

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

INFORMATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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Has Anyone Forgotten Dust Clouds Of Spring?

Have the dust clouds of the spring of 1966, 1967 and 1968 been forgotten? Fall plowing activities have already started on some fields, the Hardin Soil Conservation District reports. The question that needs answering now is what tillage procedures do you plan on soybean land after harvest?

Research has indicated that fall plowed soybean fields usually lose more soil by wind erosion than do other plowed fields, the district office states. Farmers and other people living near soybean fields have confirmed this fact.

Soybean land is loose and friable and soybeans produce very little plant residue to protect the land. When plowed in the fall, the freezing and thawing action over winter further breaks down soil structure. Wetting and drying crumbles soil particles. The result is a surface of dust particles waiting for a strong wind to put it into motion.

Soil lost from fields not only fills road ditches, fence rows and farmsteads, but it fills homes, stores, schools and churches. Man as well as livestock are forced to breathe soil particles that should be producing corn.

Research has also shown that corn yields following soybeans can be just as high when the seedbed is prepared by disking or chiseling in the spring. This also saves the cost of plowing. The bean residue is not buried but is mixed in the surface soil and helps prevent blowing in May after the corn is planted. It is estimated that nearly 10,000 Iowa farmers planted nearly three-quarters of a million acres using this method in 1969.

Before plowing your soybean field this fall, why not answer the following questions before you start:

1. If I plow, will the wind blow soil from my field next spring?
2. If it blows, who will be farming some

of my soil next summer?

3. Who will clean out my road ditches, my fence rows?

4. How many housewives will point their fingers at me while cleaning their homes each day?

5. How many motorists traveling down my estimate how hard the winds may blow. Ev-hope that no one hits them?

6. Will my family, friends and neighbors suffer discomfort and illness because of dust polluted air they must breathe?

7. If the answers disturb you, ask another question — Why plow soybean land this fall when spring seedbed preparation will produce as well?