

CHEROKEE COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

1945

INTRODUCTION

The Soil Conservation District serves the whole of Cherokee County(16 townships). Soil and water conservation is the basic problem with one township (Marcus) having many drainage problems.

The goal of the district is a soil and water conservation plan in operation on every farm in Cherokee County.

District Activities During 1945

Conservation Plans

Forty farmers developed conservation plans with district assistance during 1945, reaching the goal of 40 set for the first year of operation. These plans include a total of 9,234 acres(about 14¹/₂ sections).

The following farmers developed conservation plans for their farms during the year:

Cedar Township

Irven Porter(Dot McGee, operator)

Amherst Township

Lester Briggs
Arthur Dorr
Peter Grauer

Cherokee Township

Knox Montgomery
George Turner(Wm. Turner, Opera-
Fred Rupp tor)

Tilden Township

Alfred Schmillen

Pitcher Township

Eric Carlson
Eric Gustafson
Ralph Peterson
Dolquist Bros.(Clifford Bruce,
Op.)
Dan Hankins(Geo. Johnson, Op.)
Nester Stiles,(Joe Fell, Op.)
Frank Waddell(Geo. Johnson, Op.)
Mrs. Eva Wilson(Clifford
Bruce, Op.)

Silver Township

W. H. Bischel(Carlson &
Johnson, operators)
Harvey Droege Miller
F. O. Mortenson
John Ihms
Oscar Gustafson
Mrs. Ida Nelson(Mortenson, Op).

Afton Township

A. B. Callender
(Oliver Schnell, Op.)
Ralph Kludas

Pilot Township

W. H. Bischel(Guy Akers, Op.)
J. H. Clow(Milo Clow, Op)
P. M. Peterson(Paul Peterson, Operator)

Grand Meadow Township

F.W. Althaus(Herbert Althaus, Op.)
J. Ford Ralston
Ralph Robison

Willow Township

C. C. R. Bush(J. H. Soper, Op.)
J. Ford Ralston
Ralph Robison

Rock Township

Gilman Fee
Howard Fee
Frank Kohn
Robert Olson
W. H. McWilliams
(Chas. Perry, op.)

- - - - -

Progress in Establishing Conservation Plans

The 40 initial district cooperators have made progress in establishing their soil and water conservation plans by:

- contouring 1,768 acres
- constructing $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of terraces
- seeding 6 acres of new permanent pasture
- seeding 62 acres of headlands and turn rows
- seeding 34,484 lineal feet of grassed waterways
- contour plowing 557 acres.

Also much progress has been made in re-arranging fields so as to fit the contour which in many cases meant removal of straight fences and refencing on the contour.

Other Farmers Assisted:

In addition to the cooperators named on the previous pages, 107 other farmers were assisted in:

contouring 5,942 acres
constructing $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of terraces
contour plowing 950 acres

Conservation Surveys

Conservation surveys were completed on 8710 acres during 1945.

Work With Schools in The County

A contour school was conducted for the benefit of the Cleghorn High School Agricultural class in April. This consisted of one period of classroom instruction and one period of field instruction. Twenty students and their instructor attended the school.

The Sound motion picture "The River" and "Once Upon A Time" (both excellent conservation films) were shown at the Quimby and Grand Meadow High Schools during the month of December. The total attendance was 185.

4-H Club Work in The County:

The soil conservation district had an exhibit at the county 4-H fair.

Two boys in the county submitted soil conservation reports for entry in the contest sponsored by the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company. One of these boys, as his entry, had developed a complete soil and water conservation plan for his father's farm. He later brought this into the district office and his father is now a district cooperator.

The county 4-H committee has designated soil conservation as the special 4-H activity for the coming year.

War Food Production Meetings

At the invitation of the County Extension Director the district took part in the War Food meetings held in January, February and March and explained the part soil conservation could play in food production. Twelve meetings were held with a total attendance of 196.

Farm Planning Meetings

Seven meetings were held in the county during the year to discuss farm plans, giving farmers a clearer idea of what is meant by a farm conservation plan; 46 farmers attended these meetings.

Terrace Demonstration

One terracing demonstration was held in the county in August to demonstrate methods of terrace construction using a disk tiller. There is considerable interest in terracing and several farmers have ordered disk tillers.

Township Meetings

Through the assistance and cooperation of the County Extension Director and the County Farm Bureau, the sound motion picture "The River" and "Once Upon A Time" were shown at township meetings in five townships during December. At each meeting a short discussion was presented on district activities. A total of 166 attended these 5 meetings.

Cover Crops

The district had experimental cover crop plots on two farms in the county during 1945. Where seeded in soybeans at the time of the last cultivation, Wild Rye and Rye and Vetch developed good stands and considerable growth. Both show promise as cover crops but more work is needed before any recommendations can be made. The district feels that if further experimental trials are to be carried out that they should be on a larger basis; covering plots of one to two acres in size. If this were done, it would be possible to obtain much more information on the value of cover crops. Some work is also needed in designing simple and adequate equipment to seed cover crops.

Forage Trial Plots

In the spring of 1945, several forage trial plots were seeded on the state hospital farm. These were put in by Dr. Baake, plant pathologist, assisted by the County Extension Director. Several plots of brome mixtures including different legumes were seeded. Good stands have been secured. Dr. Baake plans to make yield determinations on the various grass and legume mixtures. Results of these trials will be followed closely as such information has a direct bearing on soil conservation programs recommended in Cherokee County.

Commercial Fertilizer

The district assisted the County Extension Director in establishing experimental plots to check the effect of nitrogen fertilizer as a side dressing for corn. Observations indicate yield increases, especially on thin soils. The outstanding difference noted was the improvement in the quality of the corn harvested. The manager of the Farmer's Coop. at Cleghorn stated; that from observations on two farms, the quality was increased one grade.

Due to the increased interest in and demand for commercial fertilizer the district has found that more information is needed so that recommendations can be made that will enable farmers to reap the largest possible benefit from applications of commercial fertilizer. Mineral deficiencies have been observed in scattered parts of the county with calcium and phosphate apparently the most prevalent.

Contour Listing

There is a good deal of interest in contour listing. During 1945, the experiences of many farmers in the county with contour listing was not too satisfactory. Because of this the district has requested the Experiment Station to set up three corn planting method demonstrations in various parts of the county. The district hopes to obtain information comparing listing with other methods of planting and also obtain recommendations on listing practices.

Weed Control

The district feels that weed control is an integral part of a sound soil conservation program and that special emphasis must be placed on it in this county.

Experiments conducted by the County Extension Director in this county indicate that the weed killer known as 2-4D is at least as effective as sodium chlorate. It also has an advantage in that it does not leave the soil barren and subject to erosion. Stock should be made available and more information obtained as to its effectiveness and the best time of application.

The Cherokee County Farm Supply Co. is stocking this weed killer, primarily for experimental use.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Cherokee County Farm Bureau - the district wishes to express its appreciation of the assistance rendered during the past year by this organization. It should also be noted that the Farm Bureau planning committee and board of directors wrote in their program for 1946 that soil conservation was to be one of the two major projects designated for special emphasis.

Extension Service - the district is indebted to our local county extension director for the help he has given in getting the soil conservation program under way. He has not missed an opportunity to promote the use of soil conservation practices in his work and contacts. During the rush season last spring his office was of great help in handling requests for assistance.

AAA - the county AAA organization has done much to promote the use of soil conservation practices in this county; they have consulted with us in attempting to work out a sound soil conservation program for the county. Members of the county committee are very much interested and all have installed soil conservation practices on their farms. They inform us that according to their records, about 22,000 acres of row crop was contoured in the county in 1945.

Newspapers - the district appreciates the assistance the newspapers have given us by publicizing the work and program it is striving to establish in this county. It is worthy of note that Cherokee County business men have run ads in local papers supporting the district program.

OUTLOOK

The district feels that the proposed Little Sioux Valley flood control program presents a challenge and an opportunity. It is a challenge to get as much conservation on the land as possible because that is the only way in which the flood control program can be made to operate effectively.

It is an opportunity to extend our program in this county more rapidly because of the increased emphasis that will be placed on soil conservation in the Little Sioux Valley.

SUBMITTED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE CHEROKEE COUNTY SOIL
CONSERVATION DISTRICT:

/s/ C. C. Martin, Chairman

/s/ Louis C. Bengston

/s/ James R. Fee