsin Corn Growers, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Participants were asked to fill out a registration/survey card upon arrival. A total of 315 attendees completed the card, however it was estimated that the total attendance was at least 100 individuals higher, as many of the exhibitors did not complete a card and several attendees arrived after 9:30 when the registration desk was closed. A total of 213 participants identified themselves as full or part-time farmers, representing over 450,000 acres. Other represented categories included industry (49), government (25), student (6), university (13), and other (9).

Attendees were asked to indicate current tillage practices for continuous corn (CC), soybean after corn (C Sb), corn after soybean (Sb C), and wheat (W). The results of this survey are shown in the accompanying graph. Farmers showed equal favoritism for no-till and chisel in continuous corn, but no-till was the most popular selection for the other crop rotations. Strip-tillage was already being practiced by 10 – 20 % of the attendees. Deep tillage was practiced 5 – 15 % of the time and most popular in continuous corn. Other reported tillage practices included field cultivation, mini-moldboard, and Aerway.



Attendees were also asked to indicate how they first learned about the 2008 Midwest Strip-tillage Expo. The Expo was promoted in several ways. Ads were purchased in leading agriculture newspapers in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois. It was also known that other agriculture publications ran unsolicited features about strip-tillage and printed the date and location of the Expo. The Expo was featured prominently on the UW Department of Soil Science Extension Web site, where people could download a flier and directions to Arlington. Fliers were distributed to the NRCS and county conservation offices in Wisconsin. Extension promotion included placing the flier in the weekly *Wisconsin Crop Manager* and the distribution of a press release to county agents, Certified Crop Advisors, and other contacts in the state. Local agents included details of the Expo in their local updates. Information about the Expo was also sent to Extension Specialists in adjacent states who were asked to promote with their clientele. Several Wisconsin agriculture radio programs promoted the Expo as a public service. Information about the Expo was sent to southern Wisconsin farm equipment dealers.

The chart below shows the distribution of the attendee's response to how they learned about the Expo. These data are relatively qualitative since it is expected that there was likely some overlap in response between categories. For example, a governmental agency contact may have learned about the Expo at work after seeing the flier in the *Wisconsin Crop Manager*. These data emphasize the importance of running print ads, which was assumed to be especially important for out-of-state attendees. It also clearly shows that attendees still explore various methods of Extension publicity to learn about upcoming events.

