

ADVOCATE PROFILE

GROWER:

John Werries (*left*)

LOCATION:

Chapin, Illinois

RETAIL FACILITY:

Bader Agricultural
Service, Inc.

CROP ADVISOR:

Verne "Tinker" Bader (*right*)

RETAILER LOCATION:

Meredosia, Illinois



Werries Farm LLC, managed by John and his son Dean, maintains 3,800 acres of corn and soybeans on owned and rented land consisting of both flat fertile soil and less productive rolling terrain (3,500 acres of corn on corn). They also sell cover crop seed and offer custom seeding through a new venture, Chapin Cover Crops.

CROPPING SYSTEM GOALS:

Continually evaluate management practices to strive for improved yields, reduced soil erosion, sequestering of nutrients and improved soil health.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED ON THE FARM:

- No-till soybeans since 1990 and strip-till corn since 1996 to build organic matter and reduce erosion
- Utilize GPS-based grid sampling on 2.5-acre grids every four years to begin agronomy decisions
- Utilize soil tests, removal rates and yield maps to develop fertility recommendations
- Utilize five fertilizer applications, including use of nitrification and urea inhibitors to reduce in-field losses
- Broadcast variable rate applications of DAP and Potash behind the combine after harvest
- Apply a portion of nitrogen in a strip-till band as variable rate anhydrous ammonia stabilized with N-Serve after soil temperatures drop below 50 degrees F
- In spring, apply pop-up nitrogen and phosphorus at planting as 10-34-0 starter with TraFix Zinc
- In spring, apply pre-emerge UAN 28% solution with Agrotain as weed and feed
- Sidedress with UAN 28% solution after corn emerges
- Participate in "Keep It for the Crop 2025" N-Watch program to track and understand ammonium and nitrate movement and availability in the soil throughout the cropping year
- Utilize cover crops on all 3,800 acres
- Install field tile to promote consistent yield and prevent runoff

FORMS OF NUTRIENTS APPLIED:

DAP, Potash, Anhydrous ammonia with N-Serve, 10-34-0 with TraFix Zinc, UAN 28% solution with Agrotain and 28% sidedressed

NUTRIENT USE EFFICIENCY:

For 2013, 0.96 lb N/bu with 234 bu average yield for corn on corn since using 4R approach. Historical use was 1.2 to 1.3 lb N per anticipated yield of corn in one fall anhydrous ammonia application regardless of the year or yield potential. We are looking to further improve N use efficiency using nitrogen sensing technology and by decreasing the sidedress nitrogen application.

AVERAGE YIELD FOR EACH CROP:

Implementing the 4Rs, the 2013 average corn on corn yield was 234 bu/ac; this is a 41 bu increase over the previous 2006–2012 average yield of 193 bu/ac. 2013 soybeans averaged 69 bu/ac.

ECONOMIC MEASURE OF SAVINGS:

Using no-till beans and strip-till corn, investing in 4R best management practices and using cover crops has greatly reduced erosion and improved soil health and crop yields. Our greatest economic measure of savings is how we preserve and protect our most valuable natural resource, which is our soils. With no measurable precipitation in August and a local regional average of 185 bu for corn, the Werries overall farm average corn yield was 234 bu/ac.