

Keynote Speaker Summary

Rick Clark



Key take aways

Balance: It's all about farming with Mother Nature. Find balance on your farm and you'll rely less on inputs.

Not about chasing yields: Build a program to reduce inputs based on your farm's goals.

Allow cover crops to do their job: Plant green and maximize the benefit of the cover crop to reduce inputs.

"If you're not uncomfortable with what you're doing, then you're not trying hard enough to change."

- Rick Clark

7 Soil health principles

1) Minimize disturbance: minimize tillage AND minimize inputs.

2) Maximize diversity: diverse crop rotations AND diversity of ideas. Surround yourself with others who have similar soil health goals and be open to new ideas.

3) Living roots: roots are activated during winter warm-ups and help keep microbes alive throughout the year.

4) Armor the soil: wind is always blowing, so keep soil protected.

5) Livestock: animals on pasture is the most efficient way to build soil health. **Manure is the best natural resource available.**

6) Context: where are you at in your soil health journey? Find ways for conservation to fit into your system at this time.

7) Commitment: It's going to take time, patience, and commitment to make it work. **No such thing as failure, just outcomes you didn't expect.**

