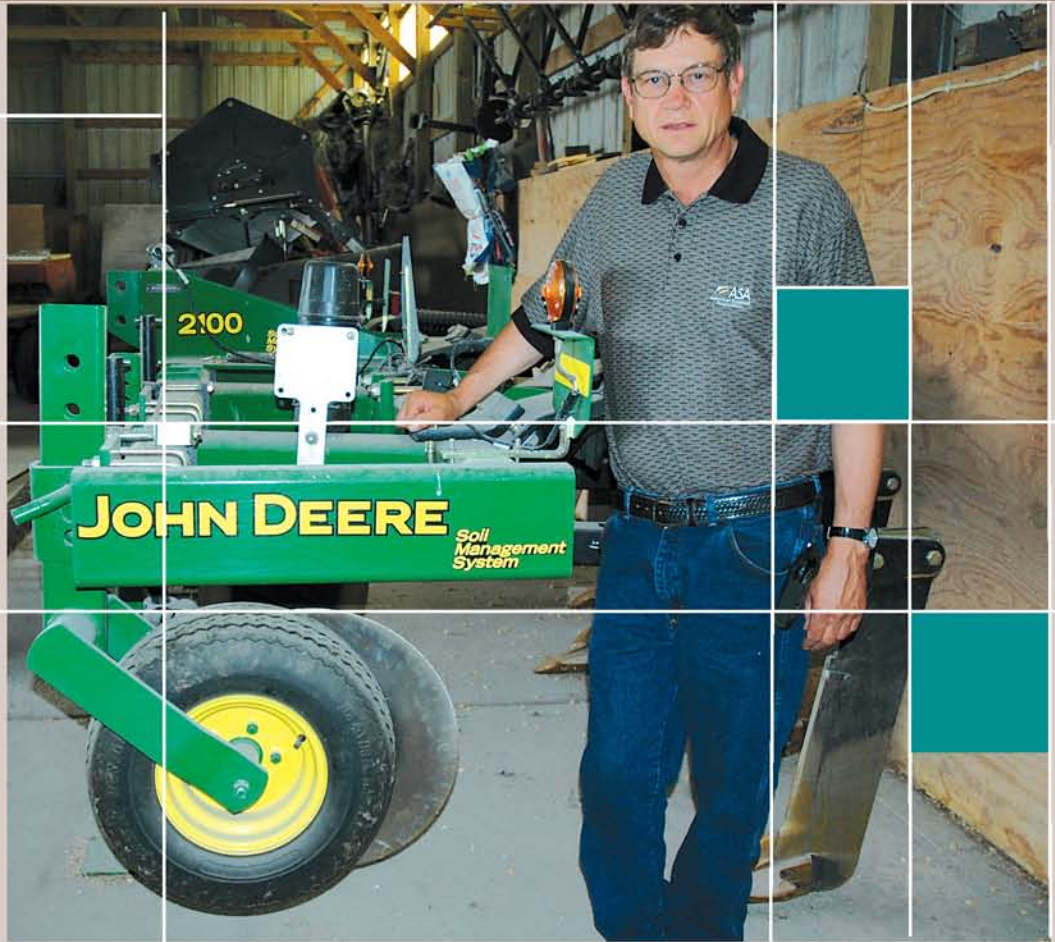




Larry Swanson
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"I had purchased an in-line ripper and wanted to see if there was economic justification for ripping prior to planting corn."



I had just purchased an in-line ripper when I agreed to participate in the On-Farm Network Ripping study. I wanted to see if there was economic justification for deep ripping prior to planting corn.

In my plots, there was a 5.7 bu. per acre yield advantage in both the Ossian soil, which

makes up about a quarter of that field, and the Clyde-Floyd Complex, which makes up the remainder.

As I see it, that's about break even, since it takes \$10 to \$12 an acre in fuel, labor and machine costs to operate the ripper. That doesn't include the cost of picking up rocks after

using it, and on my farm, that was a problem. I'd say you'd need to add another \$3 or \$4 an acre to cover rock picking. So to fully cover your costs and see a return, you'd need about a 10 bu. per acre increase in corn yields.

I haven't given up on the idea completely. I think it does pay in certain situations, such as on the end rows or if you have an area of the field that's been compacted for some reason. In addition, it might have some advantage if you were unloading the combine on the go, running a heavy grain cart up and down the rows.

But from what I've seen so far, I'd have to say it's probably not something we could routinely recommend for all farmers.