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Care for pond like a home

Caring for a farm pond is much like caring for the home. It takes continual care and maintenance to keep a pond in top condition.

Eugene Francis, conservation technician, Bloomfield, says a pond should be inspected frequently.

Some of the problems to look for are wave action, erosion, livestock damage, rodent damage, debris around the inlet, and undesirable tree growth. Prompt action when any of these hazards are noticed may avoid costly major repair later.

Wave action and other erosion around a pond can usually be controlled by vegetation such as Reed's Canary grass if established soon enough. If this type of damage is not repaired quickly, a more expensive remedy such as riprap or rock fill is needed.

Livestock can severely damage the grass cover on an earth fill dam by overgrazing. Often, the lush growth on the dam makes excellent pasture and grazing helps control weed and tree growth if practiced in moderation. Mowing the area around a pond also discourages weeds and trees and promotes a dense sod. Periodic

fertilization will encourage a lush grass cover around the pond.

The roots of water-loving trees can cause damage to structure drainage systems and spillways. All woody growth should be controlled for a distance of 30 feet from the toe of the fill or any of the spillways.

Any debris left near the spillway after a rain should be removed as soon as possible. A few minutes spent doing this may eliminate many costly hours needed to clear a clogged pipe.

Muskrats can cause severe damage to the earth fill. Whenever muskrat activity is found, steps should be taken to discourage them.