

**Darwin Peterson, Oelwein
9.9 bu. increase**

My deep tillage strip trials were on a field with heavier soils where I've applied a lot of liquid hog manure over recent years. We broadcast the manure in the fall with a 1000 gal. tank spreader and work it in with a disk or field cultivator as we have time. After years of compacting the soil like this, I suspected we might see a yield increase on that field.

We have a number of other fields that have been managed the same way. I have another set of strips on one of them to compare in 2005. I'll also be looking at soybean yields from the strips ripped for 2004, to see if the ripping effect carries over there.



**Steve Copenhaver, Independence
2.8 bu. increase**

We went into the 2004 ripping trial thinking we'd see a big yield response. We did get a response, but it wasn't big enough to pay for the cost of ripping. We put corn on the same field again in 2005 and we'll be looking at the yield results on that field again. We're hoping that even though we didn't get a huge yield advantage, there might be some remaining benefit for second year corn.

We put out additional strips for a trial in 2005, but we're not expecting to see big results this time. I'm not sure about ripping as a general practice in this part of northeast Iowa. In the back of my mind, I still think we have some soil compaction, but this suggests it's not economical to try to correct it. I'm convinced it does help on end rows and other high traffic areas and it might be worthwhile there. But in this area, it also has a major disadvantage in that it brings up stones that must be removed to avoid damage to tillage equipment, planters and combines later. That's something we try to avoid.

What I like about the On-Farm Network is the trials are easy to do. We use our own GPS and combine yield monitor to mark the trial strips and measure yield results. The Iowa Soybean Association analyzes our data and sends the results back to us. Then it's up to the individual farmer to look at the results and decide whether he should do more trials, adopt the practice on more acres or move on to something else.

