

Soil Award Winners To Be Honored Friday

By a Staff Writer

BLOOMFIELD, IA.—A banquet honoring James Melvin and his son Phillip for soil conservation achievement on two farms near Savannah will be held at First Methodist Church here starting at 7 p. m. Friday.

The Melvins are Region 9 (southeast Iowa) sweepstakes winners in the soil conservation achievement awards program sponsored by The Des Moines Register and Tribune and Iowa Farm and Home Register.



The recognition banquet is sponsored by the Davis County Soil Conservation District and principal speaker will be Dewey Cornell, conservation program specialist in Iowa for the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Cornell, staff member in the state office of USDA's agricultural stabilization and conservation Service (ASCS), will discuss government cost sharing on approved conservation practices.

The Melvins operate a total of 610 acres. It is largely grassland with 384 acres of pasture and only 174 acres of cropland.

Six stock ponds provide water in every pasture. Live-stock consists of 240 ewes, 50 purebred Hereford cows, 20

bred heifers. They also raise 300 hogs per year.

The 300 lambs produced this year were fattened on grass, and this year's crop of 45 calves will be sold as feeders, either later this year or in May of next year.



Conservation practices include improvement of 300 acres of pasture, 150 of it with birds-foot trefoil, two miles of terraces, seven acres of waterways and crops grown on the contour.

Improved pastures have made it possible to increase the size of the beef cow herd and ewe flock.

"We just farm it enough to maintain a good seeding," the father said. "We seeded 60 acres to trefoil in 1962."

He was in a group of 29 Iowa farmers who visited the Soviet Union on a People to People tour in 1962. Discussing what he saw during 11 days in Russia, he said:

"Agriculture is so primitive in a number of ways behind the Iron Curtain. I haven't growled about paying my taxes since I got home. We have so much to be thankful for."

Melvin, 55, and Phillip, 29, operate the land in partnership. Now it is two-thirds for the father and one-third for the son, but starting Jan. 1 it will be on a 50-50 basis.

Phillip and his wife Linda



James Melvin (left) and son, Phillip.

live on 370 acres near the Missouri border. They have three children, Theresa Diane 4, Robert Lee 3 and Tammy Lynn 1.

The elder Melvin and his wife, Ethelene, live on 240 acres just south of Savannah.

Another son, Stewart, 23, a 1964 graduate in agricultural engineering at Iowa State University, Ames, is now taking graduate study for his master's degree. He is the first recipient of the Quincy C. Ayres Fellowship, worth \$3,000, and granted by the Iowa State University Research Foundation.

They also have a daughter, Mrs. Scott (Marilyn) Wagner, jr., whose husband is serving

his apprenticeship as a mortician in a Bloomfield funeral home.

The elder Melvin has been active in rural electrification and until recently served as vice-president of the Iowa Association of Electric Co-operatives.

He is chairman of the board of the Southern Iowa Electric Co-operative, Inc., Bloomfield, which serves an area extending into four counties, and is secretary-treasurer of Northeast Missouri Electric Power Co-operative, a generating plant at Palmyra, Mo., in which three Iowa co-operatives are part owners.