

Very recently Kees Stigter wrote on the Agromet Market Place the item "Beyond better funding for agrometeorological research". It was concluded there that research is a key to reducing inequalities, but only if governments do a better job implementing long-lasting and effective policies based on its findings and communicate what works to their neighbors. INSAM, Kees Stigter said, wants to be a medium "to communicate what works to neighbors". Zhang Jianxin from Taiyuan, that Zheng Dawei (China Agricultural University, Beijing) and Kees Stigter (Agromet Vision) visited for a project in August 2004, now sent us an illustration of something that works in microclimate management, for "communication to the neighbors". Who follows?

An Effective Anti Drought Measure: Furrow Planting and Ridge Covering

1 The source of this measure

This measure was proposed by professor Wang Hualan of Shanxi Institute of Meteorological Science, China, during 1984~1989

2 Measure description

Furrow planting and ridge covering is a combination of three techniques: furrow & ridge planting, intercropping and plastic film mulch. It changes the local terrain and forms an environment favorable to crop growth. Figure 1 gives its sketch:

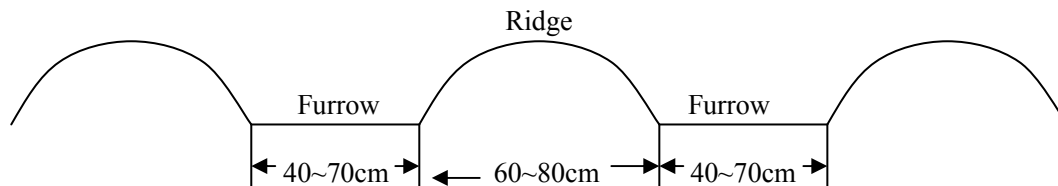


Figure 1 The sketch of furrow planting and ridge covering

The ridge is covered with plastic film. Crops can be planted both in the furrow and on the ridge, generally a drought-resistant crop is planted on the ridge, another crop easily affected by drought is planted in the furrow.

3 Advantages of this measure

- 3.1 It can improve the sunshine and ventilation situation of farmland because the two crops usually have different heights.
- 3.2 It can increase soil moisture of the furrow, obviously because rainwater can easily flow from the ridge to the furrow. Furthermore, soil moisture of the ridge is also not very low because of the plastic film mulch.
- 3.3 It also has effect on increasing soil temperature.

4 Effect of this measure

This measure has been applied in Shanxi Province for more than 15 years now. Many districts have used this

measure. It has been proved that this measure can promote crop growth and increase grain output observably.

Mr. Zhang Jianxin, Head of Agrometeorology, Shanxi Provincial Administration, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China, contributed this example of what works in microclimate management.