No-Tilling Forage Brassicas Into Existing Pasture

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New York Organic Dairy Initiative

2007

• John Stoltzfus reported on his trial supported by Lakeview Organic.
• Conversation with other grazers who tried brassicas but didn’t continue. Why?
Conventional Till vs. No-Till

• Conventional:
  – Cost to plant $47/acre
  – Loss of pasture for 3 months
  – Need to replant to get back to pasture

• No-Till:
  – Cost to Plant $16-$18/acre
  – Can graze immediately
  – No need to replant

2008

• Sara Zglobici
• Planted two plots: Cortland County, & Tompkins County
2009 - Toward Sustainability Foundation

- Do Trial Plots on 3 Farms

- Work with Acetic Acid (vinegar) to suppress pasture Sward.

This is the Result We Sought
3 WEEKS LATER

20 Samples From Tuttle Farm

- NFC
- NDF
- TDN

Y-axis: 0 to 70

Legend:
- 20% AA
- 10% AA
- Control
Rule of thumb:

• Cows can eat 1.3% of their body weight of NDF from forage on a DM basis.

• Changing NDF from 50 to 36 allows cows to eat 43 lbs Pasture w/Turnip vs. 31 lbs of Control Pasture (Dry Matter)

Ration Cost

• 1,200 Lbs Cow, Giving 50 lbs of Milk Requires
• 23 lbs Control Pasture + 8 lbs Corn Meal OR
• 43 lbs Pasture w/Turnip

• Cost difference of $1.60/ cow/day