

# RESIDUE MANAGEMENT, RIDGE-TILL

## PRACTICE INTRODUCTION

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service - practice code 346



**RESIDUE MANAGEMENT, RIDGE TILL** - This practice is managing crop residue on a year round basis and growing crops on ridges alternated with furrows protected by crop residue.

### PRACTICE INFORMATION

This practice generally applies to cropland but may also be used on other areas where field crops are grown such as wildlife or recreation lands.

Growing crops on pre-formed ridges covered with crop residue requires specialized equipment for both cultivation and planting. At crop lay-by, or last cultivation, a disk cultivator reforms the ridges for the next crop. After harvest, the crop residue is left on the soil surface until the following crop is

planted. The ridge planter is equipped with a tool to clear a narrow path on the ridge top to accommodate planting the seed.

The benefits of ridge-till are significant. Soil slowly but steadily improves when erosion is reduced and organic matter increases. Soil tilth improves and productivity increases as the constant supply of organic material left on the soil surface is converted to humus by a healthy population of earth worms and other soil organisms. The surface residue plus the ridges and furrows provide excellent food and cover for wildlife.

Additional information including standards and specifications are filed in the local NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.