“Innovative Production Strategies”

Andy Juris
The Fine Art of Screwing Up

OR

How to Screw Up in Style
How To Come Up With an Innovative Strategy

• Desperation?
  • Or is it:
    • Soil Health
    • Residue Management
    • Biological Diversity
    • Environmental Concerns
    • NRCS EQUIP Money

• OR is it Most Likely:
  • “OMG – How am I going to make it?!"
Missteps in Innovation

• Attitude
• Emotion
Missteps in Innovation

• What attitudes and emotions can inhibit your innovation?
  • Unfounded uninhibited enthusiasm
  • Unfounded uninhibited pessimism

• Both of these are equally dangerous!

• They can make us:
  • Impractical
  • Misspend money
  • Take too many risks
  • Miss opportunities
  • Have disagreements
Where To Start?

• Necessity is often the mother of invention/innovation.

• What are the limiting factors on your farm?
  • Disease?
  • Pests?
  • Soil Type?
  • Politics and Laws?
  • Cultural? (Anti-GMO, etc)
  • Weather?

• An example…
  • Moisture being our biggest one.
Where To Start?

- Once you’ve identified the limiting factors you want/need to target, you come up with a purpose statement from which you base your decision making.

- “On our farm, we intend to implement practices that will result in the maximum amount of water retention. We will attempt to capture and retain every drop of rain, every snowflake, mist, fog, vapor, and cow fart that crosses our fields.”

- Now based on this premise, what can you realistically do to achieve this?
  - We must be practical.
  - We must be economically realistic.
  - BUT, we must put everything on the table and carefully examine all options.
First Steps

• Is there anything you are currently doing that is helping to combat the problem?
  • In our case, no-till since 1996.

• Is there anything you are not doing that you can implement to further help?
  • For us, this evolved over several years which involved the following:
    • A move to minimum till no-till (Cross-Slot Drill)
    • A move to maximize above ground residue (Shelbourne Reynolds Stripper Header)
    • A move to reduce compaction with tracked and high flotation machinery.
Think I’m Crazy Yet?
Think I’m Crazy Yet?
Closing Thoughts

• What you didn’t see today:
  • Not a lot of fancy pictures of our shiny equipment.
  • No promises of insane yields/high returns with minimal investment.
  • Not a lot of Ag’s hot (Top Producer approved) buzzwords.

• BUT, what you did see:
  • Our (hopefully) simple approach to starting an innovative strategy on your farm.