

Agricultural Beet

September 19, 2025

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Cooperative

Fall Tillage for CLS Inoculum Reduction

With the extremely favorable environment for CLS we experienced this summer, many fields turned brown in September. This undoubtedly impacted individual fields and the overall sugar and yield for the Cooperative. However, the negative impact of these brown fields doesn't stop there. As we plan for 2026, we will have a high inoculum load to manage, especially on 2026 fields that share a border with 2025 fields that were heavily infected. Data shows that if we bury CLS inoculum with aggressive tillage, we can significantly reduce disease development in the following year. The choice of tillage equipment you use is important. Field cultivators and vertical tillage equipment deposit leaf tissue on the surface. Aggressive tillage equipment that turns the soil over will be the best choice for burying the inoculum and reducing disease pressure in 2026. We recommend that if you have a field with significant CLS pressure this fall, you be aggressive with your tillage and bury that inoculum. At a minimum, we would recommend doing this along the 150-200' that will border next year's beet fields.



Picture taken Aug 4, 2021, from an SMBSC CLS management research trial. The treatment that used aggressive tillage to bury inoculum had a foliar rating that was **2 points lower** than the plots that were not tilled (1-9 rating scale).