

# Technotill offers Wainwright producer a simple seeding solution

After direct seeding more than 14,000 acres over the past few years, east-central Alberta producer Bill Roberts remains convinced the Technotill seeding system is a simple, cost effective way to get seed in the ground.

Roberts and his wife Bernice run a mixed farming operation near Wainwright, just west of the Saskatchewan border. He says the narrow Technotill system helps conserve soil moisture, places and packs seed at an accurate soil depth, and has a durable, trouble-free seed boot.

"I wouldn't say my crops are any better than anyone else's, but they are certainly just as good as people using much more expensive seeding systems," says Roberts, who has used the Technotill system to seed his 2,000 acres of annual crop land for the past seven seasons.

"I like the fact that it is simple. You can get the crop seeded and packed without a lot of extra moving parts and separate packing systems. Over the past seven years it shows the normal wear and tear but nothing exceptional. I am still using the original openers. I might break and replace three or four tips per year but you would do that with any openers. Technotill has very little maintenance."

Seven years ago Roberts converted a 40 foot wide air seeding system to a single pass system, using Technotill. He had been operating a minimum till system that involved one pass before seeding, to band granular fertilizer. He used a harrow packer to get seed-to-soil contact after seeding.

By installing Technotill, on 12 inch spacing, to his existing tool bar, he was able to create a one pass seeding system. He switched to a liquid fertilizer blend that could be applied at time of seeding.

"I do a pre-seeding burnoff with glyphosate and then direct seed," he says. "There is minimal soil disturbance, which is critical for conserving moisture and I can place and pack seed right into moisture."

Roberts uses liquid fertilizer, which goes on at a rate equivalent to 170 pounds/acre of granular. The main feature of the low disturbance

Technotill system is that it allows producers to seed crops into moisture, whether it be one-half inch deep, one inch or even up to 3 inches deep. The system is designed so it only packs from ¼ to 3/8 of an inch of soil on top of the seed. So in essence, regardless of what depth the opener is running at, you always have shallow-seeded seed with good seed to moist soil contact, allowing speedy and even germination. Fertilizer is sidebanded after the seedrow is packed.

Depending on the year, Roberts seeds canola, peas and/or oats with the Technotill system. This year, for the first time he seeded 2,000 acres of oats all harvested as silage. While he feeds some silage to his own 200 head cow/calf herd over winter, the bulk of this year's production will be sold to two nearby feedlots in a custom silaging service.

"We usually get the crop seeded between May 1 and June 1," says Roberts. "Depending on the crop we aim to seed canola at less than one inch depth, peas usually go in a about 1.5 inches in depth and oats up to two inches in depth. The opener handles all seed sizes equally well, and the plan is to seed all crops into moisture with whatever amount of packing is needed."

"The low disturbance system conserves moisture, and we have very little weed regrowth either, due to the low disturbance."

Roberts even used the Technotill system to seed peas directly into about 200 acres of sod this spring. He applied 1.5 litres of glyphosate over the played out pasture and then seeded peas.

"It worked really well even though it was seeded late," he said. "The opener worked through the sod without a problem, and I thought we might end up with a poor grass/pea stand we would have to cut for silage. But as it turned out we had a decent pea stand that went about 18 bushels per acre. So I was very pleased."

**For more information on the Technotill seeding system phone 780-352-9890 or visit the company website at: [www.technotill.com](http://www.technotill.com).**

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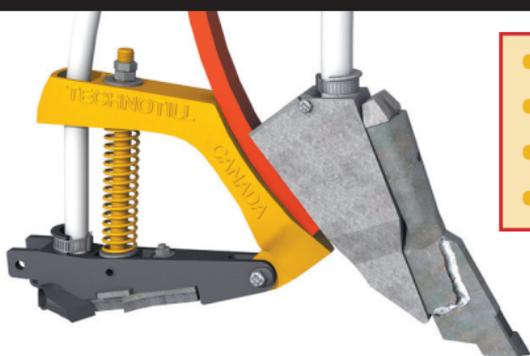
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