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## BEING MINDFUL OF COMPACTION

Cory Utterback, Crawford County, Illinois, is always mindful of when he gets into his fields in the spring and what kind of compaction he is creating. In his area the soil types are a lot of clay. Cory says, “I would not call what we have down here black dirt. The soil here tends to get really tight very quickly. It’s just not the most forgiving ground.”

In the past, Cory has primarily practiced minimum tillage in the fall with the tillage layer at mainly three to four inches deep. After acquiring an 870 ripper, he decided to try 360 BULLET.

“We just felt like if we were going to go through the effort and the time and fuel and wear and tear on the equipment, then we wanted something that would totally eliminate compaction at that three to four inch tillage layer and also at the 13 inch layer.”

And now that he has been through an entire growing season after having run 360 BULLET, Cory says there are definitely some noticeable differences, starting with fall spraying. “The first difference I noticed is we sprayed some fields crossways to the way the field was worked and the ride was excellent.”

Then fast forward to the spring and the differences continued. “We were thrilled with the way the soils held after a whole winter of erosion. We had more erosion on our fields after the 11 inch rain event on April 24, 25, 26th, than we did from November to middle of April.”

Lastly, he noticed a difference in emergence. “The emergence on our corn seemed to be much more even. We attributed that to the BULLET points doing their job on eliminating that 4” compaction layer and the 13” compaction layer for the seed bed.”

Cory also noticed that because the soil profile was looser, the water from the April rain event percolated through the soil much easier and after a period of just a day or two there was significantly less ponding. And, April corn that was planted behind where 360 BULLET had run did not have to be replanted.

“Not every year is the same so you need to run a product at least three years to really get a good feel on how it’s going to perform for your farm. Overall we are very satisfied with the way the BULLET points have performed for us so far and we are looking forward to seeing how the updated design performs this fall.”

