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No-till farmer, non-farmer awards presented

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The Manitoba-North Dakota Zero Tillage Association presented its no-till farmer and non-farmer of the year awards for the U.S. and Canada during its 30th Annual Workshop and Trade Show in Minot, N.D., Feb. 4-6.

U.S. No-Till Farmer of the Year was Bill Kuehn of Turtle Lake, N.D. Kevin Anderson, manufacturer of the Horsch-Anderson Planting System, Andover, S.D., was presented the U.S. No-till Non-Farmer of the Year award.

On the Canadian side, Kendall Heise, Isabella, Manitoba, was named the No-Till Farmer of the Year while Norbert Beaujot, creator of the Strawtrack Manufacturing Seedmaster drill, received the Canadian No-Till Non-Farmer of the Year award.



No-till awards for U.S. and Canadian farmer and non-farmer were presented during the Manitoba-North Dakota Zero Tillage Association's (Man-Dak) annual workshop and trade show. From left to right, Bill Kuehn, U.S. No-Till Farmer; Kevin Anderson, U.S. No-Till Non-Farmer; Rochelle Beaujot, representing her father Norbert Beaujot, Canadian No-Till Non-Farmer; Cal Thorson, Man-Dak Zero Tillage Association president; and Kendall Heise, Canadian No-Till Farmer.

Kuehn began no-till farming with his father-in-law in 1992 on his farm near Turtle Lake and has been practicing no-till ever since. Being raised as a "town kid," Kuehn started questioning many farming practices that were taken for granted. An innovator in his community, he was the first to use a Seed Hawk drill and many innovative farming practices in his area.

He believes in farming focused on the soil and less soil disturbance no matter what it takes, and the dollars will come from that.

Kuehn is also a past director and past president of the Manitoba-North Dakota (ManDak) Zero Tillage Association.

A farmer from Andover, S.D., Anderson purchased his first no-till drill over 20 years ago. He soon found out that accurate fertilizer placement was just not possible and so he developed the Anderson opener to solve the problem 20 years ago.

Anderson's focus is always that fertilizer placement is as important as seed placement.

He just completed a 7-year, 21-field study that focused on fertilizer placement and nitrogen extraction rates. He found that nitrogen use could be reduced by 50-60 percent and yield increased by 15 percent in no-till through more focus on fertilizer placement.

The U.S. No-Till Farmer and Non-Farmer awards were sponsored by Farm & Ranch Guide.

Heise and his wife, Angie, and their daughters, Jessica and Karina, farm northwest of Brandon at Isabella Manitoba. The Heises have been no-tilling winter and spring wheat, barley, canola, dry peas, oats, flax, and caraway since 1992.

Following graduation from the University of Manitoba, Heise worked with Agriculture Canada and Manitoba Agriculture. In 1997 the Heises moved to the family farm and engaged in full-time farming.

Heise has had a long history of service to the ManDak organization having served as an advisor, a director, and president, and also as the organization's executive secretary.

Beaujot created Strawtrack Manufacturing - the manufacturer of the Seedmaster drill. He started designing the drill in 1991 and created the prototype in 1992. Continually refining the design, Beaujot built a new modern manufacturing plant in 2001 and has needed to expand it every year to keep up with demand.

His wife, Sam, children Rochelle, Cory, and Ryan, all work in the business with him. They have converted their entire family farm into a research farm and are committed to continual improvement of their product.

The Canadian No-Till Farmer and Non-Farmer awards were sponsored by the Manitoba Cooperator.