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Secretary Yeutter will attend Farm Progress Show

By Jane Bigbee

Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter is expected to attend the Farm Progress Show at Amana Wednesday, Sept. 26, according to Dave Roepke, show manager.

Yeutter is expected to make an announcement on new conservation plans or policies, Roepke said. Yeutter will be at the show from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., probably in the area where soil conservation exhibits are planned near the Visitors Center as well as on the show site, according to preliminary plans.

Governor Terry Branstad and Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Dale Cochran will take part in the opening ceremonies for the show Tuesday morning, Sept. 25.

No political campaigners are allowed to speak on the public grounds of the show site. Exhibitor lots are not designated as public grounds of the show site, according to Roepke, in explaining show policy on political speeches.

The three-day Farm Progress Show (FPS) - Sept. 25, 26 and 27 - will be headquartered on the 60-acre exhibit field at the Amana Outdoor Convention Center plus adjacent fields of crops, 1,300 acres in all. There may be as many as 330 exhibitors; a few non-profit ag-related exhibitors may still be coming, Roepke said Sept. 6.

Field demonstrations

Nearly 900 acres will be used for crop demonstrations. They include:

- 400 acres of corn to harvest
- 300 acres of beans to harvest
- 74 acres for corn silage
- 90 acres for hay

There will be mowing and baling demonstrations on the hay ground. This is the first time hay has been made at the Iowa show although there was a limited amount of hay ground used at the show in Indiana last year.

Corn silage demonstrations were in-

Farm Progress Show time

Some of the 60-acre exhibit area and the 1,300-acre total site are in back of Dave Roepke, manager of the Farm Progress Show being held at Amana Sept. 25 to 27. About 1,100 volunteers have been recruited to help with various aspects of the show expected to attract over 200,000 visitors. Up to 330 ex-

hibitors are expected. Fields of corn and soybeans are maturing for harvesting demonstrations. There will be corn silage and hay-making along with a variety of tilling, soil conservation, health and safety and other demonstrations and exhibits.

cluded at the Iowa FPS in 1987 but were not done at either the Illinois or Indiana shows the last two years.

Early maturing corn and soybean varieties were planted early by the Amana

Farm Department, Roepke said.

"The corn is really in good shape," he continued, noting the heat during the first days of September have helped.

Harvesting soybeans, however, is questionable, he said. An agronomist was to walk the fields Sept. 12 to check the status of the beans for harvesting. If they are far enough along, they will be sprayed to help dry them down. While Roepke believes "chances are the beans will be ready," he still isn't ready to give a harvesting guarantee.

Tillage practices will be demonstrated. Roepke predicts there will be a lot more chiseling shown with moldboard work limited. Look too for no-till drills and planters, ridge planting and ridge-till, he suggested. Tillage demonstrations will be taking place in the conservation area west of the Amana Visitors Center building.

Louis Licht, an environmental engineer at the University of Iowa, who has planted trees along the bank of the creek back of the Visitors Center, will be at the show too, Roepke said. Licht is one of two environmental engineers in a project sponsored by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. Scientists have found the expansive root systems of poplar trees planted between crop fields and streams filter ground water. Licht and a fellow environmental engineer have planted 14,000 trees per acre along

creeks to take up nitrate from surface and subsurface water that is no longer available to field crops, in conducting the research.

Farm health and safety

Exhibitors with a tie to the state include the Department of Natural Resources, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Iowa State University Extension Service (ISU), University of Iowa, plus Northern Illinois University - DeKalb.

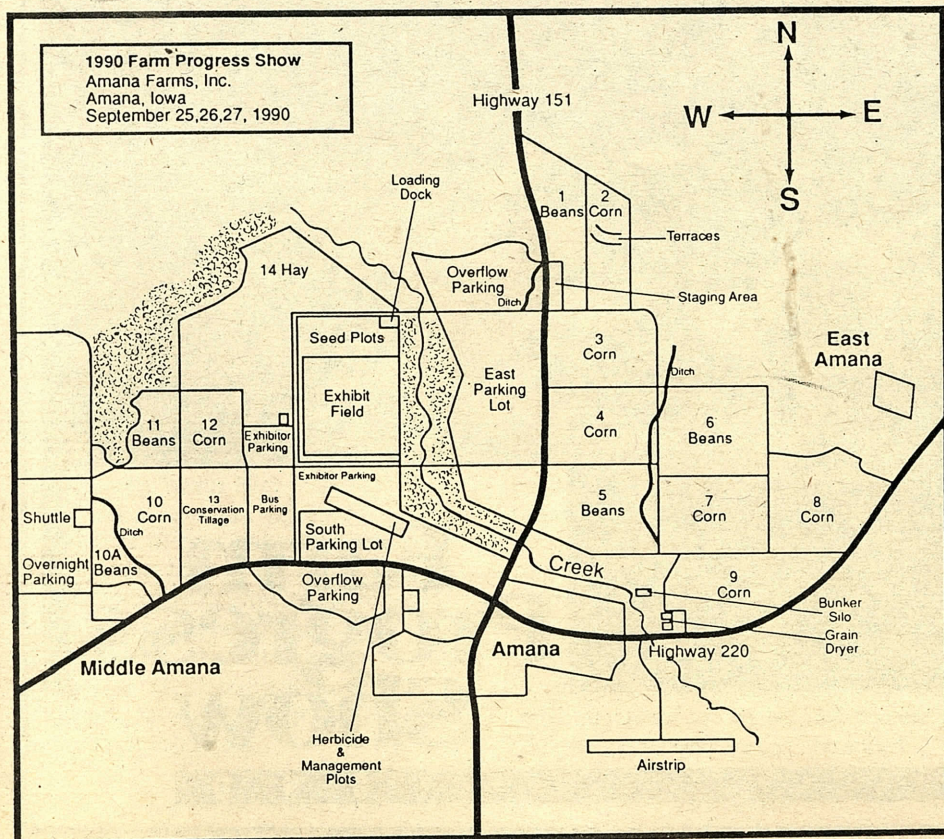
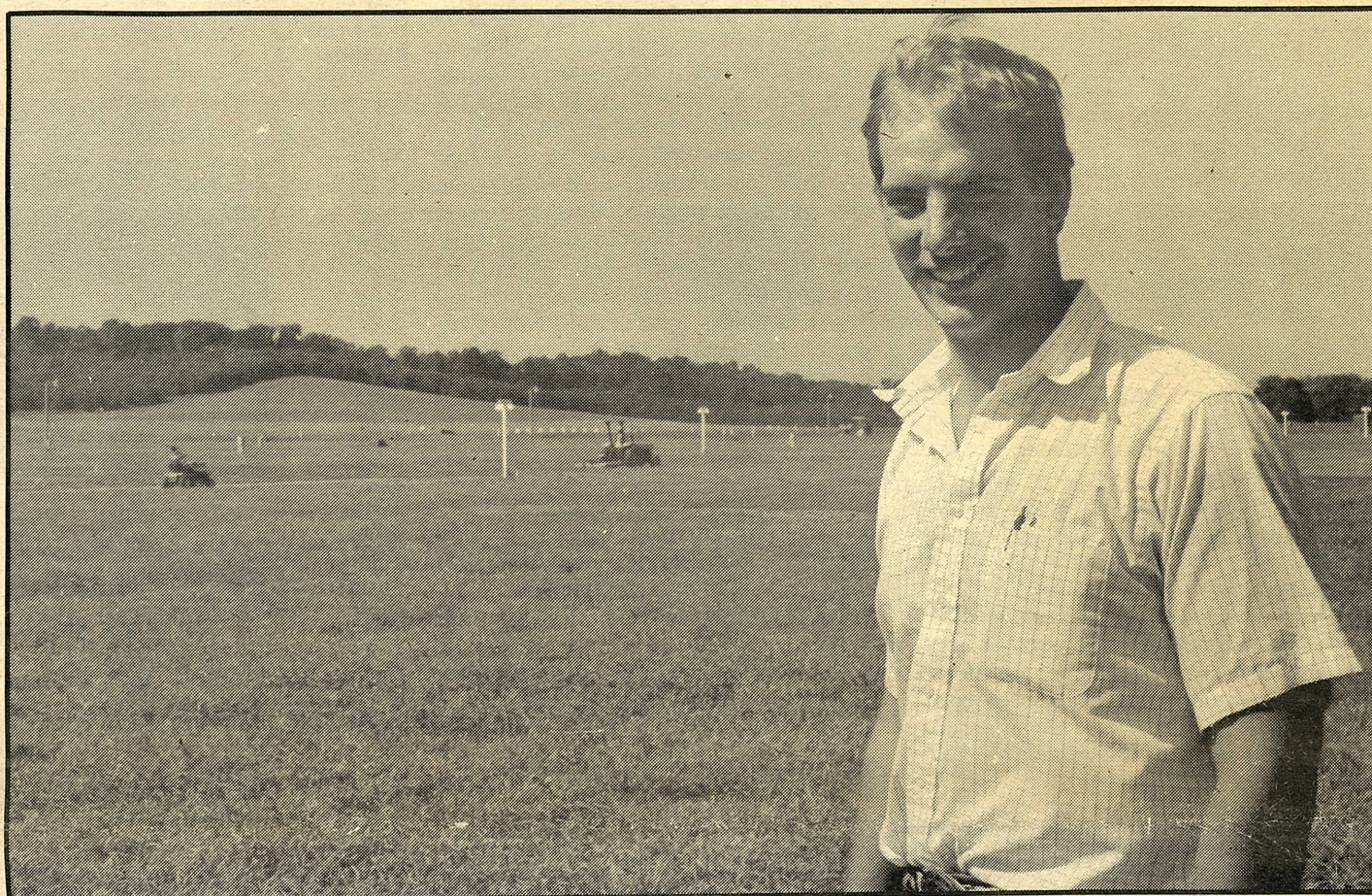
Farm safety plus the health and safety of farmers will be the emphasis for several exhibitors. The University of Iowa Medical Laboratories will be displaying research and services relating to health and safety in agriculture and also hydraulic research on soil conservation.

St. Luke's Hospital, Cedar Rapids will offer free hearing tests. There will be a small charge for the respiratory testing they will do, particularly aimed at farmers who work with confinement systems or grain.

Northern Illinois University also will be doing hearing tests.

ISU Extension will have a number of displays including nitrogen management and nitrate testing plots, exhibits on well protection, plugging abandoned wells, soybean cyst nematodes, alternative crops, Lyme disease, food safety, publications,

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Soil conservation is family tradition for Dietrichs

By Pat Axmear

Normally, when farm land switches hands from generation to generation, the land use also changes, according to Steve Johnston, Iowa County Soil Conservation Service district commissioner.

But that doesn't hold true for this year's Iowa County landlord-tenant conservation award winners, Donald and Gene Dietrich. Johnston said the Dietrichs are unique in their farming practices.

"Normally, when younger farmers take over the land, they try different types of farming," Johnston said. "(Gene) has carried on his father's system of farming."

Donald has been farming 180 acres southeast of Ladora since 1950. In 1968, he purchased the land and created diversion terraces to protect the 60 acres of bottom ground.

After teaching for a few years at Cardinal of Eldon, Gene came back to Iowa County in 1976 to farm with his father. In 1977, they started strip cropping and rotating their crops in a six-year cycle.

"Our rotation is corn, corn, corn, oats, meadow, meadow," Gene said. "I farm 720 acres in all and 240 acres are strip-cropped because of the degree of the slope."

One of the main reasons the Dietrichs were chosen for the award, Johnston said,

is because not many farmers contour strip-crop and he thinks it is a good practice to promote.

"We had a contour-strip tour at (Dietrichs') farm, which is an excellent example of contour farming," Johnston said. "Because of the topography of their land, their entire system is contour strip-cropping."

"It is a very complex practice and one of the most effective. It's a hard practice to lay out because it is basically a lot of little fields."

With this year's flood-like conditions, soil conservation efforts have been put to a test but both Dietrichs said they've had very little erosion.

"This year was the supreme test, but our erosion was negligible," Gene said. "Silt fell only a few feet into the next strip. The terrace channels did not get any silt."

Besides contour strip-cropping the Dietrichs have initiated other types of soil conservation into their system of farming.

"We have extensive tiling and on the gentler slope we've established dry ponds and permanent waterways," Gene said. "With our 150 stock cow herd we utilize the roughage and we use minimum tillage."

"(Soil conservation) has been a continuing process that started in 1968."



Conservation winner

Gene, left, and Donald Dietrich are winners of this year's Iowa County Soil Conservation Service landlord-tenant soil conservation award. Gene farms 180 acres of his father's land and is carrying on the tradition of soil conservation with contour strip-cropping.

Rudin finds financial benefits in conservation practices

By Ken Sweeney

When he started implementing soil conservation practices a few years ago, Al Rudin was motivated more by potential financial benefits than by conservation goals.

But the Iowa County farmer admits he has seen the payoff work both ways on his farm.

Rudin, who farms 240 acres in section 20, Iowa Township, about six miles northeast of Williamsburg, recently was named Iowa County Soil Conservation District new cooperator award recipient.

Al grew up on the acreage he now farms. The farm has been in the family for about 65 years, he said, with his grandfather, the late Albert Rudin, farming it first, followed by his father, Carl. His parents, Carl and Velma Rudin, still live in a mobile home on the same farm.

After graduating from Williamsburg High School, Al attended North Iowa Area Community College, Mason City, for one semester. He spent 19 months in the Army, including a tour as an armament repairman in Vietnam, worked on his family farm, then attended airframe and power plant mechanic school in Kansas City, Mo. After spending two years as a helicopter mechanic in Louisiana, Rudin returned to Iowa in the fall of 1977 and started farming when his father, Carl, retired.

He and his wife, Loree, have two children: Monica, 20, a beautician living in Cedar Rapids; and Heather, 12, a Williamsburg Junior High student.

The major portion of Rudin's crop operation is in corn, with a few acres of soybeans. The hills on his farm, he noted, are not conducive to growing soybeans.

In addition, he has a farrow-to-finish hog operation, marketing about 1,200 hogs a year. His interest in hogs extends to his active membership in the Iowa County Pork Producers.

Land is hilly

His land in the Clear Creek watershed is extremely hilly and quite irregular, most

of the erodible land ranging from 9 to 18 percent slope.

Rudin said he first started no-till planting six years ago with 12-15 acres. "At the time," he recalled, "I wasn't approaching it from a standpoint of soil conservation as I was a different way to raise crops and save money."

Rudin began no-tilling in earnest about three years ago, including about 50 percent of his land, and now almost 100 percent of his land is no-till.

"I was not enthusiastic about it at first," he recalled of those early efforts, "but after I had a chance to think about it for awhile, I decided it was a good thing."

"You can't stop erosion," he added. "You can limit it, but you can't stop it completely."

If farmers make the effort to prevent erosion now, he said, it may prevent less government control in the future.

As part of his soil conservation practices and because of the irregular layout of his land, his rows are planted cross-slope, a method which reduces the slope and length of the row.

When he decided to get into no-till farming, he bought a planter with no-till colters which cut the residue in front of the furrows. He also invested in a high-clearance cultivator which allows the old residue to pass around the cultivator's shanks without clogging the equipment.

The other part of Rudin's soil conservation program involves establishment of grass waterways and field borders. He said he is attempting to establish a stand of brome grass on the waterways but due to the dry weather of the 1988-89, he has had some difficulties.

He has gotten a good jump on compliance with the 1985 Food Security Act which required a conservation plan in place by Jan. 1, 1990, and compliance by 1995. "My intentions are to be 100 percent in compliance by next spring," he added.

Benefits

Rudin said he has been quite pleased with the results of his efforts, both in



Grass waterways

Al Rudin, rural Homestead, stands in front of corn fields crossed by brome grass waterways which serve as barriers against soil erosion. In the foreground is a garden of shrubs and gourds tended by Al's wife, Loree.

terms of the financial benefits as well as soil conservation. No-till farming, he said, saves time, fuel costs and depreciation on his equipment because he has to operate it fewer hours.

In addition, he said he also gets better weed control with no-till than when he was disking, using slightly less chemicals.

His satisfaction extends to his crop yields which have not dropped off since he began using no-till except for the dry summers of 1988 and '89.

Some of his corn this year shows signs of foliar disease and, he said, although no-till may have played some part in that, the wet weather conditions could also be a factor.

His soil conservation practices paid

dividends during the heavy rains of June and July. Although he found quite a bit of crop residue in ditches following the rains, he said he saw little evidence of soil erosion. "It impressed me," he said of the conservation measures.

Rudin's independence as a farmer carries over to his attitude toward the environment. "I'm concerned about the environment," he said, "but I don't like the term 'environmentalist' because it has a bad connotation."

"You want to farm your land for the future," Rudin added. "I like to hunt and fish too and I'm concerned about ground water contamination."

"I think you just have to be a good steward and take care of your land while you have it."

Charles Pope: We're building more terraces

By Doris McCartney

When the June 16 floods washed through the countryside, cornfields on the Charles Pope land, braced by 9,250 feet of terraces and 11,600 feet of tile, held fast. Soil losses on the Greene Township farm were reduced considerably.

Pope credits the soil savings with the conservation plan designed by Iowa County Soil Conservation Service technician Ted Oswald.

In a mood of appreciation this fall, Pope predicts, "We're building more terraces in the future."

After examining the Pope farming practices, Iowa County Soil and Water Commissioners have selected the Popes as their long-time conservation winner. Pope and his wife, Marlene, will be honored along with other area recipients at a dinner meeting in November.

The Popes moved to their farm east of North English in 1969. Crops are raised on 235 acres they own and an additional 230 acres they rent nearby. There are 275 acres in corn and 100 acres in soybeans this year. They plant 240 acres of the corn and soybeans on the contour.

Pope first attempted no-till planting three or four years ago at the urging of a neighbor. This year he has used no-till planting for 63 acres.

"He (the neighbor) suggested I should try no-till. I've been farming all my life and had that reaction - can the crop survive in trash? It doesn't look tidy. No-till has advantages.

"Weed kill has to be timely, I've learned."

Pope has decided concern about weed

control with no-till. "I don't want excessive chemicals, yet I aim to expand no-till on corn ground," he said.

Future conservation work

In planning for the future, Pope said, "I discovered the benefits of soil conservation."

"Those terraces saved the farm during the season of steady rainfall. We're looking for an impact on production because of this type of construction."

Pope says he also has used crop rotation. There is little hay to make, however, because of their swine operation. Some pasture is maintained for his horses.

Pope maintains a crossbred farrow-to-finish hog operation, farrowing four times a year using 70 gilts or sows. He employs a full-time worker to help.

"Spring and fall we plan to be occupied with planting and harvesting, so I need the help," Pope noted. Keeping the facility pits cleaned is another major effort on the work schedule.

"Getting away from the farm," Pope says, "means hitching horses to a wagon for trail rides. Last fall we had a long trip through the English river bottom lands and woodlands. Another trail ride is planned by another club."

Marlene Pope helps her husband by running errands for the farm operation. Her hobby is collecting salt and pepper shakers. In addition, the couple spend time away from the farm visiting his mother, Hazel, who lives at English Valley Care Center, North English.

Their only son, Lynn, is a junior at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls. He is employed seasonally by a seed corn firm.



Will build more terraces

Charles and Marlene Pope found they had little soil loss this year despite the heavy rains, including June 16 when flooding occurred extensively in Iowa County. Pope gives credit for the soil savings to the Iowa County Soil Conservation Service plan. The couple will be recognized in November as the SCS longtime conservation winner.

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