

# Special Report: Freedom to Farm



## Impact of 'Freedom to Farm'

The direct impact of "Freedom to Farm" on conservation tillage adoption is difficult to measure, since prices, weather and other factors also influence crop rotations. However, several clear patterns are emerging.

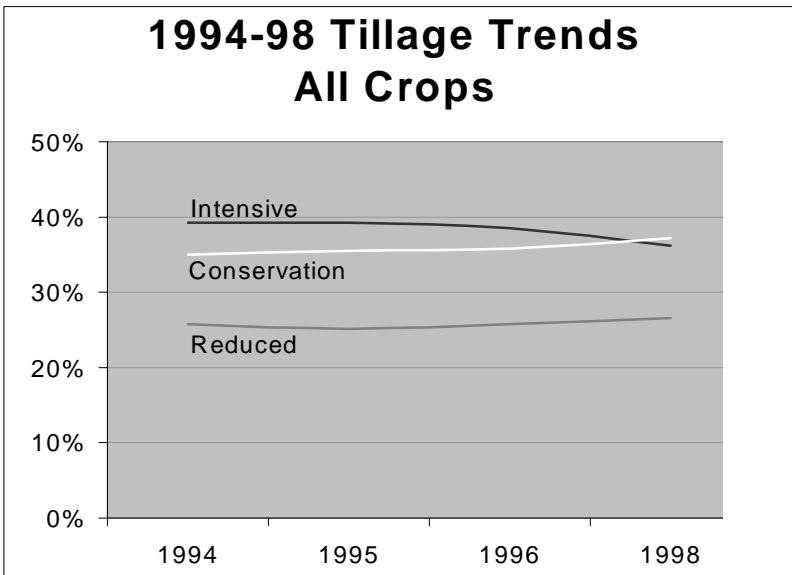
Growers in the Great Plains are beginning to look at diversified crop rotations combined with the moisture savings inherent in no-till. This allows them to reduce or even eliminate fallow from the crop rotation and can dramatically increase profit potential. The diversified crop rotation strategy is

also being used to combat disease problems like "scab" in North Dakota.

Growers in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi have increased corn acres and decreased cotton acres in recent years due to the low cotton price. However, aflatoxin problems and low corn prices this year will likely require rethinking this strategy.

Some areas in the Corn Belt have increased their soybean acres and reduced corn acres. Delayed planting due to prolonged wet springs may have contributed to this, but the desire to overcome some of the problems of corn following corn have also aided in this shift.

The "bottom line" is for some regions and crops, a crop rotation that is conducive to high residue systems will need to be used. Freedom to Farm provides growers with the option of "farming the land" because it takes away the economic incentive to maximize "base" acres and "farm the program."



Definitions: Conservation tillage includes no-till/strip-till, ridge-till & mulch-till.  
Conservation tillage, 30% residue. Reduced tillage, 15-30% residue.  
Intensive/conventional tillage, 15% residue.

# Soybeans.

## Conservation tillage continues growth, no-till leads the way.

Many of the technological advances needed to produce profitable conservation tillage soybeans have been around for years. Perhaps this is one of the reasons conservation tillage soybeans continue to grow at a steady pace. In 1994, 48% of soybeans were conservation tillage. In

creased by more than 10 million acres in 1998 (compared to 1994). Leading the charge were:

State	Planted Acres (1994-98)
Iowa	up 1.8 million
Minnesota	up 1.1 million
S Dakota	up 1.0 million
Illinois	up 0.97 million
N Dakota	up 0.91 million
Nebraska	up 0.87 million
Indiana	up 0.50 million
Kansas	up 0.47 million

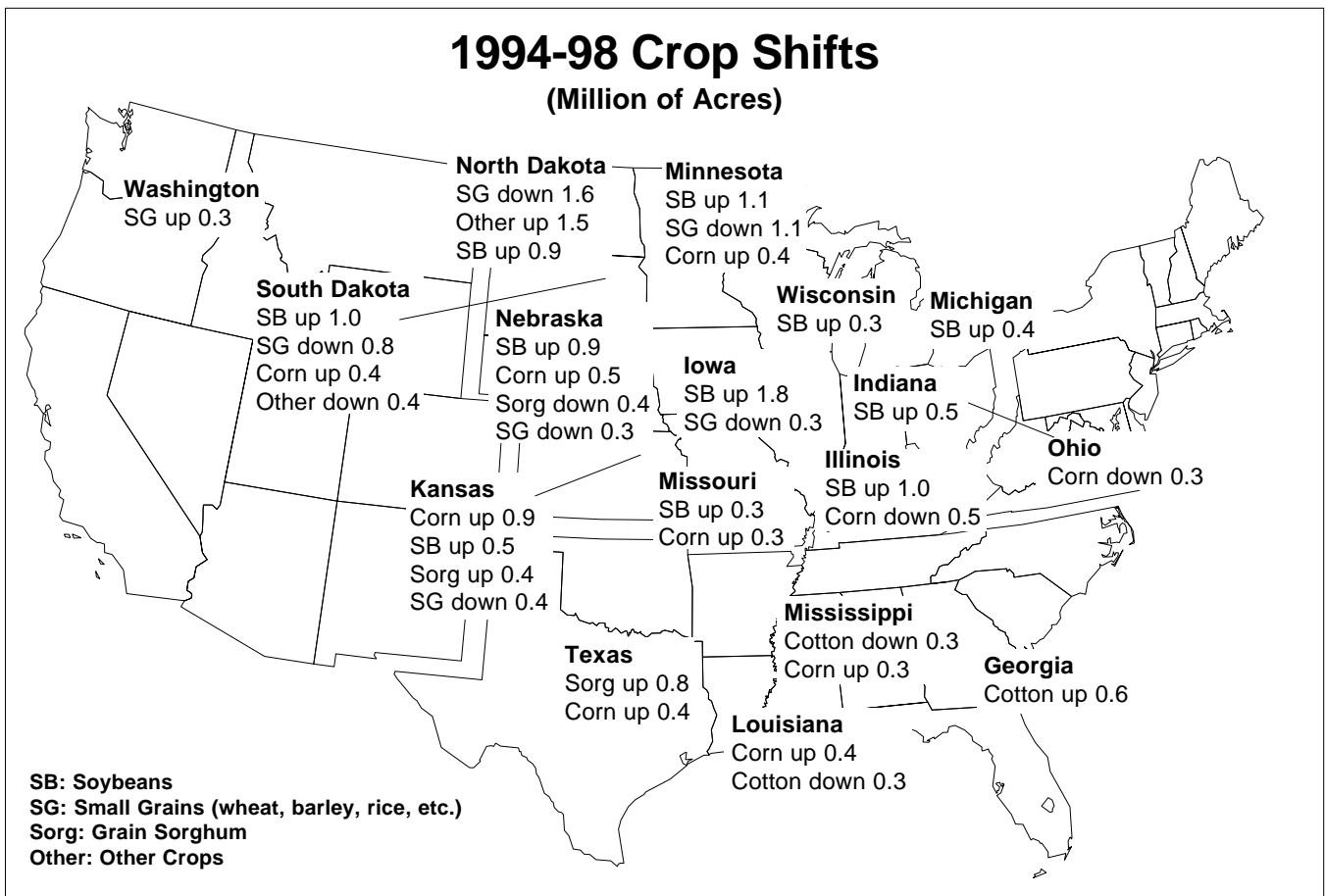
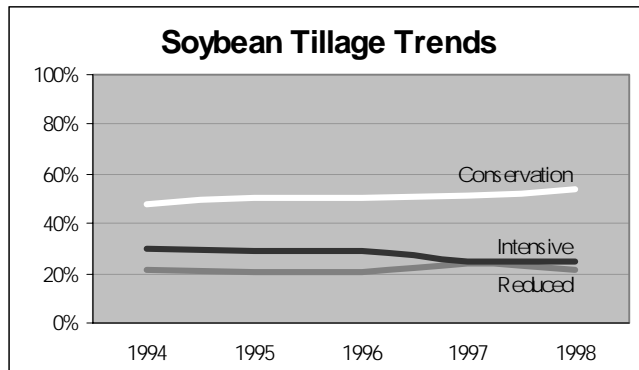
Top 10 Soybean Production States		
State	1998	1994
IL	58%	47%
IA	69%	65%
MN	38%	33%
IN	70%	62%
MO	60%	54%
OH	67%	55%
AR	17%	16%
NE	62%	63%
SD	52%	42%
KS	41%	29%

\*Millions of acres

1998, 54% were planted conservation tillage conditions.

As other crops in the rotation move toward conservation tillage practices, conservation tillage soybeans will likely continue to grow.

**Acres increase.**  
Soybean acres in-



Definitions: Conservation tillage includes no-till/strip-till, ridge-till & mulch-till. Conservation tillage, 30% residue. Reduced tillage, 15-30% residue. Intensive/conventional tillage, 15% residue.

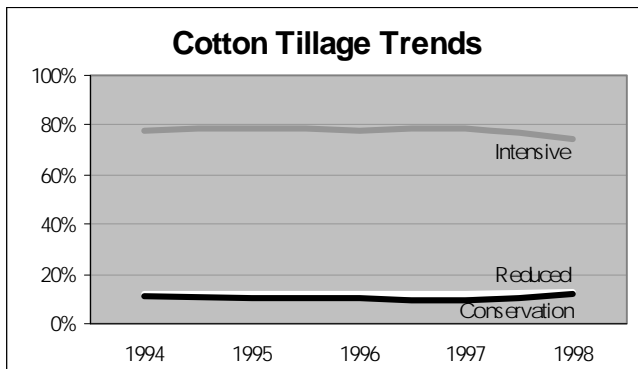
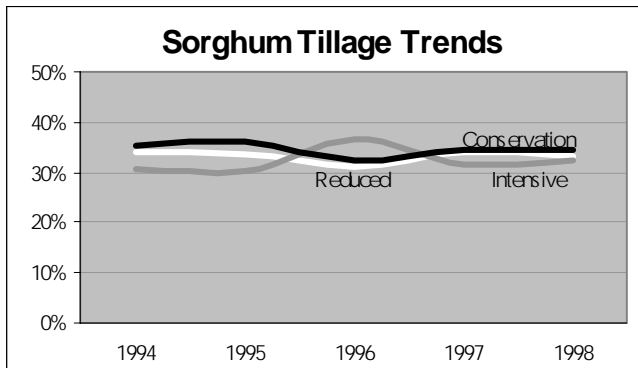
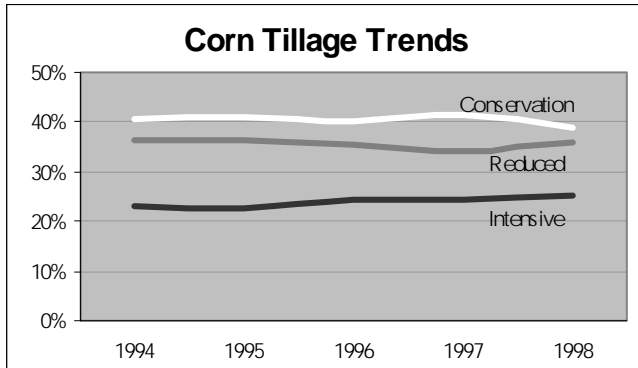
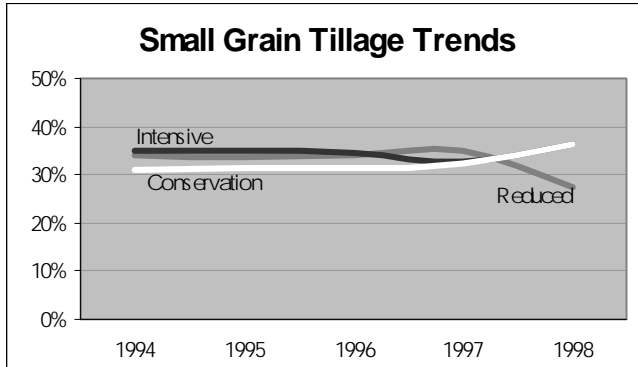
## Small Grains.

Recent technological advances, used in conjunction with a rotation that eliminates a year of fallow, will make conservation

tillage economically viable for small grains like wheat, barley and rice ... especially when the entire rotation is considered.

### Small grain acres decrease.

With a reduction of 4.6 million acres, 2.0 million fewer acres of spring-seeded small grain were planted in 1998 as compared to 1994. Fall-seeded acreage dropped even more, by 2.6 million acres, during the same time period.



#### **State** **Planted Acres (1994-98)**

##### **Spring-Seeded**

N Dakota	down 1.6 million
Minnesota	down 1.1 million
S Dakota	down 0.2 million

##### **Fall-Seeded**

Montana	down 875,000
Kansas	down 425,000
Oklahoma	down 316,000
Colorado	down 244,000

## Corn.

With the advancement of strip-till management technologies, conservation tillage corn is likely to pick up speed as well. The bottom line: conservation tillage in these crops will likely reach the level soybean growers have enjoyed.

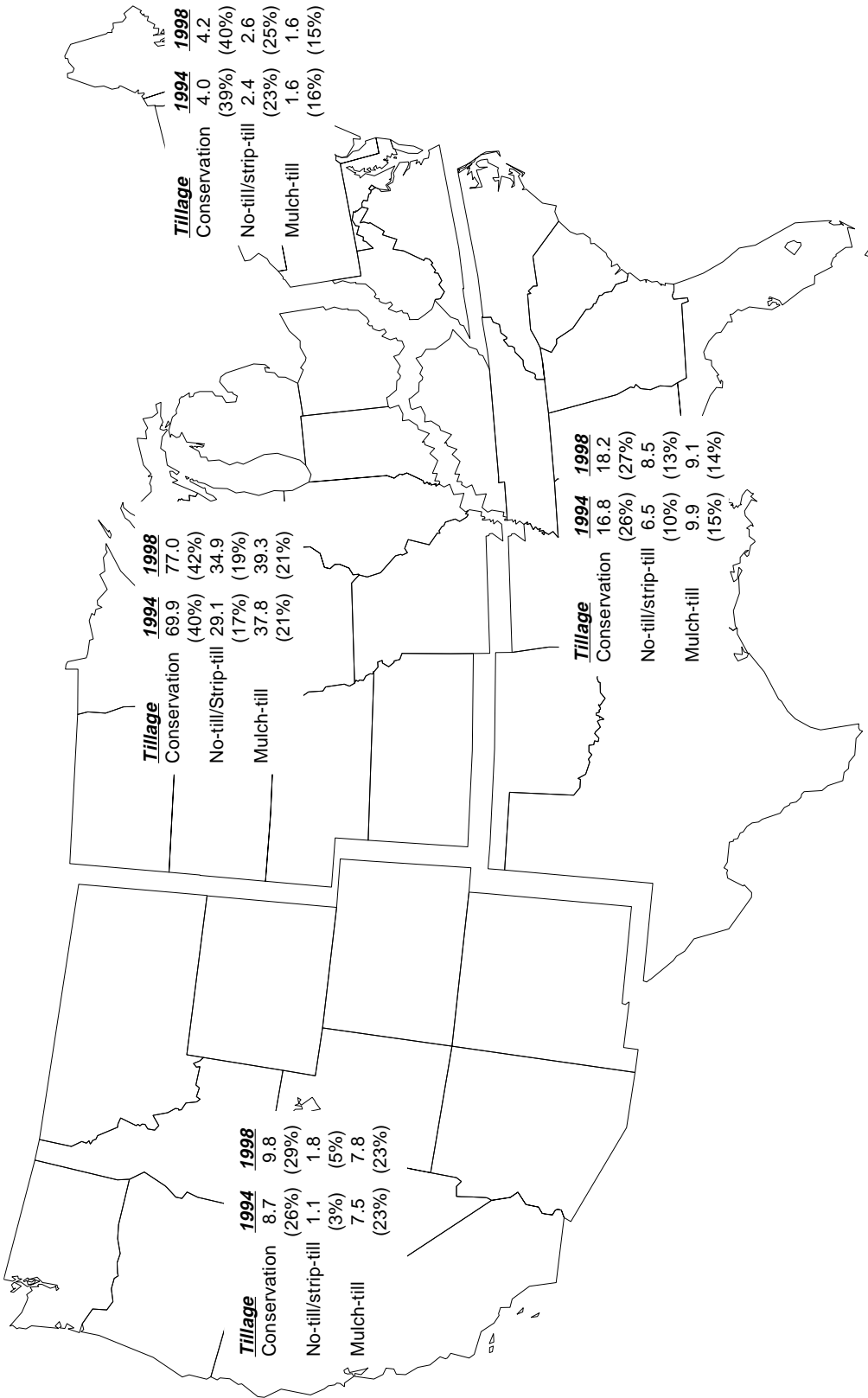
### Corn acres shift west.

Overall corn production increased approximately 3 million acres with increases in the Western Corn Belt overcoming decreases in the Eastern Corn Belt.

#### **State** **Planted Acres (1994-98)**

Kansas	up 886,000
Nebraska	up 500,000
S Dakota	up 428,000
Minnesota	up 407,000
Indiana	down 276,000
Ohio	down 295,000
Illinois	down 502,000

# 1994-98 Conservation Tillage Shifts (Million of Acres)



Definitions: Conservation tillage includes no-till/strip-till, ridge-till & mulch-till.  
 Conservation tillage, 30% residue. Reduced tillage, 15-30% residue.  
 Intensive/conventional tillage, 15% residue.

# How to Obtain Additional Data

## Report

1998 CRM Survey Report ..... \$325  
(includes state-level data) Non-Profit Organizations: \$250

## Data & Software

Data is embedded into WinCEDAR, a proprietary software packaged developed by CTIC for analysis of the Crop Residue Management Survey data. WinCEDAR software runs on Windows 3.1, Windows '95 or Windows'97. Available by diskette or on the Web (password protected site). *All options below include a printed full survey report (see above).*

One State (1998 & 1997 county-level data, specify state) ..... \$325  
One Region (1998 & 1997 county-level data, specify region) ..... \$1750  
Two Regions (1998 & 1997 county-level data, specify regions) ..... \$3250  
Three Regions (1998 & 1997 county-level data, specify regions) ..... \$4850  
National (1998 & 1997 county-level data) ..... \$6500  
National (1998-1994 county-level data) ..... \$7500

## Order Information (please print)

Description (see above): \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_

If Applicable, Specify State or Region(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Purchase Order Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized By: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mail or fax order to:

Conservation Technology Information Center  
1220 Potter Dr Rm 170  
W Lafayette IN 47906  
Tel: 765 494-9555 Fax: 765 494-5969

Definitions: Conservation tillage includes no-till/strip-till, ridge-till & mulch-till.  
Conservation tillage, 30% residue. Reduced tillage, 15-30% residue.  
Intensive/conventional tillage, 15% residue.