

# On-farm demonstration of CTF for vegetables in the northern midlands

J McPhee<sup>1</sup> and P Aird<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>TIA – Cradle Coast Campus, <sup>2</sup>Serve-Ag, Devonport

**Key Words:** controlled traffic, vegetables, duplex soils

## Take home messages

- ❖ *Implementation of surface drainage will be essential for successful operation of controlled traffic in the northern midlands.*

## Introduction

The limited controlled traffic work done in the Tasmanian vegetable industry has all been conducted on the red ferrosol soils of the north-west coast. The Northern Midlands is a significant vegetable production area, which will gain more prominence with the expansion of irrigation capacity. This project has been established on a duplex soil at Cressy, and aims to continue the on-farm development of controlled traffic for intensive vegetables in conjunction with a commercial collaborator. Unlike the north-west coast, topographic challenges of a different nature need to be addressed to ensure adequate surface drainage to allow paddock access at key times of the season.

## Objectives

The objective is to demonstrate controlled traffic for vegetable production on a duplex soil within a commercial farming operation in the northern midlands.

## Methods

The 3 ha trial commenced with a winter green manure crop following pumpkin harvest. The site has since grown potatoes, another green manure crop, and broccoli.

## Outcomes to date

Soil samples were taken at the start of the project and in the mid-season of each of the cash crops. No discernible differences in mid-season soil physical condition have been found, despite large differences in the degree of disturbance between the conventionally tilled and controlled traffic areas.

## Discussion

Poor internal drainage and poor surface drainage in very low slope topography are challenges to the implementation of controlled traffic in the northern midlands. Surface drainage has been addressed at this site in order to maximise the timeliness window for field operations in the spring.

## Funding and project duration

Horticulture Australia Ltd. with voluntary contribution from TIA.

- Feb 2011 – Jun 2013

## Collaborators

- Harvest Moon



Rye grass green manure crop (CTF site), Kinburn.