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WORDS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

By Leonard L. Lane

Agriculture, like Iowa's weather, is interesting because of frequent changes. If you don't like it now, wait for a while and it will be different. There are also other contrasts, while some farmers are struggling to survive financially others are showing a profit. So where are we headed? Most people will agree they want to survive in farming and show a profit. Exactly how to do that is the tricky part.

Taking license on predicting without a crystal ball, I feel we will see an acceleration in farming trends already underway. First is the need to concentrate on net income per acre instead of maximum yield. This will require that we know what our input costs and incomes are, not for the entire farm but fields or maybe a portion of a field. One good alternative to the step by step erodible portion of a field as cropland is the Conservation Reserve Program. Details of the program are available at the SCS or ASCS offices. Another way to increase net income is by reducing the number of trips across the field. It not only saves fuel but will extend the life of high priced equipment.

Second, we will be growing other crops besides corn and soybeans. These could be as exotic as hay, wheat or vegetable crops. Before we get into production, we must identify markets. Groups may be established to market these, similar to what co-ops are doing today.

A third trend is increased emphasis on soil and water conservation. We have seen Congress pass cross compliance legislation - if you farm land and allow it to erode above acceptable levels you will not be eligible for government agricultural programs. We also see a lot of concern by farmers with pollution of their wells by nitrates and other agricultural chemicals. That problem is too close to home to ignore. Nobody knows for sure how long our ground water supplies could be damaged by these pollutants, but it will probably be a long time. We also cannot be sure what kind of problems will result from this pollution, but we have seen high cancer rates in areas of Iowa suspected to be caused by ground water contaminated with ag chemicals.

Times are changing; we need to keep an open mind and be able to adjust our farming operation. This includes "backing up" to rotations, for example, as well as adopting those "new technologies" of farming.

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES AND REPORTS

In July 1984, Soil Conservation District Commissioners were Leonard Lane, Chairman; Wayne Ertzinger, vice chairman; James Jenson, William Walker, and Donald Mathews. In the general election Sherman Smith and Keith Renner replaced Jenson and Walker. January 1985, the district held its organizational meeting; Lane and Ertzinger were re-

lected chairman and vice chairman. Assistant Commissioners for 1985 calendar year were Horace Sutton, treasurer, Harold Linder, Barbara Bonnett, James Jenson, William Walker, Roger Gay and Martin Culik.

Office personnel for the District are: Howard Bright, SCS district conservationist; Rick Shafer, SCS soil conservationist; Diane Reed, SCS soil conservationist; Mark Fehseke, SCS conservation technician; Tom McIntosh, state soil conservation aide; and Dorothy Davis, state clerk and district secretary.

Three volunteers have served the district the past year: Corinne Walman, Jeff Gehring and Donald Andrews.

For the 1984-85 year, the District received \$74,334.04 in state cost-share funds that were applied toward permanent soil conservation practices at 50 percent. The district also received \$21,770.16 in Special Lakes Fund that were applied toward permanent soil conservation practices at 75 percent.

District continued dispensing funds for the state and county for the Multiflora Rose Eradication Program.

District reaffirmed the present policy of approving cost sharing on a priority point system. District also established a policy of estimating the cost of terraces at a maximum of \$2 per foot for the purposes of paying cost sharing.

James Gullford presented a certificate from Department of Soil Conservation to Dorothy Davis for outstanding contribution to soil conservation program in Iowa.

District completed the distribution of Iowa 2000 Conservation folders to each landowner in the county. A total of 1,386 Conservation folders were prepared and delivered. Des Moines County has the distinction of being the first county in the state of Iowa to have completed the first phase of the Iowa 2000 program.

Commissioners met with ASC committee in an effort to establish common standards to approve cost sharing and to share concerns about the ASCS farm program.

Sherman Smith was appointed Iowa - Cedar Conservancy District representative.

Martin Culik, doing research with Iowa State University, worked with small grain farmers doing research on rotation of oats, corn and beans. Commissioner endorsed establishing an Agricultural Research Center and corresponded with state legislators and ISU personnel toward this effort.

District distributed 400 trees to third graders in Burlington and Middletown schools in celebration of Arbor Day and discussed soil conservation with elementary students and teachers.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year July 1, 1984 - June 30, 1985

Expenditures of funds provided by State of Iowa and Des Moines County for District Commissioners' Expenses, Office Supplies and Expenses, Office Equipment and Cost-Share Programs.

3-M BUDGET	
Office Supplies & Expense	\$1,153.88
Commissioners' Travel	866.24
Released to State	79.30
Total Allocation	\$2,000.00
3-M BUDGET (84-85)	
Expenditures:	
Terraces	\$44,396.17
Water & Sed. Contr. Basin	1,894.50
Total Expenditures	\$46,290.67
Obligated	25,991.50
Balance on Hand	317.83
Allocation	\$72,600.00

Special Lakes Fund (84-85)	
Expenditures:	
Terrace	\$17,360.08
Water & Sediment Control Basin	4,410.08
Total Expenditures	\$21,770.16

3-M BUDGET (83-84)	
Expenditures:	
Terrace	\$58,518.60
Water & Sed. Contr. Basin	3,745.00
Total Expenditures	\$62,263.60
Obligated	4,250.00
Balance	0.00
Released to State	1,975.24
Total Allocation	\$68,488.84

Special Lakes Fund (83-84)	
Expenditures:	
Terrace	\$17,977.67
Water & Sed. Contr. Basin	1,146.25
Total Expenditures	\$19,123.92

CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT	\$3,303.55
CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT	\$2,500.00

COUNTY COST-SHARE BUDGET	
Big Hollow Watershed	
Balance July 1, 1984	\$13,793.31
County Allocation	\$7,500.00
Total	21,293.31
Expenditures: Terrace	
Sam Schneider	\$6,066.89
E. Peterson	9,034.25
Total Expenditure	15,101.14
Balance, June 30, 1985	\$6,192.17

COUNTY MULTIFLORA ROSE	
Balance, July 1, 1984	\$18,209.47
County Payments	11,970.90
Balance June 30, 1985	\$6,238.57

STATE MULTIFLORA ROSE	
Allocation, Aug. 1984	\$3,000.00
State Payments	3,000.00
Balance June 30, 1985	\$ 0.00

MULTIFLORA ROSE ACCT.	
Interest	\$1,360.81
Checking Fees	\$ 0.62

REVOLVING FUND	
Balance July 1, 1984	\$13,366.94
Receipts: USDA	
Cost Sharing	\$8,381.69
Co. Cost Sharing	7,500.00
RC&D	3,385.00
Subscriptions	20.00
Portage	9.12
Interest	1.59
Marking Flags	7.50
Office Supplies & Expense	1,164.26
Total Receipts	\$20,469.16
Balance June 30, 1985	\$33,836.10

Disbursements:	
Computer	\$3,385.00
Equipment	209.90
Computer Update	718.11
Office Supplies & Expense	1,283.78
Cost Sharing	23,482.83
Certificate	2,500.00
IASCD Dues	150.00
Subscriptions	95.97
Soil Judging	5.20
Trees	38.30
Meeting Expense	13.27
Bank Charges	11.13
Total Disbursements	\$31,893.49
Balance June 30, 1985	\$1,942.61

DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

October 1984 - September 1985

ITEM-NAME	NUMBER	ACRES-FT
New Cooperators	14	2,446
Individuals Groups Assisted	1,013	
Conservation Practices Applied	340	
Conservation Plans	10,440	
Multiflora Rose Treatment	5,763	
Conservation Cropping System	6,231	
No Till	8,905	
Erosion Control Ponds	6	
Grassed Waterways	7	
Pasture-Hayland Management	2,239	
Pasture-Hayland Planting	10	
Terrace (ft.)	49,015	
Water & Sediment Control Basin	25	
Wildlife Management	54	
Woodland Improvement	30	
Reduced Erosion on Cropland	15,402	
Reduced Erosion on Pasture-Hayland	2,532	
Reduced Erosion on Range & Nat. Past	30	
Reduced Erosion on Wildlife Land	24	

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