

1980

Ecofallow Storms Plains

ECOFALLOW is becoming more accepted on the Central Great Plains, and more farmers are trying it. Small wonder when you compare wheat yields on ecofallow land with those of conventional fallow: The former average 44 bushels per acre to the latter's 34, according to the U.S. Central Great Plains Research Station, Akron, CO.

Moisture retention is the key. Using the best conventional tillage practices, water storage in fallow soil rarely exceeds 35%, and each pass of the disk can cause 1/8 inch evaporation. By using contact and pre-emergence herbicides and no tillage, storage has been as great as 60% and averages more than 50%.

Darryl Smika, soil scientist with USDA's Science and Education Administration, reports that highly calcareous soils don't seem to respond quite as well. "Because those areas probably represent less than 5% of the total acreage in this area, it is not necessary to treat them differently. The slight reduction from them will more than be made up by the increased yields from the majority of the acreage in chemical fallow," Smika emphasizes.

Farm Chemicals 143, 85 Dec 1980

Potash: Supply & Dem

