

NO-TILL HELP FOR TANZANIA

Bill Berry, a founding member of the KZN No-Till Club, hopes to duplicate the club's success among Tanzania's cotton farmers.

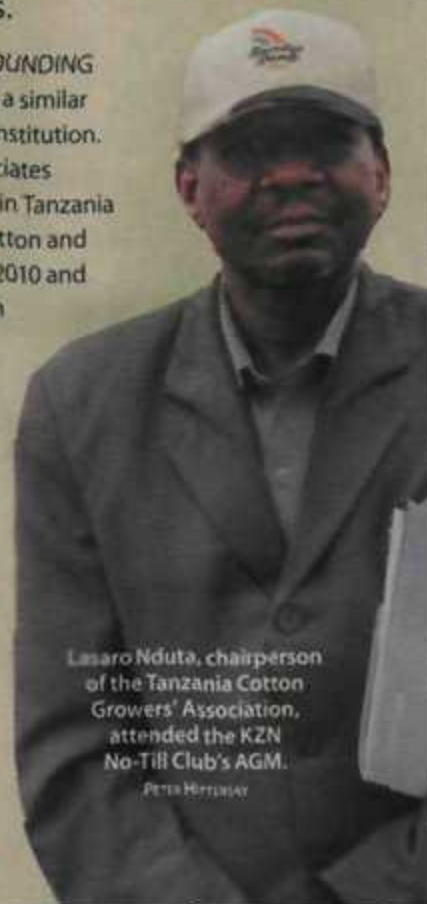
Peter Hittersay reports.

AT THE KZN NO-TILL CLUB'S AGM LAST YEAR, FOUNDING member Bill Berry asked that the club help form a similar body in Tanzania by sharing its methods and constitution.

Bill, an agronomist consultant to Golder Associates Africa, is the team leader of a three-year project in Tanzania introducing conservation agriculture (CA) for cotton and maize production. The project ends in October 2010 and targets Tanzania's approximately 400 000 cotton farmers, who each work two to five acres (0,8ha to 2,02ha) of land. Cotton provides some income to about 40% of Tanzania's population, or about 16 million people.

The project arranged for Lasaro Nduta, chairperson of the Tanzania Cotton Growers Association, to attend the KZN club's AGM. He also attended the field workshop on 11 September at Ant Muirhead's farm Grouton in Winterton, where rhizosphere ecologist Dr Jill Clapperton showed practical ways of determining soil biodiversity under no-till.

Nduta said he was highly impressed by the interest the farmers attending the conference showed in no-till, and he is keen to help start a no-till club in Tanzania. |fw



Lasaro Nduta, chairperson of the Tanzania Cotton Growers' Association, attended the KZN No-Till Club's AGM.

PETER HITTERSAY