

Video News Release – Draft talking points for script.
March 2010

Topic: Seeding Cover Crops During Manure Application

1. Use of livestock manure on fields can help manage manure as a resource instead of a waste product while saving money on purchase of commercial fertilizers for crops.

Michigan State University agronomist Tim Harrigan has developed an easy way to seed cover crops with a manure slurry, thus combining two field operations into one operation, saving time and money in the process.

2. Harrigan modified a manure slurry tank with agitator by adding a low-disturbance AerWay manure injector.
 - a. **(Harrigan quote: A tank agitator is needed as well as a gateway valve, to control the amount of manure applied to about 600 gal/minute. The tank agitator keeps seed in suspension and distributes it evenly.)**
3. Harrigan recommends this seeding technique for many cover crop varieties, but here he's talking about use of annual ryegrass.
4. **(Harrigan quote: Seeding rate and mix ratio with manure – 6 – 8 lb. of seed for ½ acre, with 3000 gal/ac of manure (approx. 15 lb/ac and 6000 gal)**
 - a. **Mix seed in a bucket of water to prewet, keeps seed from floating)**
5. The AerWay makes slots in soil up to 5" deep; the slurry/seed mix flows into cracks and fissures and seed will germinate even to depths of 3-4".
 - a. **(Harrigan quote: This method provides better seed growing environment than if planted shallowly or is broadcast on top of the soil.**
6. Harrigan said that the technique works well with any type of manure and in a range of soils – from sandy to high clay. He recommends that it's best to seed just before a predicted rain, to get proper cover crop establishment.

7. Just as no-till takes new management practices, so does planting cover crops and making use of manure slurry to deliver cover crop seed. Timing is important – and the sooner the cover crop follows the late summer harvest, the better chances for a good cover all winter.
8. **(Harrigan quote: Something generic about the value of cover crops, or the added benefits of applying manure at the same time)**
9. For more information, the Annual Ryegrass website has a longer video, in which Harrigan explains the details of the manure slurry and cover crop seeding operation. www.ryegrasscovercrop.com