



for a cleaner tomorrow

OFC Switchgrass Research Project



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Ontario Biomass Producers Co-op

Biomass Knowledge Exchange, February 25, 2014



Project History

- Personal contact with Ray Robertson, Manager of Ontario Forage Council
- Trying to introduce him to switchgrass
- **Initially, tough sell with weedy switchgrass fields**
- Breakthrough at OSCIA Field Day at our farm
- OFC offered to share their research grant quota
- Successful OFIP grant application under OFC umbrella



Research Activities

1. Improve Establishment of Switchgrass
 - a. Nurse Crop Concept
 - b. Re-seeding Options
 - c. Weed Control in Existing Stands

2. Improve Logistics of Switchgrass Production

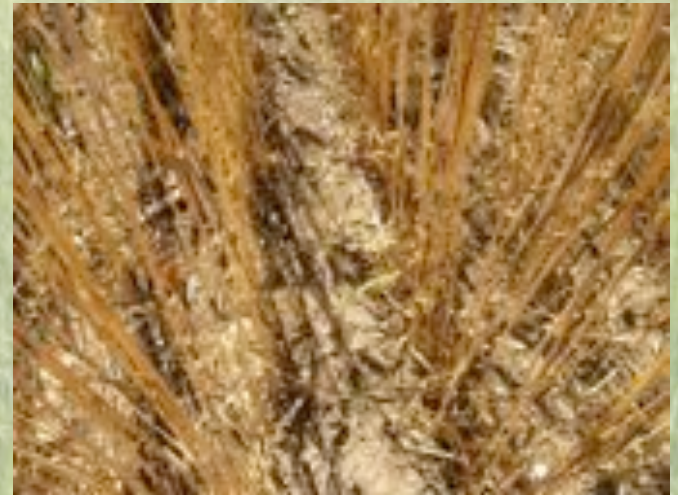
3. Disseminate Information to Producers

Nurse Crop Concept

Past projects with Spring Wheat

Nott Farms with 90% seeding rate:

- Very successful re weed control and cash flow



Eggimann Farms with 50% seeding rate:

- positive results re weed control, flat cash flow → higher rate!

Nurse Crop Concept

New and other nurse crop options

– More tests with spring wheat:

- With more aggressive planting/harvesting dates
(early planting / early harvesting)
- Experiment with 100% spring wheat seeding rate

– Barley or oats

- Some dairy farmers might not be comfortable with spring wheat

– Other?

Re-seeding Options

- Frost Seeding



- Seeding with no-till seed drill



Weed Control in Existing Stands

- Mechanical Weed Control (mostly in 1st Year)
 - Benefits
 - Drawbacks
 - Methods / Timing
- Weed Control using Herbicides
 - Perennial Weeds
 - Annual Weeds
 - Grassy weeds vs. broadleaf weeds

Improve Logistics of Switchgrass Production

- Minimize:
 - Handling
 - Indoor storage
 - Transportation
- Experiment with Wrapping / Outdoor Storage



Project Research Sites

Huron County, Nott Farms



Halton Region, Fidale Farms



Grey County, Eggimann Farms



Dissemination of Research Results

Informing Producers re research results by means of:

- Field Days
- Seminars
- External Biomass Events
- OBPC Website
- OBPC Newsletter
- Ag Media
- Social Media

Project Approach

- We do **not** want to “re-invent the wheel”
- We want to benefit from proven past experience of other organizations (excellent research material from US mid-west)
- We aim for a close co-operation with partner organizations, like:
Ontario Forage Council, REAP-Canada, UofG, OMAF
- Research results will be applied for new production as rapidly and efficiently as possible

Achieving applicable results is top priority!



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CO-OPERATIVE INC.

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Thank you!

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