

'No-Till Drill,' Bought To Help Farmers Meet New Water Rules

BY LYNN CARLSON

As environmental concerns heighten and regulations tighten, farmers in small operations sometimes find themselves unable to afford the expensive changes they need to make.

But through a unique partnership between the 6,000-member Brunswick County Farm Bureau and the Brunswick County Soil and Water Conservation District, farmers will be able to "time-share" a \$12,000 Great Plains no-till grass and grain drill to help them meet the demands of the stringent federal Clean Water Act Reauthorization.

The drill, bought by Farm Bureau, will be rented to farmers at a cost of \$5 per acre, with a \$50 minimum per rental. Rental arrangements will be handled by the SWC District.

Although such equipment is becoming more common in the plains states, its use is somewhat new in the Southeast.

"We're already getting response," said Mamie Wilson, administrative conservationist and technician with the SWC District. Wilson explained that the drill is a tangible way for the district to promote good conservation practices, control erosion and improve water quality.

Harold Robinson, who is both the local Farm Bureau president and conservation district vice-chairman, has had prior experience with a no-till drill on his Turnpike Road farming operation, and he's a believer. Robinson

points to rows of corn planted with a no-till drill. Tender green shoots are growing out of ground that hasn't been disked.

"You don't tear up the land so it doesn't get lost to the water and wind," he said.

Planting without disking helps farmers keep their land where it ought to be and keeps water contaminated with farm chemicals from running off into rivers and streams, explains James Bellamy, vice president of Farm Bureau and chairman of the conservation district.

The federal Clean Water Act Reauthorization will have tough new regulations aimed at controlling all types of runoff from agricultural operations into surface waters. Bellamy expects the drill to get its heaviest use in the fall when hog farmers are seeding the rye and Bermuda grasses used for land application of treated waste from their operations.

Many other types of seed can be planted with the drill, too, Bellamy adds.

"Most farms couldn't afford a piece of equipment like this," he explained. "Farm Bureau purchased it for the use and benefit of the Soil Conservation District. This is a great example of people working together to help farmers meet regulations. We hope the idea will spread to help farmers in other areas, too."

For information about renting the drill, call the Brunswick County Soil and Water Conservation District at 253-4458.



DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST Harold Jones discusses the operation of the new no-till grass and grain drill with Farm Bureau and soil and water conservation officials. Pictured, from left, are Mamie Wilson, administrative conservationist and technician with the Brunswick County Soil and Water Conservation District; Harold Robinson, Brunswick County Farm Bureau president and conservation district vice-president; Jones, district conservationist for the Brunswick County Soil Conservation Service; and James Bellamy, vice-president of Farm Bureau and chairman of the local soil and water conservation district.

Fair Provides Good Information, Fun

Visitors to The Brunswick Hospital's Children's Health Fair Saturday had their choice of services and entertainment on the hospital grounds.

The hospital's medical/surgical, laboratory, radiology, cardiopulmonary and pharmacy departments conducted health-related screenings and distributed literature. Agencies providing health and safety exhibits include the Brunswick County recycling, health, and parks and recreation departments, the Brunswick County Literacy Council, Brunswick Electric Membership Corp., the American Cancer Society, the

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Calabash Emergency Medical Service, Brunswick County D.A.R.E. program, the N.C. Highway Patrol, Comprehensive Home Health Care and the Brunswick County Schools' drug abuse prevention and wellness program.

Carolina Eye Associates provided eye exams and Dr. Mark Lizak's office conducted hearing screenings and hearing aid checks, and distributed health-related information.

Entertainment included opening ceremonies by the West Brunswick High School Army JROTC Color

Guard, music by Miss Brunswick County Larniece McKoy, Little Miss Brunswick County Maleta Murray, the Sudan Thunderbolts, Chalmers Champion and Gaye Fulford.

Smokey the Bear, crimefighter McGruff and a variety of clowns circulated through the crowd. Free facepainting, gifts and door prizes were available throughout the day.

This was the fourth year the hospital has held the fair to promote children's health.



MARY SILLINGS (left) gets her blood pressure checked by Julie Small, a licensed practical nurse in the hospital's Family Center, on labor, delivery and postpartum unit.



MISS BRUNSWICK COUNTY Larniece McKoy entertains fairgoers Saturday at The Brunswick Hospital.



A BILL pending before the North Carolina legislature would make the Southeastern Welcome Center at Charlotte an official state welcome center.

Bill Would Make Southeastern Official State Welcome Center

BY SUSAN USHER

A bill introduced by State Rep. E. David Redwine (D-Brunswick) would make the Southeastern Welcome Center at Charlotte an official state welcome center.

Presently only eight centers located on interstates are part of the official network operated by the N.C. Travel Development Division.

The Southeastern Center opened in February 1992 and has seen a steady stream of visitors ever since. It served an estimated 377,177 visitors during 1992.

The 1,200-square-foot facility was built by the state at a cost of \$1.2 million in conjunction with a rest area relocated from U.S. 17 near Bolivia. The state built the center with the understanding that its operation would be paid for by local sources. The center has been operated by the Southeastern Welcome Center Inc., a non-profit organization.

However, Redwine introduced legislation in 1991 and 1992 that provided some operating funds for the local center as well as other non-state welcome centers across the state. The money came from a portion of the state Department of Transportation's personalized license tag fund, over the objections of DOT officials.

Redwine pledged last year that if the Southeastern center continued to serve such large numbers of visitors that he would introduce legislation to make it a state center, since it would be functioning as one.

The bill provides for the Southeastern center at the U.S. 17 bypass of Charlotte and a similar facility near

Camden on U.S. 17 north near the Virginia state line to be made official state welcome centers.

It also provides \$300,000 per year for the next two years to each center for personnel and other operating needs, with the understanding that funding will continue in the future.

If adopted, the precedent-setting bill would become effective July 1, 1993. As of Tuesday the bill was still in a House appropriations committee.

Wayne Grissett Is County FmHA Panel Nominee

Wayne Grissett is Brunswick County's nominee for its Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) county committee.

The election will take place on June 11. The committee assists the FmHA office in determining the eligibility of applicants for certain types of loans. Farmers whose principal operation is in Brunswick County are eligible to vote.

One committee member will be elected for a three-year term.

Ballots are available from the FmHA county office at Promenade Office Park, 143 West Holden Beach Road, Shallotte. Marked ballots must be received at the FmHA office by 5 p.m. June 11.

For more information, call Ted C. Rivenbark Jr. at 754-4880.

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