

Editor's corner

By Laurence Tisdall

Minimal tillage practices are the focus of this REAP newsletter. The increased awareness of the value of top soil and the need for more environmentally sound farming systems have resulted in the increased use of tillage methods termed "conservation tillage". Many producers have found that the annual fight to till before the fields get too wet or wait for them to dry out may be avoided. As with most things in life we are coming full circle; Many years ago, before the advent of the moldboard plow minimum tillage was the only approach to agriculture. However, the use of fertilizers and herbicides is often increased under minimal or no-till systems. REAP-Canada has always striven to promote systems which are environmentally sound while remaining profitable to the producers. Producers are finding that conservation tillage used in combination with proper agricultural practices, such as rotations and cover cropping, may well be the future of agriculture. In this issue there are articles on producers who use conservation tillage, and an article concerned with potential problems that may occur using conservation tillage and how to avoid them.

REAP-Canada appears to be more than just another agricultural organization, it is rapidly becoming a movement. The field day at Harry Wilhelm's farm was an overwhelming success with about 250 people attending. Producers and extension agents alike are starting to turn in our direction and to take account of the techniques we've developed and/or improved. It is because of you, our members (over 200 strong), that we are able to continue to scientifically investigate low-input farming methods which will reduce environmental impact and potentially increase profits and we want to make sure that we are meeting your needs to the best of Durability. It would help us a areas deal if You would fill out the attached READER SURVEY and not post it in the top drawer of your desk, PLEASE!. We always welcome suggestions or queries concerning the content in the REAP newsletter. Based on the answers you provide from the enclosed survey the newsletter will be accordingly improved.

Recently, the Jessie Smith Noyes foundation provided us with a monetary base to develop the newsletter and facilitate our outreach to the agricultural community. With this money we will also make videos demonstrating the techniques being used. Just think of it, some day in the not so distant future, you will be going to the video shop to buy or rent a popular movie about how to plow (or not to plow), plant and harvest. We will guarantee that the plots will not be disappointing. O.K., I'm sorry, I just couldn't resist that one.

On the serious side, there is a need for all members to vote conning the amendment of a bylaw which stipulates that every year we must have the organization audited. This can either be done by a general accountant or a chartered accountant. The difference between the two is that the licensed chartered accountant would verify each financial entry, according to specific guidelines, in greater detail than a general accountant. A chartered accountant would also charge a base rate of about \$1 000 to look over our books and this would represent almost 3 % of last year's budget. The members may, if desired, vote for the use of a general accountant instead of a chartered accountant to oversee the books. It is to be understood that this accountant is in no way directly related to the REAP Canada organization.

As we are a registered non-profit charity the government may wish, from time-to-time, to investigate our books and would then themselves make an official audit. After proper consultation, the executive felt that it was unnecessary to employ a chartered accountant. If any member wishes to receive a financial summary of the accounts handled by REAP-Canada, they are welcome to write and request one.

REAP-Canada now has a real office. Previously we have been working out of boxes and file cabinets distributed randomly around the country. We are now located in the GLENALADALE HALL on the campus of Macdonald College. The mailing address remains the same. Our temporary phone number (9am to 5pm on business days) is (514) 457-3179.

The next annual REAP Canada conference will be held on or around February the 1 6th 1990 and will focus mainly on sustainable systems in vegetable and greenhouse production. Part of the conference will also be the presentation of the most recent findings of our on farm research taking place in Ontario. This will also be the time when the annual meeting will be held and a partially new board elected.- We will keep you posted on details.

- REAP is announcing a contest to design a logo for our organization. Five logos chosen from those submitted will be published. Once again you will be able to use your democratic ability to control our destiny by voting on which logo you prefer. The winner will get a 5 year free membership in REAP.

By the way, some of the more observant among you may think that this issue is coming out a little late to be dated "Sum mer 1989". You're right!. However, "Indian Summer 1989" takes up too much space. The real problem is that all the material in the REAP newsletter is written by REAP members, who are also doing all the research. It becomes difficult to get articles when all daylight-hours are used to prepare and harvest plots. In the future we hope to use interesting articles from other sources as well as some of our own so that the newsletter will become less sporadic. The next issue, marked "Fall 1989" should, all being well, turn up at your mailbox in about 6 weeks.

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