

THE MAIZE TRUST

PRECIS OF A WORKSHOP ON CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE HOSTED BY
THE MAIZE TRUST AT 09:00 ON 27 MARCH 2012 IN THE AUDITORIUM OF THE
GRAIN BUILDING AT 477 WITHERITE ROAD IN THE WILLOWS, PRETORIA

PRESENT

Delegate

Ms. S. Bekker	North West University
Mr. P. Botha	Grain SA Consultant
Mr. T. da Costa	Maize Producer (Manjoh Ranch)
Mr. A. de Villiers	Maize Producer
Mr. L. du Plessis	Maize Trust Administrators
Dr. S. Engelbrecht	Maize Trust CA Coordinator
Mr. C.K. Ferreira	Maize Trust Trustee/Maize Producer
Mr. P. Ferreira	Maize Producer
Mr. R. Findlay	KwaZulu Natal No-Till Club
Prof. B. Flett	ARC Grain Crops Institute
Ms. P. Fourie	Grain SA
Mr. D. Groenewald	Maize Producer
Mr. C. Koch	Sandy Soils Development Committee
Dr. F. Koekemoer	Sensako
Mr. S. Koster	Pioneer
Mr. R. Kuschke	Klein Karoo Seed
Dr. S. Lamprecht	ARC Plant Protection Research Institute
Ms. N. Lukhele	DAFF
Mr. M. Makinana	DRDAR Eastern Cape
Mr. K. Mampholo	DAFF (CA Coordinator)
Prof. A. McDonald	North West University
Ms. O. Mmolaeng-Nyirenda	DARD Gauteng
Mr. A. Muirhead	KwaZulu Natal No-Till Club
Dr. A.A. Nel	ARC Grain Crops Institute
Mr. J.K. Peele	Maize Trust Trustee/Maize Producer
Dr. J.L. Purchase	Maize Trust Trustee
Ms. J. Rakuambo	DARD Gauteng
Dr. H. Smith	ARC Institute Soil, Climate and Water
Mr. J. Strauss	DoA Western Cape
Mr. C. Swanepoel	ARC Institute Soil, Climate and Water
Dr. G. Thompson	ARC Grain Crops Institute
Mr. C. van Coller	Maize Producer
Mr. C. van der Linde	Maize Producer
Mr. F. van der Merwe	Maize Producer
Mr. P. van der Walt	Maize Producer (Walt Landgoed)
Mr. W. van der Walt	Maize Producer (Walt Landgoed)
Mr. H. Vermooten	Maize Producer
Dr. M. Visser	Grain SA

ABSENT WITH APOLOGY

Delegate

Mr. W. Boshoff	Syngenta
Mr. C. Botha	Maize Producer
Ms. K.P.N. Daly	Maize Trust Trustee
Mr. J.F. de Villiers	Maize Trust Trustee
Mr. A. Dreyer	SGS
Mr. M. Farina	Omnia/KZN No-Till Club
Dr. J. Le Roux	ARC Grain Crops Institute
Mr. M. Makaepe	DAFF
Mr. J.D.M. Minnaar	Maize Producer
Mr. H. Otto	Maize Producer
Mr. G. Reitsma	SANSOR
Mr. B. Strauss	DoA Free State
Mr. G. Thibaud	KZN No-Till Club/Cedara
Mr. A. Wessels	Agricol

CONCLUSIONS REACHED AT THE WORKSHOP

It was concluded that –

1. Efforts are to be made to convert producers to CA practices

This could be done through trial plots, information days and publications.

A “Guidebook for Beginners/CA for Dummies” should be published. The existing publications of the KwaZulu Natal No-Till Club could perhaps, with their permission, be used as the basis for such publication. Seed companies, fertilizer companies, tractor and implement suppliers, Agri-businesses and other industry and input suppliers should be involved in the publication.

This publication could also, inter alia, contain information on the use of inputs, chemicals that are approved and tested for CA systems, the importance of fire breaks, et cetera.

There should be area specific information included in the publication. CA results in different areas should be expressed in yield and other economical advantages that would make sense to producers in order for them to accept the benefits of CA.

A website should be developed for CA that could serve as an information platform and where information could be obtained and disseminated.

Additional funds, funding partnerships and cooperation with other industries should be exploited (other agricultural commodity trusts).

2. Wish list for Basic Research

- South Africa is to be divided into different agri-ecological zones for CA research. (Perhaps the water areas of the Department of Water Affairs can be used, but it should preferably be done on the basis of climate, soil and water in different zones)
- Information verification – platform for beginners
- Cover Crops (ley crops / intercropping / full season / crop rotation / effect of allelopathy)
- Improvement of Soil structure
- Management of Soil compaction & mechanization
- Level of minimum soil disturbance in each agri-ecological zone
- Plant population per cultivar per agri-ecological zone
- Importance of soil organic cover
- Importance of carbon content
- Crop info - labelling
- Controlled traffic – system development
- Soilborne diseases and disease complex
- Monitoring insect complex (also snails, worms, termites, rodents)
- Environmental impact (soil health research)
- Soil life and chemicals
- Green house gas emissions (carbon credits to farmers?)
- Management of soil acidity (lime and fertilizer application)
- Soil biological diversity (beneficial organisms, microbes, nematodes)
- Anhydrous ammonia (effect on biodiversity)
- Agronomy effects – management systems for selection of hybrids, plant depth, row width, plant populations.
- Livestock integration
- Equipment improvement & adaptation (particularly seeders & sprayers)
- Effective weed control (application, type, etc.)
- Seed quality (particularly optimal vigour, uniformity, plant depth)
- Effect of glyphosate on soil life and increased fusarium
- Effect of GMO crops on environment. CA without GM.
- Evaluation of effect of increased chemicals on soil health and plant nutrition uptake
- CA re climate change
- Insect dynamics – molusca and earthworm balance

3. Access to International Research

Grain SA (Mr. Pietman Botha) is to access all relevant research from INTA in Argentina in order to determine what is or could perhaps be applicable to South African CA conditions.

4. National CA Committee

An official CA structure is deemed to be important. A national CA committee is to be established with representatives from research institutions, input suppliers (fertilizers, seed, etc) and producers from all the agri-ecological zones.

The following possible producer representatives are identified:

Springbokvlakte	Willem van der Walt
Water Table Area (Hoopstad,Wesselsbron)	Piet Ferreira
Winterton/Bergville	Anthony Muirhead
Standerton	Callie van der Linde
Leandra/Kinross	André de Villiers
Delmas/Nigel	Tony da Costa
Middelburg (Mpumalanga)	Gerrit Roos
Vryheid/Paulpietersburg	Ralph Küzel
Piet Retief	Tommie Ferreira
Central Free State (Senekal and surrounds)	Gerrie Jacobs
Northern Free State (Kroonstad and surrounds)	Flip van der Merwe
Eastern Free State (Bethlehem, Harrismith)	Redge Jelliman,
Southern Free State (Ficksburg,Clocolan, etc)	Henk Vermooten
Besproeiing – Northern Cape/Free State	Jaco van Niekerk

Research/ Industry/Technology

ARC:	Andre Nel
Agronomy:	Sakkie Koster
Expert	Hendrik Smit
Disease Research:	Sandra Lambrecht
KZN No-Till Club / Cedara	Guy Thibaud
Industry / Sandy Soils	Pietman Botha
Agricultural Engineering Department	To be announced
Seed Industry	Sansor to assign
Small and Development Farmers	Nicolas ?
Government / DAFF	Klaas Mampholo

[Note: This group is regarded as too large and will have to be reduced to a practical working number of individuals]

The first task of this group will be to identify the core areas for CA research derived from the wish list. It is intended to have a meeting arranged within the next six weeks.

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(Compiled by L&L Agricultural Services – Tel: 012-807 3958)