

1-30-84

HOW DO I REDUCE EROSION?

By Norman Brus, Soil Conservationist
Delaware Soil Conservation Service

Most crop acres in Delaware County are losing soil at a rate that far exceeds the rate of which mother nature replaces it. Unless we do something to reverse this trend, our topsoil will slowly disappear.

When the topsoil leaves, productivity will go with it. A recent erosion study shows a 46 bushel decrease (153 bu. vs. 107 bu.) on a soil with 10 inches of topsoil versus the same soil type with only 3 to 6 inches of topsoil remaining. There is a further decrease in fields when there is less than three inches of topsoil left.

A "Soil Loss Analysis" is the first step in trying to eliminate erosion. The Soil Loss Analysis will tell you what your current erosion rates are, what areas of your farm has the greatest erosion and what areas are within soil loss tolerances. Current erosion rates are figured using your current rotation and tillage methods.

The second part of the Soil Loss Analysis deals with what should be done to get soil losses at or below the rate of which nature replaces soil. Whenever possible, these alternatives will allow the farmer to raise the crops and livestock that he wants to. Alternatives may be as simple as leaving some extra residue on the surface or farming on the contour. On steep or long hills, adding meadow to the rotation, constructing terraces, or a combination of practices may be needed.

If you have a Soil Loss Analysis developed for your farm, you are not obligated to implement the alternatives listed. As the owner or operator of the property you make the final decision on any practices that are implemented.

Developing a Soil Loss Analysis involves only an hour or two of the farmer's time. This time is used to obtain some basic information such as present tillage, rotation, and future plans for the operation. With this information, a Soil Conservationist then walks over the farm to obtain slope and soil information. This can be done alone or with the farmer if the farmer wants to accompany him. After this, soil losses and alternatives can be calculated and discussed.

If you wish to find out how much erosion is taking place on your farm or would like some assistance in controlling your soil losses so that you can maintain the productivity of your farm, attend the Soil Erosion Workshop sponsored by the Extension Service on February 8 at 1:00 p.m. in the Farm Bureau meeting room in Manchester. If you are not able to attend this meeting and would like some assistance, contact the local Soil Conservation Service office at 927-4590 or stop in for a visit at 721 South 5th Street in Manchester. Our services are free and without obligation.

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*Good promotion
by a soil
conservationist*

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List tips on how to reduce soil erosion

Most crop acres in Delaware county are losing soil at a rate that far exceeds the rate of which mother nature replaces it. "Unless we do something to reverse this trend, our topsoil will slowly disappear," says Norman Brus, soil conservationist with the Delaware County Soil Conservation service.

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A "Soil Loss analysis" is the first step in trying to eliminate erosion, Brus said. The analysis will explain the current erosion rates, what areas of a farm has the greatest erosion and what areas are within soil loss tolerances. Current erosion rates are figured by using current rotation and tillage methods.

The second part of the Soil Loss analysis deals with what should be done to get soil losses at or below the rate of which nature replaces soil. "Whenever possible, these alternatives will allow the farmer to raise the crops and livestock that he wants to. Alternatives may be as simple as leaving some extra residue on the surface or farming on the contour. On steep or long hills, adding meadow to the rotation, constructing terraces, or a combination of practices may be needed," said Brus.

"If you have a Soil Loss analysis developed for your farm, you are not obligated to

implement the alternatives listed. As the owner or operator of the property you make the final decision on any practices that are implemented," he continued.

He said developing a Soil Loss analysis involves only an hour or two of the farmer's time. The time is used to obtain some basic information such as present tillage, rotation, and future plans for the operation. With this information, a soil conservationist then walks over the farm to obtain slope and soil information. This can be done alone or with the farmer if the farmer wants to accompany him. After this, soil losses and alternatives can be calculated and discussed.

Farmers who wish to find out how much erosion is taking place on their farm or would like some assistance in controlling soil losses so they can maintain the productivity of their farm are encouraged

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