

Summer Institute of Agronomy: Conservation Agriculture in Africa

Non-credit Certificate Field Course for Graduate Students

July 22-24, 2019

Background

Conservation agriculture (CA) is a practice that combines the principles of minimal soil disturbance with soil cover and plant diversity. When these principles are appropriately applied to farming systems, CA can increase crop productivity and improve soil and ecosystem function. Conservation Agriculture is being actively promoted around the world by the FAO and many NGO development agencies.

The University of Manitoba has been working with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and their international partners on Conservation Agriculture in Asia and Africa since 2009. Martin Entz led the Asian project and a 4 year IDRC funded project in Zimbabwe. Mario Tenuta, Marla Reikman (Man Agric), Martin Entz and Plant Science graduate student April Stainsby are now working on CA programs in Eastern Africa (Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia). We use a diversity of tools; working together with partners in host countries, webinars and other media, and joint publication of results at conferences and workshops. Last summer, we held our first “Summer Institute for Development Agronomists” where Asian visitors spent one week at the Carman Research Station learning about the theory and practice of CA. Several Plant Science and Soil Science graduate students assisted in the Institute.

Graduate student non-credit certificate course

This July, we will host approximately 10 African agronomists plus a number of agronomists from Canadian-based development organizations for a 3-day Summer Institute of Agronomy. The summer institute will focus on the principles of CA and their application in a range of agricultural contexts around the world.

University of Manitoba graduate students are invited to participate in this institute alongside our international visitors. The 3-day course will provide U of M students with a certificate in “Development Agronomy: Conservation Agriculture”. But perhaps more importantly, U of M students will gain valuable experience from International agronomists, learn more about issues of food security in Africa, and join the worldwide network of agronomists working to develop sustainable food production systems.



Interested? For more information, please contact Martin Entz m.entz@umanitoba.ca.