

Daniel Brune



Soil Conservation District Commissioner Harry Scurr plants corn in corn stalks the no-till way. Harry was using a new

John Deere planter provided through a joint program between the local soil conservation office and Ray Holst Inc. of Traer.

One Of Agriculture's Growing Movements—No-Till

The 1981 Annual Report Of The Tama County Soil Conservation District The Toledo Chronicle's Annual *Soil Conservation Issue*

Soil Conservation District Commissioners Comments



Dan Bruene

One of the few good things that inflation and higher costs have brought us, is an increase in soil conservation. More and more farmers are realizing that it costs less and is more profitable to farm the conservation way. You hear more farmers talking about how little tillage they can use to get the crop in, rather than how much fall plowing they did this year. Hopefully it won't be long, or maybe the time is already here, that the farming community will look upon the

farmer that plows, the same way that they looked upon a no-till farmer a few years ago.

If a farmer doesn't think it is profitable to save all the soil he can now, then just wait until he tries to grow good crops on subsoil.



Robert Fontinel

We must save our precious topsoil for future generations. Each and every one of us must do what we can in our own way to help achieve this goal. All of our efforts today will show great benefits tomorrow.



Franklin Bro

It is a known fact that the way to get the most conservation of the soil for the least amount of money is through no till farming, strip cropping, and contouring. Terraces are fine, but they take a lot of dollars for a small area.

If farmers will follow practices where they will have at least 50 per cent of their residue on top of their soil, there is a good chance that no more than two tons of soil per

acre will be lost, which is acceptable.

I feel that through simple basic conservation practices such as no till farming, contouring, strip cropping and grassed water ways and head lands, we can reduce our soil losses to an acceptable rate and can actually build up our soil and clean up our streams. Terraces can aid in making our basic practices work all the better on certain land, but will take more revenue.

The SCS Office will be glad to help anyone on their individual conservation problems.

I feel that we as individuals should really strive for better conservation in the 80s, so that we don't leave our children a land that is completely eroded and air and water that is unfit for wildlife and human habitation.

land that was taken out of production, about one million of this was prime farmland. In the US, 800,000 acres of our best farmland has become housing tracts, highways, airports, industrial sites, parking lots, etc. Nearly 200,000 acres are covered by water for manmade lakes and water storage for other uses.

What do we have for potential soil to be converted to row crop production? Most of the ground that could be brought into production is already in pasture, timber or wildlife habitat, etc.

Control of prime farm ground is important to everyone in the US. How well the future generations will be fed, depends on the land use restraints that will be applied by the concerned citizens of the individual counties of Iowa and the US. I believe the best type of control can be carried out at the local or county level.

There are a couple of ways in which we can reverse this trend. The first is by new tree plantings. It is unrealistic to believe that trees will be planted on large acreages in this day and age, but we can certainly encourage planting trees in fencerows, along roads and in odd corners and around buildings. These practices provide wildlife cover and help cut down on wind erosion. A second area we can encourage is the education and aid we can give to the owners of established woodlands. We have a district forester who is more than willing to help with woodland renovation and management. In this era of high-priced lumber and wood burning stoves, it is not hard to see that trees can be a paying proposition with proper management. While it is true that "only God can make a tree," the rest of use can surely help!

Erosion

Affects

Crop Yields

Profits and yields are two factors Iowa farmers try to increase every year. But as soil erosion increases, profits and yields decrease.

Crop production yields are affected by four soil characteristics related to erosion, according to Gerald Miller, Iowa State University extension agronomist. These characteristics are percentage of clay distribution in the soil profile, topsoil thickness, amount of organic matter in the topsoil and soil slope gradient.

Percentage of clay distribution, topsoil thickness and amount of organic matter are affected directly by soil erosion, while soil slope gradient determines how much potential erosion can occur. A general rule is that as percentage of slope gradient is doubled, potential soil erosion increases 2.5 times.

As erosion increases, topsoil

EROSION
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Harry Scurr

The time has come in Iowa for the people of Iowa to become concerned about the loss of prime farmland.

It has been estimated that prime farmland in Iowa is being taken out of production at the rate of one county every 11 years.

The cornbelt states have 81 million acres of prime farmland (by far the most acres of productive prime land in the US).

On the national level, of the three million acres of rural



Dave McMillan

We should be alarmed at the rate which our trees and woodlands are disappearing. We see acre upon acre being bulldozed off land that is unfit for row crop farming. Not only is this land steep, but forest soils are by nature more unstable than prairie soils and very subject to erosion.



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District Accomplishments

Fiscal Year 1981

District Cooperators	19	NO.
Sediment & Water Control Basins	4,500	AC.
Terraces	90,550	FT.
Grassed Waterway	51	AC.
Contour Farming	4,790	AC.
Farmstead and Feedlot Windbreak	16	NO.
Conservation Tillage	23,777	AC.
Wildlife Habitat	61	AC.

Budgets

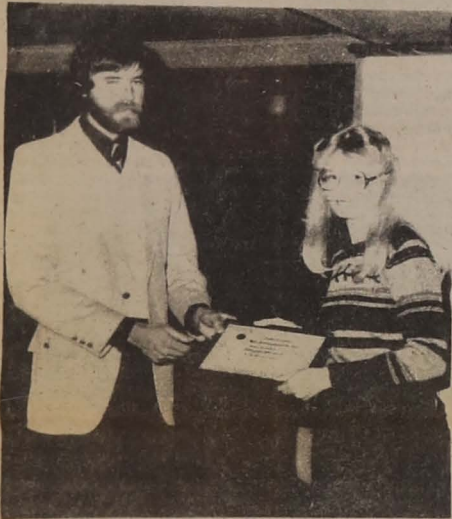
Commissioners mileage, meals, hotel	\$1,369.29
Office Supplies & Expense	758.11
Printing	225.35

2M

State Aide and Clerk Salaries	\$22,788.49
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3M

80-81 Allocation	\$71,796.00
26 Agreements approved	
15 Agreements completed	\$57,356.98



First place junior division essay winner Becky Bartsch receives a certificate from Commissioner Dan Bruene.

District Activities By Month For '81

January

Commissioners attended Annual Commissioners Short Course at ISU.

Reorganization of officers: Dan Bruene, chairman, vice chairman Robert Fontinell, secretary treasurer, Audrey Wheeler. Ferd Kvidera and Forrest Hill appointed assistant commissioners.

A special meeting was held on Land Disturbing Activities. Quarterly newsletter mailed.

Environmental Education committee met. SCD met with board of supervisors concerning county cost-share funds.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

The Annual Awards Banquet was held in Tama to honor local people involved in soil conservation.

February

The annual contractors meeting was held in Tama to help contractors stay on top of policy changes and become familiar with contractor check out. 51 people attended.

Committee assignments were given the commissioners. Awards and contest, Franklin Bro, education and publicity, Dan Bruene.

Environmental Education committee met. Regular monthly meeting was held.

March

No-till exposition in Tama, 75 people attended. Ernest Behn feature speaker.

SCD worked with Ken Holst of Ray Holst, Inc., Traer to provide a no-till planter for use by county farmers to try no-till.

The commissioners attended the spring regional meeting.

Annual report published in local paper.

Chester Coffman was entered in the Good Year Contest.

Mrs. Yvette Berner appointed representative to the Iowa-Cedar Conservancy District Advisory Committee.

No-till cost share program for Otter Creek was approved by the State Soil Conservation Committee.

Environmental Education committee met.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

April

Minister Breakfast (Soil Stewardship Week).

Booster club letter mailed. Environmental Education Committee met.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

May

The 5th grade field day was held at Otter Creek Lake with 350 students in attendance.

Arbor Day tree planting by all sixth grade students in Tama County.

Union Grove Lake Phase I meeting was held with ICC and ISU at Union Grove Lake.

Quarterly newsletter mailed.

Environmental Education committee met.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

June

A no-till tour was held.

Iowa Conservation Awards winners chosen.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

July

A Union Grove Lake kick-off meeting was held.

No-till tour, 60 people participated.

SCD booth displayed at Fair.

Ted Hall resigned.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

August

SCD entered essay contest.

Dan Bruene was entered in Outstanding Commissioner Awards contest.

Paul Bruns retired.

Dan Bruene, Harry Scurr and John Nicholson toured 4-mile with Congressman Evans.

SCD discussed keeping the project alive.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

September

John Nicholson reported on education committee activities.

ACP development meeting attended by commissioners.

Ferd Kvidera entered in Izaak Walton League Windbreak contest.

Three commissioners attended the Fall Regional Meeting.

The Land Disturbing Activities meeting was held.

The Environmental Education Committee met.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

October

Essay contest winners chosen: Sr. Division Janeen Chamberlain, James Haan, Jr. Division Becky Bartsch and Marie Morris.

Ray Drewelow started work as Soil Conservation Technician.

Quarterly newsletter mailed.

The Environmental Education Committee met.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

November

Soil Loss Conservancy Complaint filed and was reviewed by commissioners.

Contractor bid forms made available by commissioners.

The Environmental Education committee met.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

December

Commissioners attended the Annual Commissioners Conference.

Adolph Bruene was honored as Good Year Contest Winner.

Regular monthly meeting was held.

Safety Tip

Always stop machinery before making repairs or adjustments



All Life Depends On Six Inches Of Earth!

The land we live on is covered by six inches of rich top soil. Without it, all life would cease — nature's bountiful gifts of water, woodland and farmland would become wasteland. Fire, flood, drought and improper planting can all lead to soil erosion. It is up to each of us to protect against these hazards.



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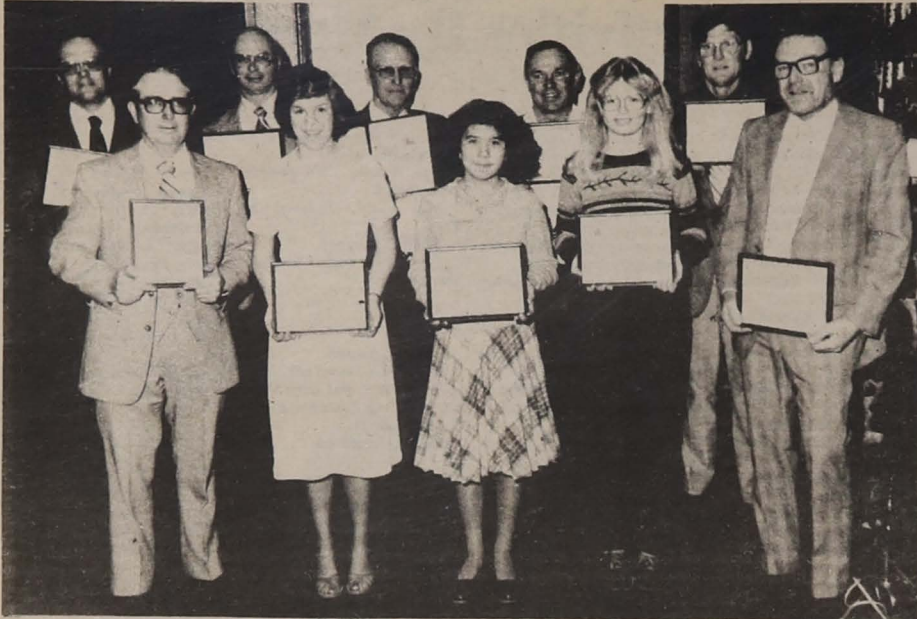
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Conservation Is Everyone's Job



Joe Else, state aide with the Tama SCD for two years, left the position recently to venture out to Alaska. Joe was instrumental in much of the survey work completed in the 4-Mile Creek Watershed project.



The Tama County Soil Conservation Awards banquet was held January 25 at King Tower Cafe in Tama. Receiving awards were: Front Row (l-r) Izaak Walton Wind Break Award Ferd Kvidera, Senior Division county and regional essay contest winner Janeen Chamberlain, second place junior division essay contest winner Marie Morris, first place junior division essay winner Becky Bartsch, Iowa Conservation land-lord, tenant,

and overall soil conservation award Bud Bruene; Back Row (l-r) Friend of Conservation Winner David Podhajsky, Friend of Conservation Winner David Podjasky, Friend of Conservation Winner Ken Holst, Goodyear Award Winner Chester Coffman, Iowa Conservation Owner-Operator Bill Tessau, and Iowa Conservation owner-Operator Award Martin Bruene.

Windbreaks Shield Farmstead From Iowa's Winter Winds

No Iowa farmstead is complete without a sheltering belt of trees and shrubs on its north and west sides to shield against Iowa's predominate northwest winter winds. A well planned windbreak will not only help conserve energy by slowing winds, but also direct snow drifting, prevent wind damage to the farmstead, provide vital shelter for livestock, help beautify a farmstead as well as attract a wide variety of wildlife.

A newly planted windbreak utilizing fast growing shrubs and deciduous trees along with slower evergreen trees begins to be effective in as little as 3-5 years. Even older windbreaks can be improved by interplanting trees to succeed mature or missing trees or by planting shrubs and understory trees to fill in the bare and void spots that develop in the lower portions of maturing trees.

Now is the time to begin planting for your new windbreak or improve upon an existing windbreak. Contact your Tama county ASCS (Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service) office today for cost-sharing details. Upon qualifying the SCS (Soil Conservation Service) will contact you and help plan your windbreak, suggesting suitable trees and shrubs for

your soils, spacing of plants, location of windbreak, planting preparations, and plant maintenance. This technical advice aids in planning an effective, long living windbreak, while qualifying you for cost sharing. Upon qualifying for this program the ASCS will provide 50% of the cost of the plant up to \$6 per tree and .50 per shrub. Usually local nurseries can obtain the species of plants desired if orders are placed soon enough. However if one waits until the last moment you may have to take what species the nursery has on hand.

Trees and shrubs are available as bareroot, balled and burlapped or container form in a range of sizes and prices. It pays to check around at different nurseries to compare quality, size, price and location grown. Most bareroot plants must be planted no later than May 15. Container or balled and burlapped stock dug previous to the setting of the new growth, while under ideal conditions may be planted anytime during the year, is best planted early in the spring.

If you have any problems associated with an existing windbreak, such as wildlife

foraging damage, plant crowding or tree and shrub trimming contact the SCS in Toledo or your state forester, Bob Hibbs, USDA Building, Marshalltown. Questions concerning plant diseases or damage by insecticides or herbicides are best answered by the Tama County Extension Service.

Food Bills

The weekly "food" shopping bill reflects price increases not only for food, but for non-food items as well. In fact, the USDA reports that one grocery bag in three brought home from the supermarket is filled with non-food items.



This windbreak on the Ferd Kvidera farm, located near Traer, was given the annual Tama County Izaak Walton League Windbreak award for its effectiveness and layout.

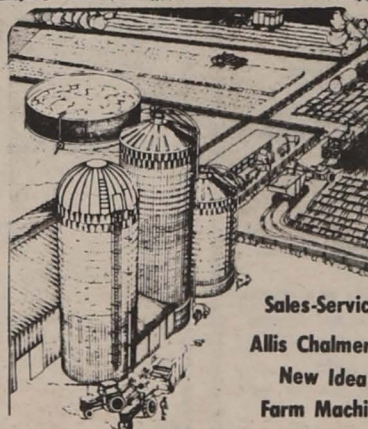
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by Byron Witt

FmHA County Supervisor

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Individual applicants must: 1. have the character, managerial ability, and industry needed to carry out the farm operation; 2. possess the legal capacity to incur the obligations of the loan; 3. be unable to obtain sufficient credit elsewhere at reasonable rates and terms to finance actual needs; 4. be a citizen of the United States, or legally admitted as a permanent resident of the United States, or on indefinite parole; 5. be the owner or operator of a farm after the loan is made.

Funds may be used to: 1. develop wells and otherwise improve water supply systems for irrigation, home use, and livestock; 2. purchase pumps, sprinkler systems, and other irrigation equipment; 3. acquire a water supply or water right; 4. purchase water stock or membership in an incorporated water user's association; 5. construct and repair ponds and tanks, ditches, and canals for irrigation; 6. dig ditches and install tile to drain farmland; 7. develop ponds and water control structures for the production of fish under controlled conditions; 8. level land; 9. carry out basic land treatment practices, including liming, fertilizing, seeding, sodding and subsoiling; 10. establish approved forestry practices on a farm, such as pest control, thinning, and fire protection; 11. establish permanent pastures and farm forests; 12. meet requirements for agricultural, animal, or poultry waste pollution abatement and control facilities; 13. build dikes, terraces, waterways and other erosion control structures.

In addition, loan funds may be used to pay expenses

incidental to obtaining plans and making the loan, such as legal, engineering, and other technical services.

The maximum repayment term is 40 years. The interest rate is set periodically based on the cost of borrowing to the Government.

The loan may not exceed the amount needed for improvements and costs connected with the loan or the market value of the security less other debts against it.

The maximum outstanding principal balance for insured soil and water loans is \$200,000 and \$300,000 for guaranteed loans.

Each borrower is expected to refinance the unpaid balance of the loan when able to obtain such refinancing at reasonable rates and terms from other lenders.

Soil and water loan borrowers are required to maintain their property and pay taxes and property insurance premiums when due.

The county or area committee of FmHA determines the eligibility of applicants. The committee consists of three persons who know local farming and credit conditions. Before a loan is made it must be clear that the applicant will have enough income to meet farm operating and family living expenses and to repay the loan and other debts.

The FmHA county supervisor will assist the applicant in working out a farm and home plan to determine the soundness of the loan and the applicant's debt-paying ability.

If the applicant operates the farm, the plan will show the best use of land, labor, livestock and equipment. This plan will be a guide to follow in operating the farm. It will show the crops and livestock the borrower expects to produce for sale; practices to follow in caring for land, crops, and livestock; proposed expenditures for livestock, equipment, and for running the farm and home; and the expected income and how it will be used.

these loans help farmers acquire the resources and skills they need to improve their operations, raise their standards of living, increase their incomes, and participate in new enterprises. This assistance in turn stimulates business activity in neighboring towns and, in general, helps farm families and their communities make an important contribution to the strength of the Nation's economy.

Other loans made by the FmHA are loans to buy and operate farms. Also loans are available in cases of economic and natural emergencies. Housing loans can be made for home ownership. Community development loans can be made to install water and sewer systems, and other essential community facilities, and for business and industrial development.

We Eat All That?

According to the USDA, the average American family eats about 2.5 tons of food each year. This breaks down into 694 lbs. of meat, 1,154 lbs. of vegetables, 349 lbs. of poultry and about 600 lbs. of grain products.

Union Grove Lake Gets Top Priority For Renovation

Farmers in the Union Grove Lake watershed area were invited to attend a workshop at Gladbrook, Feb. 11 on how to cut soil losses on their farms and lessen the siltation problem in Union Grove Lake.

Union Grove Lake, located south of Gladbrook, has been given the top priority on a list of 107 lakes managed by the Iowa Conservation Commission.

The purpose of the workshop, sponsored by the Tama County Extension Service and Soil Conservation Service was to assist farmers in determining their potential soil loss and to study the various conservation practices.

On hand for the workshop were Kay Connelly, Waterloo Area Extension specialist of soils and crops, John Nicholson, Soil Conservation Service technician, Don Bonneau, fisheries specialist of the Iowa State Conservation Commission and Dick Pulse, Tama

County extension director.

The morning session was spent listening to comments from these men. The farmers attending the meeting were given kits containing soil maps and aerial photos of their farms. During the afternoon they were able to work on determining their potential soil losses, according to a soil loss formula explained by Connelly.

Average annual soil loss from any field can be determined by a combination of factors including rainfall, type of soil, slope length and steepness, crop management and conservation practice.

Average annual soil loss for Tama County is estimated at 13 tons per acre but the permissible soil loss is from four to five tons per acre per year.

According to Nicholson, estimates for the Union Grove watershed indicate losses of seven tons per acre per year. It

was noted some farms which are well protected are losing less than one ton while others were losing over 50 tons per acre.

Nicholson estimated about 30 percent of the eroded soil finds its way into the lake.

The problem of siltation is not insurmountable in Union Grove lake if cooperation is received from area residents. This is one of the reasons for its priority rating along with its location in a high use area.

A feasibility study is being conducted to determine the cost of renovation.

Incentive has been provided to farmers in the form of 75 percent cost shares.

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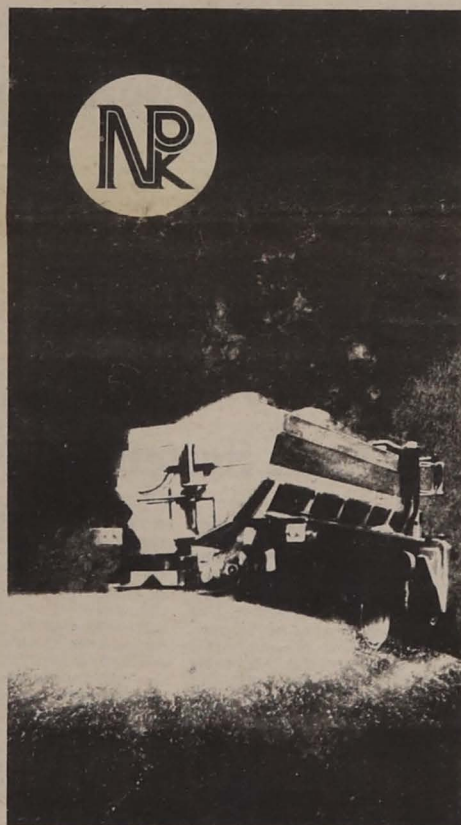
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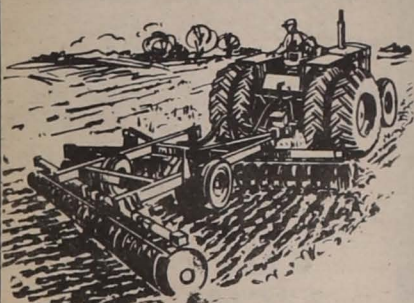
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Tama Livestock Auction
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Are You Part Of The Trend?

By Dick Pulse
County Extension Director

Are Iowa farmers adopting conservation tillage? Yes. According to a survey by the USDA Soil Conservation Service, some form of conservation tillage was used on more than 13.5 million acres of Iowa land planted to corn and soybeans in 1981. This represents 60 percent of the corn and soybean acreage. More than 95 percent of these acres were chisel plowed or tilled with a disc, field cultivator, or powered rotary tiller. However, it is estimated that less than half of these acres had sufficient residue left on the soil after planting to effectively control soil losses throughout the year.

The greatest acreage of conservation tillage was reported in the Fort Dodge area of northcentral Iowa, where row cropped acres are the greatest. Similarly, the least acreage reported was in the southwest and southcentral counties of the state, where opportunities for continuous row cropping are the least due to restrictions of soils and landscapes. Western Iowa farmers appear to favor the disc over the chisel plow as a substitute for the moldboard plow. Of the one-pass tillage systems, slot planting, or no-till, appears to be gaining favor, especially in the eastcentral and southeastern parts of the state. Till planting continues to be strong in the northwest.

Of the reported acres, 45 percent was on land planted to corn following a 1980 soybean crop, indicating a higher proportion of conservation tillage following soybeans than corn since soybeans accounted for about 35 percent of row crop acres in 1980.

Is conservation tillage increasing in Iowa? Yes. From less than a half million acres in 1968 to more than 13.5 million acres in 1981. Although the rate of increase in recent years appears to be decreasing, these data show a shift from the disc to the chisel plow, and an increase in slot planting or no-till. Slot planting acres in 1981, although still less than one percent of row crop acres, and less than two percent of conservation tillage acres, were twice that in 1980.

Much of the soil erosion in Iowa can be controlled with conservation tillage. Some form of conservation tillage can be adapted to all rowcrop acres in Iowa. In spite of its many benefits, some farmers

have been reluctant to adopt this technology because of real or imagined concerns pertaining to crop establishment and growth, fertilizer sources and placement, weed control, insect control, and disease control. These concerns as well as those being researched by scientists at Iowa State University and other land grant universities. Reconciliation of these concerns will remove some of the obstacles to the universal adoption of conservation tillage technology in Iowa.

Contractor's Meeting Held

A meeting to provide information to soil conservation contractors was held on February 24 at the Dysart Community Hall. The meeting was sponsored jointly by both the Tama and Benton Soil Conservation Districts.

This type of meeting is held annually prior to the spring construction season to bring contractor's up-to-date on policy changes, discuss problem areas, and to make suggestions that might improve operations.

Topics this year included items dealing with the state cost-share program, the federal cost-share program administered through ASCS, average earthwork costs, contractor safety, contractor check out, use of bid forms, proper outlets and terrace intakes and tile.

According to Dan Bruene, chairman Tama SCD, the event was well attended and good discussion was generated.

Interested farmers can obtain a free listing of soil conservation contractors that have asked to be included on such a list. Just stop by the soil conservation office in the USDA building in Toledo and a copy will be yours for the asking.

Food Shipments

In one year's time, U.S. farm exports fill more than 1½ million freight cars. Each day, over ten ships leave U.S. ports to transport food to overseas customers.



Barb Hempy, ACP clerk, and Craig Wambold, ASCS executive director, review and discuss terrace construction.

Terrace construction is one eligible cost-share practice administered through the local ASCS office.

Conservation Problems Solved By Supervisors, Fed Funds

By Craig Wambold, CED
1981 was a year of extremes for farmers. The Tama County Board of Supervisors allocated \$10,000 to the ASCS Office to help area farmers do much

needed conservation work. \$5,689 of the 1981 funds were used for four basic practices to shelter county ditches, roads and streams located downstream of the conservation

practice. Savings of county costs of maintaining roadways, ditches and other publicly owned structures will be much reduced by this "fight the problem" method of investing in conservation work. The County Board of Supervisors have this year allocated \$7,500 for conservation work to be administered by ASCS.

Conservation District Sets Contractor Check System

The Tama Soil Conservation District initiated a contractor checkout system this year for construction of terraces and waterways. This system allows contractors to record the final earth construction measurements and to certify that a project is built according to the provided design. With this system he doesn't have to wait on the office staff to check the work before moving to another job.

There was varying degrees of success with contractor checkout this year, mainly due

to contractors becoming acquainted with and understanding this new approach. After completing the design for a waterway or terrace, the office staff will fill out a design information sheet to give to the contractor. This sheet will contain the necessary information that the contractor will need to know in order to carry out the construction. A part of the form provides space for the contractor to record his checks of the completed work. By comparing the checkout notes with the design information the staff can determine if the construction has been done correctly.

Another proposal the district plans to present to farmers is the optional use of a contractor bid form. The form will be available for a farmer to get quotes from more than one contractor on the estimated cost of planned work. This bid may help the farmer decide which contractor he wants to select. The bid will also help the SCD in evaluating the amount of cost share funds to support the intended work.

It is hoped these procedures will be a positive step in maintaining the good working relationship between conservation contractors, farmers and the soil conservation staff.

EROSION

Continued From Page 2A

thickness is reduced. When topsoil thickness is reduced, clay from the subsoil is incorporated into the plow layer. This increases the percentage of clay content because, in most Iowa soils, 2 to 10 percent more clay occur in the subsoil than the topsoil.

More than 27 percent clay in the subsoil decreases production when combined with other factors affecting yields. Current studies show that a change in topsoil thickness from more than 12 inches to 3 inches or less can produce average yield losses in corn of 11 bushels per acre.

Soil erosion generates other losses during the growing season. In a study conducted in a field with various degrees of erosion, production costs were 56 percent greater per acre where severe erosion had reduced the topsoil to five inches than where little erosion had occurred and topsoil measured 12 inches.

In the severely eroded area corn plants were 22 percent shorter in early stages of growth. By harvest time the

Emergency Conservation Measures (E.C.P.) this year paid \$2,022 for repairing wind damage, where buildings, bins, etc., were blown into crop producing fields. Cleaning up these fields had to be finished immediately for the farmer to qualify.

Long Term Conservation Agreements (L.T.A.) is a 3 to 7 year agreement to complete a group of conservation practices. During 1981, \$11,002 was earned by farmers participating in this conservation program.

EROSION

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Tama County Conservation Board



Representing the Tama ASCS County Committee are, seated from left: Don Upah, Chairman, Raymond Ryan and Norman Draper. Standing is Craig Wambold, ASCS executive

director, and Barb Hempy, ACP clerk for the ASCS in Tama county.

Voter approval in 1958 established the Tama County Conservation Board to acquire, develop, and maintain parks, conservation and wildlife areas, and recreational facilities to help promote the general health and welfare of Tama County residents.

Much of the first 15 years was spent locating, acquiring, and developing areas to be used as multi-use parks, roadside rest areas, and boat ramps. An all-out effort was made to establish areas and provide outdoor recreation opportunities for Tama County residents and their visitors. The Board was dedicated to keeping Tama County a nice place to live.

Maintaining and improving these areas remain an important part of the Board's total program. Their role has gradually changed in recent years in preparation for future needs. An important and difficult task for the Board is to plan for Tama County's natural resource future. Planning sites must be set 5, 10, 50, even 100 years down the road. The Board realizes that natural resource decisions made by Tama Countians today will have a great impact on quality of life for all generations yet to come. Tama County, like the rest of the state, is at a critical crossroads as far as natural resources are concerned.

In 1859 there were in excess of 90,000 acres of timber in Tama County. Prairies, with their grasses and flowering plants, were still in evidence in many areas. Today more than ¾ of that timber has been lost. There are no virgin prairie

tracts known to remain in the county.

Cooperation between conservation agencies and organizations is of extreme importance to ensure coordinated and effective programs. Realizing this, cooperative programs are becoming common across the nation.

The most crucial factor to successful conservation efforts in the future is participation of the private citizens. Lack of resident participation will result in futile efforts by conservation organizations and agencies.

In Iowa 96% of the land is privately owned. Only a portion of the remaining 4% is managed by conservation agencies. In Iowa, at least, private landowners have to participate to help increase the chance of success.

Cooperation between agencies is important but cooperation between the public and their conservation agencies is vital. The Tama County Conservation Board encourages you to get involved in Tama County's conservation future and work with your agencies.

Tama County Conservation board, Robert Etzel, Executive Officer, 484-2231. Iowa Conservation Commission: Robert Kurtz, Wildlife Biologist, 484-3752; Robert Mullen, Conservation Officer, 484-3808; Robert Hibbs, District Forester, 752-3352; Robert Middendorf, Fisheries Biologist, 319-644-3615. Soil Conservation Service: John Nicholson, 484-2702. ASCS: Craig Wambold, 484-2701.



Bob Kurtz, Wildlife Biologist, ICC, discusses wildlife with

fifth grade students during the annual conservation field day held last May at Otter Creek Park.

Soil Loss Complaints Law

Chapter 467A of the Code of Iowa relates to the organization establishment and powers of Soil Conservation Districts.

One of these powers or responsibilities the district must carry out is the handling of soil loss complaints. This is not an easy job and usually results in a situation that is paraphrased as "neither side won."

A soil loss complaint can be filed with the SCD by any landowner who receives damage caused by silt deposition originating from another property. Upon receipt of a complaint the SCD is obligated to view the situation and make a determination if soil erosion is occurring in excess of the limits established by the district for certain soil types. If the problem is found to exceed these limits the SCD must notify the offending landowner.

In all cases the SCD will attempt to get both parties to voluntarily take corrective action. This approach can eliminate a lot of headache and heartache and avoid a lot of legal procedures. If no

voluntary solution can be agreed on, the district must turn the matter over to the court system for further processing of the complaint.

There are some protecting procedures for the offending landowner. He will not be expected to expend money for conservation practices unless the state can provide cost-share funds.

The soil loss complaint process apparently was included in Iowa law to hold landowners somewhat responsible for how the land use effected neighbors. The SCD's were assigned responsibility to administer the law because they have soil conservation program responsibility to all landowners in the state.

The Tama SCD would like everyone to know that they will carry out their responsibility and would encourage as much neighbor cooperation as possible to correct any situation that is causing a sedimentation problem. Your consideration and cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

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What Is Timber Stand Improvement

by Bob Hibbs
District Forester

Harry Hillbilly stretched out in his hammock as he pondered the forester's question. Hillbilly thought, then answered, "Well, timber stand improvement means cuttin' out some of the trees so's more grass grows. And so's you can see and walk through the woods — make it look nice and purty, like a park!"

The forester could tell that he had some explaining to do. "Not really," was his reply. "Timber and improvement (TSI) consists of forest protection, species manipulation, density control, and quality improvement. It is done to increase tree growth rates, to increase the value of trees, to make firewood and conserve fossil fuels, to improve wildlife habitat, and perhaps to make a little money for the landowner." The forester went on to explain the work called TSI.

Protection

Protection includes protection from fire, insects, disease, or any other destructive agent. Most often protection means nothing more than the exclusion of domestic livestock. Cattle, horses, sheep, goats and hogs kill more trees in Iowa every year than die from all other causes combined. Approximately 80% of all Iowa woodlands are pastured, destroying the young trees necessary to perpetuate the timber. Since livestock eat young oaks, hickory and walnut, pastured woodlands evolve into a stand of honeylocust, multiflora rose, and other thorny species that the livestock will not eat. Soil erosion also increases when livestock are allowed in the timber.

Species Manipulation

Species manipulation consists of removing weed species to favor more desirable trees. Forest "weeds" usually include boxelder, mulberry, honeylocust, ironwood, hawthorn, multiflora rose, prickly ash and perhaps others depending on the landowner's preference. Vines should be cut from all good-growing crop trees. This work can be accomplished by girdling, felling, handaxe frill with chemical injection, spraying, or any combination of these treatments.

Girdling works well for killing trees over 16" in diameter. Smaller trees are apt to sprout and continue growing. Then, too, trees less than ten inches in diameter can be felled quicker than they can be girdled. Be especially cautious when girdling trees suspected of being hollow!

Felled wood trees will need chemical stump treatment to prevent sprouting. Stubs of vines cut from trees should also be treated to prevent regrowth. Handaxe frill with chemical injection consists of chopping through the bark into the sapwood. Then squirt poison into the cut. Foliar-applied sprays are applied to the plant's leaves; basal sprays are applied to the lower 12 to 18" of the plant's stems.

Plant poisons for TSI work include 2, 4-D, Ammate-X, Roundup, Tordon RTU, and Krenite.

Density Manipulation

Density manipulation (thinning) consists of removing cull trees, wolf trees, and those trees that are too crowded. Cull trees are those live trees that, even though they are a desirable species, are non-marketable. This includes hollow trees, broken or deformed trees, and any tree that has been significantly damaged by wire, nails, lightning or wind. One or two strong trees with hollow cavities should be saved for wildlife on each acre treated. Dead trees can be ignored since they do not compete for light or nutrients. "Wolf" trees are old, open-grown trees with short trunks and large, spreading crowns. Wolf trees should be removed unless they are needed for seed production or for wildlife habitat. If they are unusual or aesthetic, particularly along roadsides, they should be left. Chemical stump treatment is not needed when cutting cull trees or wolf trees. Sprouts from these can develop into good forest trees.

When thinning, work with the best trees first. For example, thinning competing trees away from a young, healthy walnut makes more sense than cutting competition away from a basswood. Always remember that the final crop trees will be about 25 feet apart. You cannot save every tree. Thin from below — cut those trees that are overtopped, leaving the tallest. Make sure the crowns (tops) of your good walnut and white oak have four to five feet of growing space on at least two sides. When thinning multiple-stemmed clumps of trees, pick two or three good stems to leave and cut off the rest. Thinning will be most effective on trees that are fencepost to telephone pole size; old trees will not respond to thinning.

Quality Improvement

Pruning is a cultural practice to improve the quality of growing trees. Like thinning, it should be done when the trees are young and vigorous. Side branches should be removed when they are an inch in diameter. Prune only the anticipated crop trees, and invest your labor in the most desirable tree species. Ten percent interest compounded for 50 years means that every dollar invested in pruning must yield a return of \$1,117.40 when the tree is mature. Altering walnut or white oak from lumber quality to veneer quality will likely fulfill this demand, but pruning pine for a pulpwood market does not make economic sense. As a minimum, you should try to obtain nine feet of clear stem. Seventeen feet would be much better; more than this is generally not practical. For more information on pruning, write to this author of a copy of "Pruning broadleaved trees," Iowa Conservationist, January 1980.



Bob Hibbs, Director Forester, ICC, teaches an outdoor

class on Forestry at the annual fifth grade conservation day held last May.

Discussion

If you are interested in improving your timber stand, the first priority is fencing livestock out. Next, cut and kill weed trees, culls, wolf trees, vines, and trees that are interfering with good-growing walnut and white oak. An able-bodied worker can complete one or two acres per day, depending on the condition of the woods. At this

point, prior to thinning or pruning desirable trees, contact your District Forester or a paid Consultant Forester to obtain professional advice. Most woodlands that I have seen do not need thinning of desirable species. If you cannot do the work yourself, the ASCS farm cost-share program may allow you to hire a forestry consultant to do the work.

My preference for doing TSI work is to use Tordon RTU in a handaxe frill on tree species, and to use 2, 4-D amine in fuel oil as a basal spray on multiflora rose and prickly ash. Tordon RTU can also be applied to cut stumps and vine stubs to prevent sprouting.

When using chemicals, don't just read the label — make certain you understand the label. Follow the instructions

and precautions, and use the minimum amount required. Wear rubber gloves when using chemicals, even if the label does not specify such a need.

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ASCS Lists 1982 Cost-Share Programs

By Craig Wambold,
ASCS CED

The Tama County ASCS Committee has received an allocation of \$67,600 for fiscal year 1982. These are regular ACP (Agricultural Conservation Programs) practices chosen by Raymond Ryan, Donald J. Upah, and Norman Draper (County Committee). Applications must be approved before any work is started, to be eligible for cost-share payment.

1982 highest priority conservation practices are: 1. Seeding (establishing Permanent Vegetative Cover

(sc-1) 75% of cost. 2. Contour Farming (SC-13), \$6 per acre. 3. Strip Cropping Systems (SC-3) on the contour \$6 per acre. 4. No-Till Farming System (SC-15) only 10% of the surface disturbs from planting till harvest, \$10 per acre. 5. Establishing a Windbreak (SC-7) 50% of cost up to \$6 per tree/\$.50 per shrub. All practices must be designed by Soil Conservation Service, Wildlife Biologist or District Forester (depending on the practice) except the No-Till Farming Systems.

Area Farmers must sign up at the Tama County ASCS

Office before construction of a practice to qualify. The County Committee will then either approve or disapprove the practice, on a priority basis, and each farmer will be notified when he has been approved for cost-sharing. We suggest that farmers make their applications early as the money is limited.

Barb Hempy is the ACP program assistant in Tama County. She is responsible for taking the applications to the County Committee for approval, referring them to the Soil Conservation Service for technical determination, process-

sing the applications and making payments. Barb and her husband Brian live north of Montour. Brian farms in partnership with his father, Robert Hempy, and brother, Craig. Brian and Barb have two boys, Jason, age 11 and Jared, age 7.

Medium Priority Conservation Practices for 1982 are: 6. Terrace Systems (SL-4), 50% cost sharing. 7. Diversion Terraces (SL-5), 50% cost sharing. 8. Water Control Structures (also for sediment retention and erosion control) WP-1), 50% cost sharing. 9. Permanent Wildlife Habitat (WL-1), 50% cost sharing. 10. Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife (WL-2), 50% cost sharing.

The Lowest Priority 1982 Conservation Practices are: 11. Forest Tree Plantations (FR-1) 10 acre minimum, 75% cost sharing. 12. Forest Tree Improvement (FR-2) 10 acre minimum, 75% cost sharing.

The Toledo (Iowa) Chronicle Saturday, February 27, 1982—Page 9A

13. Improving Seeding (Improving Permanent Vegetative Cover), 75% of cost. 14. Sod Waterways (WP-3) 40% cost sharing. 15. Critical Area Seeding (Permanent Vegetative Cover on Critical Areas) (SL-11), 75% cost sharing. 16. Stream Bank Protection (WP-2), 40% cost sharing. 17. Ponds (Water Improvement Reservoirs), 40% cost sharing. 18. Animal Waste Control Facility (WP-4), 10% cost sharing.

Each practice may be funded for only part of the cost, as decided by the County

Committee in view of the entire conservation problem at each location, up to a maximum rate of \$3,500 per practice. Farmers are urged to sign up now at the Tama County ASCS Office, 203 West High (across from the Post Office) in Toledo.

Please Note: The percent shown above is the share the government invests in the conservation work. This share is an incentive for the farmer to complete the long term protective work now, rather than in future years.

Tama County Farmers Earn \$338,384 For

Conservation Work

by Craig Wambold, CED
During the past year, one hundred forty farmers have decided to do conservation work, with assistance of our regular A.C.P. (Agricultural Conservation Program) here in Tama County. \$87,236 was paid to farmers who did urgently needed conservation work on their farms last year. These lands owners and/or operators put up a total of about \$100,000 in their money, labor and time in order to qualify for cost sharing.

The "4-Mile" Creek Special Conservation Project cost shares paid north-western Tama County farmers \$251,048 during 1981. This four township watershed area in Lincoln, Grant, Spring Creek and Crystal Township has been cancelled with completion of conservation work on the 69 farms where work was done last year.

Local Department of Agri-

culture committees and staff are pleased with the momentum started in 1979. The conservation work that was started can now be continued with the farmers in the watershed. Since the first funding of the accelerated conservation activity, ASCS had allotted \$730,000 for incentive payments to farm owners or operators interested in applying a practice. By this time, the appearance of the area has improved dramatically. Very noticeable are new grassed waterways, wind-breaks, several kinds of ponds and terrace work. The interest shown by area farmer cooperators has been terrific. These farmers usually are put in the situation of sacrificing some cropland use for one year so that the conservation practice can be built. So in addition to paying for part of the work, they are losing some farm land production.

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Soil Conservation Awards Presented

The highlight of the Tama County Soil Conservation Award Banquet at King Tower Cafe in Tama January 25 was a slide presentation of conservation methods at the Gladbrook farm of Bud Bruene.

Bruene received the Iowa Conservation land-lord, tenant, and overall soil conservation award for this 12-county area.

The banquet was hosted by John Nicholson of the Soil Conservation Service.

Other Iowa Conservation Awards went to Loren Mehaffy of Lincoln in the new cooperator or conservation farmer division and Martin Bruene of Gladbrook and Bill Tessau of Lincoln in the owner-operator division.

Two awards were given to Friends of Conservation. This is an award given to area people who have contributed a lot to the local conservation movement.

The first went to Dave Podhajsky of rural Clutier. He has promoted the no-till method of farming for the past nine years and has been instrumental in promoting the practice through conversation and tours.

Traer John Deere dealer Kent Holst was also a winner of this award. He provided a no-till planter to the district for use by area farmers last year and has worked closely in promoting soil conservation.

The Izaak Walton wind break award went to rural Traer farmer Ferd Kvidera. Nicholson told of the effective wind breaks employed at the Kvidera farm and how it has helped.

The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. Soil Conservation Award went to Chester Coffman of rural Chelsea. This was for the soil conservation practices that he has already applied on his farm.

In the area of the essay contest with the topic: "Soil Conservation-A Sound Investment," Gladbrook High School Senior Janeen Chamberlain, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Chamberlain, captured both the senior county division of ninth through 12th grade and the regional award.

Second place in the senior division went to Jim Haan, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Haan of Toledo.

First place winner in the junior division, sixth through

eighth grade, went to Becky Bartsch, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dick Bartsch of Toledo. Second place went to Maria Morris, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Morris of Tama.

The first place winner in each division of the county level received \$40 and second place \$30.

Following the awards, Mrs. Shirley Franklin's South Tama Enrichment Program (STEP) students gave a presentation on their efforts to get a bill through the Iowa Legislature to "Save Our Virgin Prairie Land."

The bill is Senate File 2015 and is due to be introduced by State Senator Emil Husak of Toledo. The students are enlisting the efforts of other students around the state to write their state legislators and support the bill.

Nicholson said that there is even a possibility of prairie land on the Sells farm north of Toledo and students will be studying that further in the spring.

EROSION

Continued From Page 6A

severely eroded area had a stand that was only 76 percent of the planting rate while corn growing on the soil with little erosion had a stand that was 87 percent of the same planting rate. The corn yield was 25 bushels per acre less on the severely eroded soil than on the ground with little erosion.

What can a producer do to maintain soil productivity on his farm?

"On sloping land all available residue should be left in the field," says Miller. "Incorporation of crop residue into the soil, especially on eroded soils, is the key to maintaining soil productivity."

The rate or organic matter buildup in the soil depends on the amount of organic matter present and the kind and amount of crop residue available. "If a producer starts a residue program on soils low in organic matter — less than two percent — he should observe a sizable increase in the percentage of organic matter in the soil within five to 10 years, Miller says. "Increases in organic matter content for soils already having four percent or more organic matter will be very slow."



Corn plants popping through the residue under the no-till

system last spring. Estimates are that nearly 50 Tama County farmers experiments with no-till last spring.

How To Select A Contractor

Contractor Selection

Who should I get to build my terraces? Who's a good reliable tiller? Question's similar to these are asked by

area farmers each year. And they should be. No two contractors are exactly alike.

Perhaps the three most important items for considera-

tion include: 1) quality of work, 2) prices charged, and 3) reliability.

Quality of Work

The finished product must

meet government specifications when the landowner expects to receive financial aide from government programs. This fact is true regardless of what agency is involved.

There may be some hidden concerns here that a consumer should be aware of relative to this. For instance, government agencies don't necessarily monitor the construction while in progress to regulate the time spent on the job, the efficiency of the operator, or whether the job is "polished and neat."

Some contractors will only do enough to meet the minimum standards. Others are more conscientious.

When not part of a government program, the quality of work must be strictly worked out between the consumer and the contractor.

Prices Charged

Not all contractors charge for their work in the same manner. Some charge by the hour. This simply means that if it takes 12 hours to do the job, they'll charge accordingly.

Others will charge by the job. For instance: so much a foot or some other unit of measurement.

And still others may use a combination of these two methods.

Many contractors will give a landowner a bid or estimate on how much the proposed job will cost. Some will stick to this estimate throughout the construction process. Others may not. An estimate may not always guarantee the final cost of the project. This will depend upon the contractor and the arrangements made.

Reliability

There are at least four considerations that help to determine reliability: 1) construction starts on the date promise, 2) construction is finished according to schedule 3) once construction is started,

CONTRACTOR

Please Turn To Page 13



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Discuss Terrace Systems

Which terrace system will work best on my farm? This question is often asked of the office staff by farmers who have decided to build terraces. They are asking for an explanation of the three types of terraces generally built in Tama county: broadbase (BB), grass backslope (GBS) or narrow base (NB). These three types are almost always built as tile outlet terraces. However, each could also be graded to put water into a grassed waterway, if a waterway is already there.

The choice of what type of terrace to build is generally made after discussing cost, area removed from crop production, method of construction and farmability. The farmer's objectives on field arrangements and size of equipment are also very important. These items, along with a discussion on available cost-share programs, usually provides a farmer with enough information to make a decision.

Both the state and federal cost sharing programs will be at the same rate this year, 50%. The only difference will be in the size of the project. The federal program, ACP, has a payment limit of \$3500 per year, while there is no limit established for the state program.

The type of terrace selected will sometimes be dependent on the complexity and steepness of slope. While it is permissible to build BB terraces on 8% slope they are not laid out on slopes greater than 4-5%. This is mainly due to the increased cost of building the long backslopes and increased steepness of the back slope.

BB terraces normally cost the most on a lineal foot basis

because of the quantity of earth placed. NB terrace normally cost the least because it takes less earth to build and usually can be completed by using just a dozer. GBS terraces fit in between. BB and GBS terrace usually require the use of a dozer and scraper. Borrow areas are generally used and the earth transported a short distance to the terrace location.

On steeper land 5 to 14%, the choice is just GBS or NB. Because the usual construction procedure in building GBS terraces tends to flatten the farmable and between terraces, the maximum slope to build GBS terraces is set at 18%. Obviously, the steeper the land slope the longer the backslope of each terrace and the more area removed from

production.

Farmability of the terraces is important. All terrace layout today is intended to keep parallel spacings between terrace lines.

One of the most important differences, and advantages of NB terraces, is the placement of the tile inlet riser. With NB terraces the riser is placed next to the steep front slope. Tillage and planting are done along the front edge of the terrace. The riser does not protrude into the cropped area.

Terrace systems offer one of the next effective and permanent means of saving soil. Each year more and more farmers are turning to this single practice. Estimates indicate that terraces can reduce erosion by as much as 90 percent.



The picture above is an example of a contractor replacing topsoil over a "borrow" area during the final stages of terrace construction. Three types of terraces are generally built in Tama county and include the broadbase, the grass backslope and narrow base.

Workbook To Highlight Conservation Issues

The Tama Environmental Education Committee is presently developing a conservation workbook. The workbook is aimed for use by sixth grade students across the county.

The workbook is being developed to highlight local conservation issues and solutions. It is anticipated that this project will be completed in early March and be available for distribution to county schools soon thereafter.

Subject matter will include sections dealing with plants, wildlife, soil conservation, water quality, etc.

Other activities organized by the Tama Environmental Education Committee include the soil conservation essay contest held last fall. And the annual conservation field day for fifth grade students held each May in the Otter Creek County Park.

This April the committee also plans to distribute a "free" tree to each sixth grade student for planting in conjunction with Arbor Day.

The following people serve on the committee: Bob Kurtz, Bob Etzel, Bob Mullin, Dan Bruene, Dorothy Laufer, Shirley Franklin and Irv Meier.

Conservation Tillage Is Thrust Of FARM Conference At ISU

A comprehensive program of soil conservation tillage information has been organized for the 1982 Farm Agricultural Resources Management (FARM) Conference March 17-18 at Iowa State University. Speakers include Iowa Governor Robert Ray, U.S. Senator Roger Jepsen and several state and national convention officials.

Two sessions will be held each day, under the theme "Making Conservation Tillage Work for Farmers," according to program co-chairmen Min Ameniya, ISU extension agronomist, and Stewart Melvin, extension agricultural engineer. The conference will be held in the C.Y. Stephens Auditorium at the Iowa State Center.

The conference will open at 9:30 a.m. March 17. Lee Kolmer, ISU dean of agriculture and director of the Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experiment Station, will outline the conference objectives.

Throughout the four sessions, ISU extension specialists will present information on their areas of expertise relating to conservation tillage. Extension experts include Garren Benson on cropping practices, Richard S. Fawcett on weed control, Harold Stockdale on insect management, Robert F. Nyvall on disease control, Robert W. Jolly on economic considerations, David Foster on insect

management, Regis D. Voss on fertilizer management and Gerald A. Miller on soil adaptability.

Other first-session presentations include: "Where is Agriculture Headed?" by Michael D. Bohelje, ISU professor of economics; soil erosion and productivity by William E. Larson, head of the soil science department at the University of Minnesota; obstacles to soil conservation by Peter J. Novak, ISU assistant professor of sociology; an urban view of soil conservation by Larry Green, Midwest bureau chief for the Los Angeles Times; farm equipment for the 1980s by Fred C. Stickler, market planning director for Deere and Co., Moline, Ill.; and how to get more conservation on the land by Charles McLaughlin, Britt farmer.

The morning session will close with an address by Gov. Ray.

Keynote address for the afternoon session will be presented by William R. Oschwald, director of the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Illinois. His 1:15 p.m. address is entitled "Why Conservation Tillage?" and will be followed by a discussion of full-width tillage systems by a panel of specialists.

Other afternoon speakers are: William W. Jackson, manager of tillage and planting equipment, Deere

and Co., on equipment considerations; Donald R. Timmons, U.S. Department of Agriculture soil scientist, on fertilizer management; and farmer considerations by Keith Hora of Riverside and George Groves of Webster City.

The second day of the conference is on National Agriculture Day (March 18). It begins at 9 a.m. with an address of Sen. Jepsen. A discussion of strip tillage systems will follow.

Morning session speakers include: William C. Moldenhauer, director of the USDA's National Erosion Laboratory and professor of agronomy at Purdue University, on erosion control; Wesley F. Buchele, ISU professor of agricultural engineering, on equipment; Joseph E. Burris, ISU professor of plant pathology, on cropping practices; Gyles W. Randall, University of Minnesota soil scientist, on fertilizer management; and Damon Bahnson of Inwood and Dan Stadtmueller of Monticello on farmer considerations.

The final session will deal with slot tillage, or no-till systems and begins at 1:15 p.m. March 18.

The closing address, "Where Do We Go From Here?" will be presented by West Des Moines agricultural consultant Chet Randolph.



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MARSHALLTOWN

SCD 1981 Booster Club Provides Funds

The Tama Soil Conservation District is a non-profit organization that has responsibility under state laws for carrying out a county-wide soil and water conservation program.

As such, the Tama SCD receives money from the state to aid in their programs. While this money is certainly put to good use, it isn't enough to complete all the work that commissioners of the SCD would like to do.

To help raise funds for use in promoting conservation, the Commissioners once again organized in 1981 a "Booster Club" and asked people to donate money to the district. Actually the club then is a simple listing of those who have participated.

Those who are friends of conservation and have been kind enough to donate money to the district are listed below. It's with their help that the conservation movement is growing larger each year.

Peterson Contractors Inc., Reinbeck; Frank Train Farm (Midland Mgt.), Cedar Rapids; Farm Bureau Service, Toledo; Lewis Dvorak, Clutier; Wilmer Meek, Tama; Louis Kacer, Tama; Donald Davis, Tama; Lorensen & Beale

Lumber Co., Garwin; Paul Svoboda, Clutier; Joy Ann Farm, Clutier; C. Merle Vaughn, LaPorte City; Elsie Duffus, Brooklyn; Henry Sieh, Traer; R. Farms Inc., Elberon.

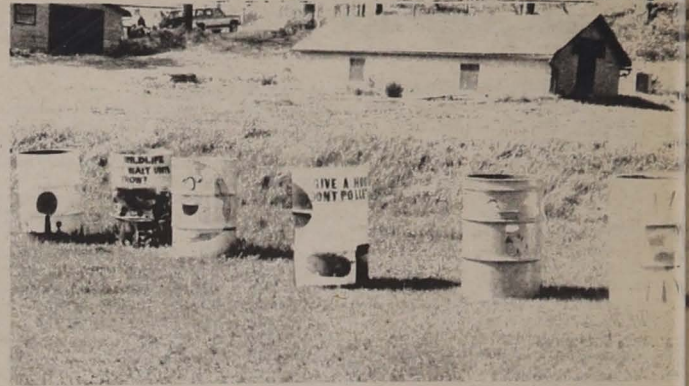
Wallace McMillan, Traer; Dorothy Sawyer, Lincoln, Neb.; Ruhl & Ruhl Realtors, Davenport; Herman Lucht, Garwin; Leonard Soucek, Traer; Amy J. O'Halloran, Traer; Mildred Anderson, Traer; Kenneth Gethmann, Traer; Don and Donna Wolfgram, Traer; Joy Weiler, Traer; Ed Hooper, Gladbrook; Ernest Lau, Gladbrook; Kenneth Bruene, Gladbrook; Don Kurth, Tama; Forrest Ambler, Gladbrook; Donald Dahms, Gladbrook; Doane Agricultural Agency, Ankeny; Robert Smits Farm (Hertz Farm Mgt.), Nevada; Gary Johnson, Gladbrook; Breakenridge Farms, Inc., Reinbeck; Farmers Cooperative, Gilman; Clarence Sears, Gilman; J. Clark Scurr, Gilman; Dysart State Bank, Dysart; Purdy Trust Farm, Hertz Farm Mgt., Nevada.

James McCutcheons, Cedar Falls; Field Tile Service, Melbourne; Farmers Mutual Ins. Assoc., Traer; Morris Bruene, Gladbrook; Bernard Shaw, Tama; Emil Hala,

Clutier; Lake and Park Holding, Gladbrook; Lawrence Brezina, Tama; Gene Barker, Reinbeck; Dennis Yuska, Traer; Steve Pippert, Clutier; William Podhajsky, Traer; Norman Holub, Buckingham; Vernon Dengler and Son, Traer; Loren Luethje, Gladbrook; Jannette Cold, Gladbrook.

Stanley Delfs, Riverside, Ca.; Richard Denbow, Gladbrook; Don Schmitz and Sons, Washburn; Lloyd Chyma, Tama; Security Savings Bank, Gladbrook; Gary Lamb, Chelsea; R.P. Young, Jr., Traer; Heckt Farms, Inc., Grundy Center; Mrs. Janet Van Horne, Davenport; Cornell College Farm, Hertz Farm Mgt., Nevada; Tom and Morris Dinsdale, Traer; Storyland Farm, Inc., Hertz Farm Mgt., Nevada; Dale Roseland, Gilman; Franklin Bro, Toledo; Jack Ramsey, Gladbrook; David McMillan, Traer; Edna Paton, Reinbeck; Stoddard Farm, Hertz Farm Mgt., Nevada; Ross Sharp, Gladbrook; Federal Land Bank, Marshalltown; Grinnell Implement Store, Grinnell; Levine Company Inc., Des Moines; Harry Scurr, Gilman.

Robert Malin, Tama; Clayton Sienknecht, Gladbrook; Ralph Crawford, Traer; Sky Farms Inc., Traer; Bohemian Mutual Ins. Assoc., Tama; Charles Bruene, Traer; Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Toledo; Nedra Neville, Toledo; David Arends, Toledo; Marvin Zimmerman, Toledo; Lee Judge, Garwin; Twin Cities Insurance, Toledo; Evelyn Mansfield, Belle Plaine; John Erickson, Traer; Wayne Downey, Reinbeck; LaVern Eckhart, Gladbrook; Adolph Bruene, Gladbrook; George Bruene, Traer; Larsen Properties Inc., Gladbrook; Sylvan Ames, Lincoln; Harvey Burd, Waterloo; Dale Gerlach, Toledo; Ray Berner, Traer; Vernon Pohlman, Clutier; Harold Wright, Ames; Betty Benda, Tama; Eunice Rueppel, Green Bay, Wisc.; Charles Dolezal, Toledo; Eldo Hagedorn, Garwin; Gerald Eernisse, Toledo; Marshalltown Savings & Loan, Marshalltown, Toledo; Joe Dostal, Traer; Leonard Vorba, Traer; Clayton Sienknecht, Gladbrook.



A few of the "trash" barrels entered in the annual conservation trash barrel contest here each year at the fifth grade field day. The barrels were judged on originality and participation and were placed in the Tama county park.

Iowa Till Project Has Good Start

The Iowa Till Project around Otter Creek County Park got off to a good start this year. The project is intended to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality on a small watershed basis, in this case around a county park lake.

Sixteen farmers signed contracts with the Iowa Department of Conservation to do mulch or minimum tillage on 1,876 acres in the Otter Creek watershed. The sign ups were made through the Tama Soil Conservation District with the office staff providing assistance to get the farmers started correctly and to certify

their progress.

These contracts will be maintained for five years. The conditions of the contract are that the farm operator agrees to; treat the same acres each year, do all soil disturbing activities on the contour, and provide 50% ground cover by crop residue after planting.

Fifteen of the 16 original signers qualified this year with very good results. Percent of ground cover by crop residue averaged 55 to 60% with one field measuring 85% soil cover. Farmers may have been assisted in retaining crop residue on the field surface due to the dry weather during the fall and spring of 1980-81.

Normal chisel — disk operations may not have cut and covered residue as during other years.

Major concerns in being able to keep a 50% residue cover will be to; keep tillage operations to a minimum, plant corn varieties that produce a high volume of stalk, control livestock grazing, consider using no-till planting on bean stubble and other low stalk volume fields, and rely more surface applied herbicides to control weeds.

The Tama SCD is very pleased with the cooperative approach of these landowners and their willingness to make change in their farming techniques. We wish the every success in their efforts help reduce soil erosion and improve the water quality of Otter Creek Lake and Otter Creek.

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Wildlife Need Your Help

By Bob Kurtt
Wildlife Biologist

The winter of 1981-82 will be remembered for a long time by area residents. The month of January was unbelievable with storm after storm pounding the area with heavy snow, high winds and sub-zero temperatures. The severe weather was hard on people, livestock and wildlife. Numerous reports of dead pheasants were received in my office. The overall impact of the severe weather on our wildlife populations may not be fully realized for some time. Wildlife surveys this coming spring and summer will shed some light on the question of "How bad was it?"

But one important observation does remain clear after the recent severe weather. In local areas where we had good quality habitat, most wildlife species did survive. The big problem is that age-old dilemma, the fact that we are losing more and more good habitat areas each year. We have been sailing along just fine the last two winters, which were quite mild with only light snowfall. Then we were hit with a good ol' Iowa winter with heavy snow and high winds. We learn the lesson over again that marginal or poor cover areas

just don't do the job in severe winters.

Comparison of 1939 and 1972 aerial photographs from 27 counties in northcentral Iowa (Iowa's traditional pheasant range) revealed a 76% decline in good quality pheasant nesting cover and a 33% decline in winter cover. The changes in land use and intensive row crop farming are responsible for these declines.

The same habitat losses are occurring in this area. Each year more fencerows are bulldozed, small woodlots are cleared, and trees and brush are removed along creeks and waterways to plant more crops. If we expect to have wildlife around in the future, we must stop this habitat destruction and act now to preserve the remaining habitat.

During blizzard conditions, tall dense vegetative cover that effectively stops snow drift and greatly reduces wind-chill is essential to wildlife survival. Large, multi-row farmstead windbreaks with dense, low-hanging branches are a necessity. Windbreaks consisting of only one row of shrubs and one or two rows of trees may be good enough in some years, but in winters like this one they simply do not provide enough

cover for wildlife. Four and five row windbreaks (or more) are much better, both in terms of winter cover for wildlife and also in energy savings for the farmstead. You might consider adding a row or two of shrubs to the outside and a row or two of pines or spruces to the inside of your windbreak. It will vastly improve the overall effectiveness of the windbreak.

Odd areas that cannot be farmed because they are cut off by a creek or located on steep hillsides make excellent wildlife areas. These areas can be planted to trees and shrubs to provide wildlife habitat or can be left alone to develop into native shrubs and timber areas. These types of areas do not have to be large tracts of land to attract and hold wildlife. One or two acres on the back forty can do wonders for local wildlife populations.

Farm pond areas are excellent sites to develop into wildlife habitat because the area around the pond should be fenced to protect the dam and shoreline from erosion. A variety of trees, shrubs and grasses can be planted in this area to beautify the landscape and provide the diversity that is so important to wildlife.

Along with the lack of adequate winter cover in many



A good example of winter cover for wildlife is this wild plum thicket along a county gravel road. Wild plum provides excellent resting areas, protection from avian predators, and nesting sites for songbirds.

areas, another limiting factor for pheasants and other wildlife is the lack of suitable, undisturbed nesting cover. Hayfields, oat fields, pastures and road ditches provide good nesting cover for ground-nesting species. But mowing of hayfields and road ditches in early June results in severe nest losses and hen mortality. Delaying hay mowing until after the pheasant nesting season is over is impractical for the farmer. However, use of switchgrass for warm-season hay and pasture greatly reduces nest disturbance in June. Switchgrass is a native, warm-season grass that comes on strong in July and August when cool-season grasses are dormant. It provides good nesting and roosting cover for pheasants as well as many other species of wildlife.

Lack of food rarely becomes a limiting factor to Iowa pheasants. However, fall plowing and deep snow (like we experienced this winter) can certainly reduce available food supplies. Fall plowing has been reported to reduce the amount of available waste grain in a picked cornfield from more than 200 lbs./acre to about 15 lbs./acre (more than a 90% reduction). Many concerned farmers and landowners have turned to feeding pheasants, deer, turkeys and other wildlife. The State Conservation Commission is not in a position to be involved in a statewide winter feeding program, but we are not against interested groups or individuals feeding wildlife. However, there are some important points to remember if you are interested in winter feeding in years to come:

1. Do not feed along roadways or other areas that could increase mortality.
2. Food should always be placed close to winter cover.
3. Once started, the feeding program must be continued until the weather breaks (usually an extended period of above-freezing weather).
4. Do not worry about grit. Pheasants and quail can retain previously-ingested grit for ten or more weeks.
5. Do not overreact. Pheasants can go for long periods of time without food; lose up to 40% of their body weight and still recover; and sustain themselves on low-quality foods.
6. If available, ear corn is much better than shelled corn.

In conclusion, severe weather can result in dramatic, short-term fluctuations in wildlife populations, but long-term trends in wildlife numbers reflect the quality and quantity of the habitat. Start planning now to leave a place for wildlife — they need your help.

Tax Incentives For Tree

Planting

Landowners with marginal farmland or areas subject to excessive erosion can plant trees while minimizing costs through tax savings under a federal law enacted in 1980.

Bill Farris, assistant state forester with the Iowa Conservation Commission, said the tax incentive legislation provides for a 10 percent investment tax credit that is subtracted from taxes owed. It also permits seven-year amortization on \$10,000 each year of capitalized reforestation expenses. This cost is subtracted from gross income over a seven-year period to compute adjusted gross income.

Farris said these tax incentives will benefit small timberland owners even if they do not itemize deductions.

To qualify for the tax incentives, reforestation costs must be incurred on qualifying timber property. Qualifying

timber property is at least one acre in size and used for timber production. Shelterbelts, windbreaks and ornamental trees do not qualify.

Qualifying expenses are direct costs, including site preparation, seeds and seedlings, labor and tools for planting.

In determining eligibility for the investment tax credit, the useful life of a tree is considered to be its normal growing period. If a tree has a normal growing period of seven years or more, for example, it would qualify for the full 10 percent investment credit. If the growing period is less than seven years, the investment credit would be less than 10 percent under the same investment credit rules that apply to other assets.

CONTRACTOR

Continued From Page 10A

full attention is given until finished, and 4) construction is done in the most efficient manner possible and the final product will be of high quality.

With these thoughts in mind, in selecting a contractor it is therefore suggested that consumers: 1) consider quality of work, prices, and reliability, 2) view work previously completed by contractor, 3) talk with past clients of contractor, and 4) shop around. Having a signed agreement prior to the start of the project between the landowner and contractor may also help avoid any unexpected surprise upon completion of the project for either party.



Eastern Red Cedar, one of the best native tree species for wildlife. Provides excellent winter cover with branches close to the ground. Also provides top-quality nesting cover for mourning doves.



An example of good wildlife habitat. This brushy cover along a ditch provides important winter cover for pheasants, rabbits, deer and many different songbirds. Nesting cover is also found here in a grassy strip between the ditch and the cornfield.

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County Farmers Use SCD

Planter For No-Till Trial

Eight farmers rented a no-till planter last spring and planted 173 acres on a trial basis. The planter rental was arranged by the Tama Soil Conservation District with Ray Holst Inc. of Traer. The planter, a John Deere 7000 max-emerge conservation planter, was set up on four 38 inch rows with ripple coulters. Farmers requested use of the planter by placing their names on a sign-up list at either the SCD or Extension offices. Those farmers were: William Tessau, Gary Boldt, Gene

Zhorne, LeRoy Thomsen, Harry Scurr, Dick Bruene, John Dvorak and Mark Roetz.

Russell Lyon, local farmer and past ASCS Executive Director, was hired to schedule the use of the planter, see that it was delivered to the scheduled farmer on the date desired, and to help the farmer get the planter hooked to his tractor. Russell was our on-the-spot answer man to handle all the questions these farmers had about what would or wouldn't work. Some common problems were in setting the coulters pressure for the field condition, driving slow enough to let the planter work, and trying to use the marker when old rows were not followed. As farmers graduate into no-till planting, some of these change-over situations are no longer problems.

As a general rule, these eight farmers had reasonably good success. Available soil moisture and timeliness of rains determined whether they had good germination and effective herbicide action. The same weed and insect conditions were experienced by other farmers using other planting methods. They found that no-till can work and most are planning to do some more this year.

It is estimated that 42 Tama county farmers planted from 3,000 to 4,000 acres of row crop in 1981 using the no-till method. No-till is a planting method that maximizes the retention of crop residue on the field surface while minimizing soil disturbance in planting the seed. This is an

economical and quick method of getting soil loss under control on an individual farm basis. We expect that there is also cost savings in fuel and labor.

For 1982, sign up lists are in the SCD and Extension office in Toledo for those who want to try no-till planting. We encourage you to sign up early so that enough requests are committed to ensure a planter can be made available.



This planter was made available for rent through the Tama SCD last spring. It was provided through the conservation support of the Ray Holst John Deere dealership at Traer. Two farmers rented the planter last spring. Bud Lyon delivered the planter and helped each farmer get started.

National Resource Monitoring

Congress decided in the mid-60's to start a land resource monitoring program to identify and catalog the type of land resources this nation was blessed with. The objectives were to identify how land was being used, what was its potential for agricultural use, and were there problems of soil erosion. The information gathering process is to be updated every five years. During 1981-82 this update work is being done in all counties in Iowa.

Information is gathered from a sampling of 160 acre land tracts scattered around each county. The statistical laboratory at ISU developed the process of randomly selecting these "primary sampling units." In Tama County there are 90 PSUs. This 3% sample of the total county area will be expanded to represent the total county situation.

The Soil Conservation Service has the responsibility of making the field observations and recording the information. About one-half of the PSUs have been studied, the remainder will be looked over before mid-June.

Some of the data recorded is; identification of soil type, present use of land, potential conversion of non-cropland areas to cropland, conservation practices presently being used, is further conservation efforts needed, does present land use benefit wildlife, rural areas in urban-built up, etc.

This land monitoring effort will be the most comprehensive analysis of what this nation has available for agricultural production. It will also indicate the degree that increased development can be expected along with the cost to put and keep land into crop production. As urban areas occupy more of the good cropland acres, the cost to produce the same bushels of crop on less productive land goes up. Future government programs supporting agriculture will use this analysis to justify the direction and coordination of efforts to protect this land resource base.

The Soil Conservation Service will be making field observations this spring in the eastern one-third of the county.



Commissioner Harry Scurr, rural Gilman, examines the seed placement after planting corn into this corn field. This was one of Harry's first attempts with no-till.

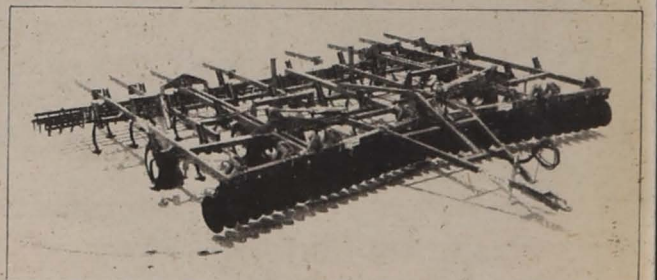


Ron Hersom, SCS, and Harry Scurr, rural Gilman, discuss planting techniques before Harry's first trips across his fields

under no-till. Harry was using a no-till planter provided by Ray Holst Inc. of Traer to the Tama SCS last spring.

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Grade Schoolers

Participate In Project Arbor Day

Three hundred and fifty Red Pine seedlings were divided among the grade schools in Tama County as a tree planting project for sixth graders. The Education Committee for the Tama Soil Conservation District promoted the project with the District buying the seedlings.

This promotion of tree planting by grade school students was a first for the SCD and the Education Committee. All responses were good with requests to continue this type of project each year.

Each school handled the tree planting in a somewhat different way. In some schools one or two seedlings were

slipped into a plastic bag and given to the students to plant at home. (The plastic bag was to help retain moisture around the tree roots). Some teachers gave tree planting demonstrations to show students how easy it is to plant seedlings. Many of the trees were planted as community beautification projects. One school planted their trees as a block planting on the school ground. This area will be cared for as an environmental area for student study.

A similar program is planned for this spring. Plans are to distribute an "American Chestnut" tree to each student.

Congressman Cooper Evans reviews a monitoring device on the 4-Mile Creek with SCD chairman Dan Bruene and Commissioner Harry Scurr. A short tour was given to the

congressman to explain the importance of the 4-Mile Creek Watershed Research Project and ask for his assistance.

No Funds For 4-Mile Project

The 4-Mile Creek Watershed Research Project, as originally funded by the Environmental Protection agency is apparently dead, a victim of the continuing change in program and budget priorities. The original project planned to gather research data in soil and water runoff and measure the effects of conservation practices in improving water quality. Funding was provided to ISU to do research, and to the county ASCS committee to administer cost-share money for installation of conservation practices.

While the need for additional land treatment and farmer interest is still high, future accelerated activity will likely be from a different approach.

Money needed for cost sharing could be allocated through ACP as special project funds but this is also unlikely during a period of restricted budgeting. Today cost share requests will be considered in the normal county cost share programs administered by the ASCS and Tama SCD.

Despite the short life (2 years) of the 4-mile project there were tremendous accomplishments in application of conservation practices. The following numbers of farmers have applied these practices:

Terraces, 41, \$93,950 ft.; diversions, 1, 1,000 ft.; waterways, 43, 106,015 ft.; ponds, 2, 2 no.; contour, 22, 1,834 ac.; no-till planting, 4, 293 ac.; conservation tillage, 69, 6,034 ac.

SCD Sponsors

Essay Contest

This year the annual soil conservation speech contest was changed to an essay contest with contest rules sent to each Junior and Senior High School in Tama county last fall. The essays were judged in mid October with winning essays advancing to Regional and State levels in early December.

The essay topic for 1981 was "Soil Conservation — A Sound Investment." This year's winners in the Senior Division were: 1st place to Janeen Chamberlain, Gladbrook; 2nd place to James Haan of South Tama. Junior Division winners were: 1st place to Becky Bartsch, South Tama; 2nd place to Maria Morris, South Tama. The Tama SCD provided the prize money for the local contest while Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company

provided contest awards for the regional and state contests. Miss Chamberlain also was the top winner in the 15 county area of east-central Iowa.

The Tama SCD wants to extend our thanks and appreciation to the school administration and teachers. Without your help and guidance this contest could not get off the ground. Also a big thank you to the parents for their encouragement. The quality of essays received this year were truly outstanding.

Productivity Expert

Even with the U.S. farm population on the decline, farm productivity continues to rise. Productivity growth in farming has been five times greater than the non-farm sector over the past five years. One American farm worker now supplies enough food to fill the needs of 68 people around the world.



Second place junior division essay contest winner Marie Morris receives her certificate from Commissioner Dan Bruene.

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Tama

LeRoy Thomsen Tries No-Till Method

"I like no-till and if I continue with the type of results I got last year, I will give a lot of thought to going with greater acreage each year," said LeRoy Thomsen.

Thomsen tried no-till for the first time last year on three fields, approximately 40-45 acres, of corn and beans. On two fields, Thomsen planted corn on corn. The third field was planted in corn last year then sewn to rye in the fall, the silage harvested in early May, and planted to beans.

Thomsen planted the corn April 29 and the beans May 23. He used the John Deere conservation planter available from the Soil Conserva-

tion District. Row width was 38 inches and population was 24,000.

Thomsen used 150 to 160 pounds of anhydrous ammonia and used the same rates of fertilizer as he did on his other fields. Round-up was used on the corn on corn ground at a rate of one quart per acre.

Atrazine and Lasso were applied right after planting at rates of 2½ pounds per acre of Atrazine and 2½ quarts per acre of Lasso.

A small area of one field was infested with cutworms, but was not treated. Although the stand was thinned a little, Thomsen said this did not affect the yield greatly.

Only one field of corn was cultivated once; the rest were

not touched until combined in the fall.

The beans did get some spot spraying with Hoelen to control grasses. Spraying was only necessary in an area next to the farmstead.

Thomsen noted he actually had better yields than with conventional methods, but added there may have been other factors such as the planting date. The bean yield was not officially checked but it appeared to be "real good" on the lower ground, he said. But, where the higher ground was a little dry, yield was down about two or three bushels.

If the SCD has another planter available this year, Thomsen said he may try the



The LeRoy Thomsen farm was one of the stops last summer on a no-till tour sponsored by the Soil Conservation Service, County Extension Service and Soil District Commissioners. Here John Nicholson of the SCS discusses the no-till method used on Thomsen's farm as well as various other fields in Tama County.

same amount of each crop under the same conditions this year. On the fields planted to corn last year, one was fairly heavy with residue while the other had been grazed down by cattle in the winter. While the results were about the same, the field with heavier residue had a slight advantage in yield, he noted.

Thomsen said he hates to see any dirt leave the farm. He has practiced conservation methods besides no-till including terraces on several of his fields. While most were built in the last three years, one was built about 17 years ago. Most of the rest of his ground is disked and planted. Planting is down on the contour where he feels it is necessary. Some strip cropping has also been used in the past.

Thomsen cited a definite savings in labor and fuel. And, if yields maintain or increase, he said he feels no-till has enough advantage to be used over the older methods.

Tour Shows Benefits Of No-Till Method

About 60 people participated in a no-till tour sponsored by the Soil Conservation Service, County Extension Service and Soil District Commissioners last summer.

Six fields, all examples of no-till practices were observed. The tour included a bean field and a corn field on the Dave Podhajsky farm near Clutier; Podhajsky has been practicing the no-till method for eight years.

The tour started out at Willer Ag Service, Toledo, and the first stop was Bud Willer's corn field just north of town. Other stops included the LeRoy Thomsen, Franklin Bro and Richard Linhart farms.

A demonstration of how a residue measurement is taken was done also. Local resource people said there should be at least a 50 per cent residue level at planting time and it is hard to get 50 per cent without going with the no-till method.



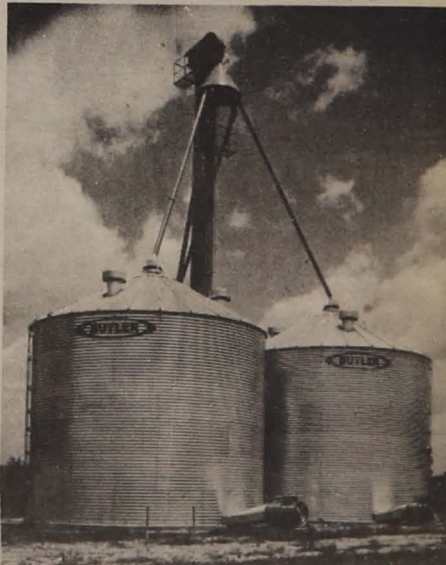
Mrs. Frank Squiers, Toledo, and John Nicholson, soil conservation service, discuss soil conservation alternatives on the family farm this last fall.



The local soil conservation service staff includes from left: Ron Hersom, soil conservationist, Ken Ruhnke, state aide,

Audrey Wheeler, clerk, Ray Drewlew, conservation technician, and John Nicholson, district conservationist.

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