

ANNUAL REPORT

IDA COUNTY, IOWA SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1946

DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Henry Dall, Chairman	Battle Creek, Iowa
Edw. C. Perion	Ida Grove, Iowa
J. B. Scott	Danbury, Iowa

SECRETARY

Donald H. Dodge, Extension Director, Ida County

TECHNICIANS

Kenneth H. Burnett	Soil Conservationist
Robert B. Hollins	Conservation Aide

ANNUAL REPORT OF 1946
IDA COUNTY, IOWA SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

This report is divided into two parts, namely activities where the Ida County Soil Conservation District was primarily concerned, and activities of other agencies and organizations operating within the boundaries of the District. It must be considered, however, that no one agency was the sole factor in the acceptance and application of any practice. In most cases such acceptance and application was the result of activity of many agencies all working together with one taking the nominal lead. Any reports of accomplishment listed below must be considered in this light since it is impossible to separate the spheres of influence of such organizations as the Extension Service, AAA, Soil Conservation Service, and others.

Flood, drouth, and other extremes of nature have accelerated the need for the application of control measures. The practical farmer has felt the need and is ready to study and act as never before. Consequently the time is ripe for organized activity to accomplish much of a material nature. Increased educational work is needed to keep interest alive, mold opinion, and to develop good practices.

Activities of the District

The District obtained from the Soil Conservation Service, the assistance of a full time farm planner in March of this year, and of a Conservation Aid in April. The services of these two men have materially increased the rate of application of conservation practices on the farm lands in this District. Further increase along this line is anticipated as planning and application policies and procedures are worked out and embodied in the district work plan.

During the Calendar year of 1946, twenty five farm conservation plans have been completed. The contents of a plan is shown in Exhibit A, attached. Where applicable all of the twelve points set forth therein, with the exception of terracing (Practice No. 6), are usually accepted by the prospective cooperator and incorporated in the plan. This form of a Plan Of Conservation Operations has proved a rapid and effective means of setting out such a plan with a minimum of clerical help. A cropping plan is also included to assist the cooperator in establishing an adequate crop rotation. The most popular rotation in this district at this time is the three year rotation of row crop, grain, hay or pasture.

Changes in land use planned in the first twenty-five agreements are shown in the attached Exhibit B. Although only five of the plans were completed before all of the 1946 crops had been planted, conservation practices in the amount indicated have been applied as a result; Contour planting 332 acres, Terracing 2 miles, Grassed waterways 3200 square yards. In addition to those practices already applied the plans call for the following practices to be installed as "rapidly as funds and resources will permit;"

Contour planting-----	2730 Acres
No burning crop residues-----	3106 Acres
Crop rotations-----	3100 Acres
Seeding permanent hay-----	202 Acres
Seeding rotation hay-----	3042 Acres
Deferred grazing-----	743 Acres
Mowing grazing land-----	636 Acres
Rotation grazing-----	222 Acres
Seeding pastures-----	61 Acres
Shaping & seeding waterways-----	376000 Sq. Yds.
Fence construction-----	4250 Rods
Terracing-----	10.8 Miles

During the year, conservation surveys were prepared on 20679 acres of Ida County land. These surveys were, and will continue to be, used as basis for farm planning.

Among others, the technicians of this district have made forty-two contacts with Ida County farmers which have resulted in these farmers planting some or all of their crops on the contour. Most of these contacts will ultimately result in complete farm conservation plans when the required watershed group interest has been developed. More of this type of work is contemplated from the coming year, to spread interest in Soil Conservation, and to hasten its application on the land. Many additional contacts have been made with interested land owners both in the field and in the district office with regard to proper methods of shaping and seeding grassed waterways, correct crop rotations for maintenance of soil fertility and control of erosion.

The Commissioner's of this district have spent much time this year in meetings with the Commissioners of other interested districts to establish policy and procedure to be followed in cooperating with the Little Sioux Flood Control Project. In as much as there is no precedent for such a type of cooperation, the deliberations of this group were time consuming and it is hoped that much of the work they have accomplished can be used as a guide by other groups in setting up similar projects elsewhere in the nation.

During the year the District has held three meetings resulting in the organization of four groups for the purpose of combating soil erosion both as individuals and as groups. There are 62 interested land owners and operators in these groups organized on a watershed basis. These meetings were held in cooperation with the County Extension Director. Most of the farm planning has been done with members of these groups since it is felt that:

- (1) Planning in this manner is more efficient
- (2) Once an individual has received assistance in farm planning, he loses much of the incentive to exert influence on his neighbors to accept the principals of conservation farming.
- (3) An individual who hesitates to accept these principals will be more readily converted if his farm is completely surrounded by farms where good soil conservation is practiced.

Regardless of the fact that many other calls and contacts have not resulted in any tangible planning or application of soil conservation, still it is felt that these calls were worth while if the technician who made the call has been able to impart new information or to correct misinformation.

The Anniversary Meeting, held last March, was a success with more than 175 land owners and operators attending. It is anticipated that this annual meeting will become an established institution in this District.

Activities of the County Extension Director

The County Extension Director, Mr. Donald H. Dodge, has assumed leadership of all Soil Conservation information and education activities in this district. He has been very active in this field and by assuming this leadership he has relieved the technicians so that they could spend more of their time on planning and application work. His services along this line have proved invaluable during the past year.

He made more than 100 office calls and farm contacts resulting in farmers taking definite action for soil conservation, such as contour planting, grassed waterways, pasture improvement and the like. In addition, soil conservation information was imparted and misinformation was corrected in connection with other office calls and farm visits.

Each of the nine 4-H clubs in the district took part in the Harvey S. Firestone Foundation project for soil conservation education. One of these 4-H club members won a \$50.00 savings bond in statewide competition of soil conservation essays. The winner, Stanley Kirkholm, is the son of a District cooperator.

Every township Farm bureau club in the county has held one meeting on soil conservation. More work with these groups is anticipated for next year. The development of much of the interest in soil conservation resulting in requests for assistance can be traced to these meetings and similar meetings held previously. As mentioned above three group development meetings were held during the year, resulting in the organization of four watershed groups, including 62 interested farmers. The total attendance at the meetings was 57. The assistance of Mr. John Maddy, Assistant State Extension Soil Conservationist, has proved very helpful in this connection.

Sixteen township schools on contour planting and one terrace construction demonstration were held during the year. Total attendance at the schools was about 95, and at the terrace demonstration 20. Reluctance to accept terracing as a practical means of erosion control indicates that much additional educational work will be necessary along this line. Fifty five subject matter information kits were prepared and distributed to rural school teachers in the county. This should do much to impart correct information to farm people. In addition to nine news releases made by the District through the County Extension Director, the latter has kept Soil Conservation in front of the public by frequently mentioning it in his weekly farm column, released to all Ida County newspapers.

Activities of the Ida County Agricultural Conservation Association (AAA)

This organization has released the following tentative report for the 1946 crop season:

Contour Planting-----	6267 Acres
Seeding Waterways-----	722111 Sq. Yds.
Tile Drains-----	501 Rods
Earth dams (small)-----	267545 Cu. Yds.
Seeding Permanent Pasture-	1250 Acres
Lining-----	1194 Tons
Fertilizing-----	253 Tons
Green manure crops-----	23154 Acres

These accomplishments include some of those indicated for other agencies above. However, all of the active members of this organization have been influential in obtaining active farmer participation in the soil conservation program.

Activities of the Ida Grove Commercial Club

The Ida Grove Commercial Club sponsored a ten acre corn yield contest, one class of competition being for contour planted corn. It is interesting to note that the highest yield of all entries was a field of contoured corn planted on broms sod. The yield was 155 bushels per acre.

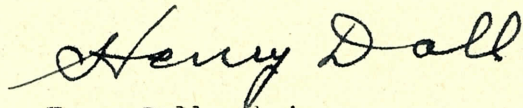
Activities of the Ida County Board of Supervisors

The Ida County Board of Supervisors is now cooperating with one of the District Cooperators on the construction of a riser on a road culvert for gully control. In the past this type of cooperation has prevailed where it has been requested by the land owner. The Board has expressed the desire to continue with this policy where funds will permit.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Space will not permit the naming of all groups to which this District is indebted for assistance and cooperation. However, it is desired to name the following organizations in addition to those set forth above and to express appreciation for all assistance rendered:

Ida County Farm Bureau
Soil Conservation Service, Research and Operations Division
Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station
Ida County Superintendent of Schools
Iowa Agricultural Extension Service
Production and Marketing Administration
Galva Tribune
Holstein Advance
Pioneer Record (Ida Grove)
Battle Creek Times

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Henry Dall". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Henry Dall, Chairman
Ida County Soil Conservation District

OWNER _____ PLAN NO _____

OPERATOR _____

PLAN OF CONSERVATION OPERATION

The following are general provisions which help to make a good Conservation Plan. A special effort will be made to follow the practices which are underlined.

1. Perform tillage operations on the contour, where practical.
2. Mark all field divisions.
3. Mark all contour guide lines.
4. Establish and maintain all waterways in sod.
5. Use grass headlands where adapted.
6. Terrace the fields adapted to terracing.
7. Use crops and crop rotations suited to the capability of the soil and to the farm business.
8. Not burn cornstalks, stubble, straw, or similar material.
9. Follow the principles of good pasture management, some of which include:
 - a. Use Legume and Grass mixtures in establishing new pastures.
 - b. Allow grass to make a reasonable growth before pasturing in the spring.
 - c. Graze heavily during the growing season, and use supplementary or rotation pastures in mid-summer to relieve permanent pasture.
 - d. Clip pastures to prevent weed seed maturity and to encourage more uniform grass and grazing.
 - e. Renew a part of old pasture land each year by seeding with a legume.
 - f. Allow a reasonable growth to remain at the close of the grazing season.
10. Develop woodland and wildlife areas on suitable places.
11. Plan structures for gully control.
12. I will help my neighbors and community to understand my conservation plan and will encourage them to follow conservation methods.

Exhibit "B"

LAND USE COMPARISONS ON THE FIRST TWENTY FIVE FARM PLANS

Ida County Soil Conservation District

Land Use	Before	After Planning (acres)				
	Planning :(acres)	Cultiv- : ated	Perman- : ent Hay	Orchard	Pasture	Miscel- : laneous
Cultivated	3419	3072	198		149	
Permanent Hay	27		27			
Orchard	2			2	3	
Pasture	648	52			596	
Miscellaneous	237				3	234
Totals	4333	3124	225	2	748	234
Net Change		-295	+198		+100	-3

Soil Conservation District
ANNUAL REPORT OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

DISTRICT Ida County, Iowa Soil Conservation District, Ida Grove, Iowa
(Name) (Headquarters of Dist. Gov. Body) (State)

Period March 18 1946 to December 31 1946

ACTIVITY		This Year	To Date
Educational Meetings	Number	25	25
	Attendance	407	407
Tours	Number	0	0
	Attendance	0	0
Demonstrations	Number	17	17
	Attendance	115	115
Leader Training Meetings	Number	0	0
	Attendance	0	0
Exhibits	Number	0	0
Radio Talks	Number	0	0
News Articles	Number	29	29
Information Kits to School Teachers	Number	45	45