



**Greg (right) and Nathan Alber, Independence
3.2 bu. increase**

I put my 2004 ripping trials on a field that was mostly Oran and Readlyn soils, with a little Kenyon, Clyde-Floyd complex, and a bit of Tripoli mixed in. Where the strips crossed the Readlyn soil, ripping gave us a 4.6 bu. boost in yield. We got nearly a 3 bu. increase on the Oran soil. The overall average increase of 3.2 bu. was not enough to pay for the cost of ripping, however. It did bring up extra stones, too, and that adds to the cost of doing it.

My son Nathan put out most of the 2005 ripping trials in this area last fall. He checked the soil with the compaction probe and set the ripper just deep enough to get past the hard pan, which in a lot of cases was 10 - 12 in. By not going deeper than needed, fewer rocks were pulled up. He noticed that in nearly every field there was an area of higher compaction, based on how the tractor pulled down when the ripper hit that part of the field. In our area, that might mean we need to identify those spots in the fields and limit ripping to them.