

ANNUAL REPORT - 1951



LOST SOILS • LOST SOILS

CEDAR COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
STATE OF IOWA

TIFTON, IOWA

OFFICE PHONE 385

During the 1940's production of food increased by 25%, while our population increased by 20,000,000. Several things have contributed to this increase in production. We have added nearly 60,000,000 acres by changing over from horses and mules to power machinery. Hybred seed corn and nearly rust resistant small grains have contributed their share of the increase and helped to lull some of us to sleep on the productivity of our soil, for it has been demonstrated that by cutting off the top inches of soil the corn yield is cut by 6 bu. per acre. We should give credit to an increased use of fertilizer, legumes, pasture renovation, contouring and other soil conservation practices.

What is there to help step up food production during this period of unsettled times when our population is increasing at a size equal to the state of Iowa each year? We, the Commissioners, feel that we cannot expect to get necessary increase in food production without putting each acre to its best suited purpose. Much of this increased production will have to come from the poorer land using better rotations, fertilizers properly applied, with terraces and contouring where needed.

Administration

The administration of the Cedar County Soil Conservation District was carried on by the commissioners with the assistance of the Soil Conservation Service and Extension Service personnel through regular and special meetings. The district was also assisted by members of the State Soil Conservation Committee.

In addition to the regular commissioners meetings the commissioners attended 4 interest and several farm planning meetings; also assisted in conducting demonstrations and tours for farm people.

The commissioners have to the best of their ability, budgeted the funds available from the State of Iowa. The \$500.00, or 1 A budget which allots equal amounts to each district, was partially expended as follows: prizes for contest on Soil Conservation, posters and display material, film and newspaper mats, pictures, postage and commissioners mileage. Total of \$459.33 was expended. The 2 A budget, or funds for extra technical help and equipment, is set up on a new basic by district. A total of \$339.42 was expended for equipment, clerical and technical assistance.

District Activities

The district's activities were quite varied and were carried on with assistance of Soil Conservation Service and Extension Service personnel. The activities being carried as part of the district's program of work.

Conducted regular monthly business meetings as part of district administration, reviewed and approved Farm Conservation Plans and requests for assistance.

Interest meetings (4) were hold for purpose of explaining district's program and policies, and problems, benefits and methods of adopting and practicing soil and water conservation practices to the land.

Special educational meetings (6) for farm groups to explain conservation practices along with their adaptations. Also presented material on harvesting, storing and utilization of high quality forages.

Assistance to G.I. and Vocational Agriculture classes in form of class room discussions and field trips. Also demonstrations.

Two 1-day short courses were held in winter of 1951 to discuss use of fertilizer, rotations, seeding mixtures, cultural practices and yields. Also forage harvesting methods of storing and utilization of forage crop through livestock.

Exhibits on conservation work were used at County Fair and local merchants, etc.

Scrap book contest on soil, water and wildlife conservation was sponsored for grades 4 through 8. Interest was very good.

Participated in inter-district activities.

Conducted farm tours and demonstrations for farm people to better acquaint them on (1) need for conservation, (2) methods & results and (3) training in how to lay out practices by themselves.

Educational & Informational Activities

The educational activities of the district were carried out with assistance of the Soil Conservation Service and Extension Service and directed toward the advancement of a sound soil and water conservation program.

	<u>No.</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Interest meetings	4	44
Educational meetings (farm groups)	6	195
Farm planning	8	57
Vocational Agriculture	2	75
G. I. Agriculture classes	1	25
Films	3	245
Short Course	2	75
Tours	1	65
Exhibits	3	
Schools	2	75
Business & Civic	1	43
Radio	2	
News releases	34	

Progress

The district's main objective remains that of getting "Soil Conservation applied to the Land of Cedar County Farms". This the district feels can be accomplished through the development of Farm Conservation Plans with proper application of needed conservation practices. Also to assist as many as possible with starting practices such as contouring and grassed waterways, as a starting point toward the development of complete conservation plans. In the end to raise yields on a per acre basis and at the same time make a deposit in our Soil Bank.

During the year, 51 Farm Conservation Plans were developed making a total of 182 district cooperators given assistance. Also 68 farmers were given assistance with the application of one or more practices. In addition 44 farmers were contacted as a part of A.C.P. program of which 16 actually applied or installed one or more practices. Thus a total of 294 farmers were contacted or worked with out on the land. Total of 685 persons were reached through meetings and office calls.

Application of conservation practices as part of district efforts in 1951.

✓ Contour farming	2986 acres
✓ Strip cropping	137 acres
✓ Pasture improvement	140 acres
✓ Farm ponds	3
✓ Terraces	0.6 3168 L. Ft. <i>per</i>
Farm Drainage	190 acres
✓ Tile	75607 L. Ft.
✓ Open drainage ditch	1 mile
✓ Waterways constructed	3.2 miles
✓ Establishment of field boundaries	2605 rods
Improved rotation	7994 acres
Soil Surveys	13068 acres

Working Relationship

The district finds itself with additional responsibility and obligations under the reorganization and coordination of agriculture agencies as set forth by Secretary of Agriculture Brannan.

The technical assistance assigned to the district by the Soil Conservation Service has in addition to carrying out the district's program, also the responsibility for site inspection, surveys as needed, supervision of installation and certification for technical correctness on permanent type practices of A.C.P. program. Thus we find it necessary to curtail some of our activities in order to permit SCS to fulfill their additional responsibility.

It is, however, believed that with more clarification and better understanding of conservation needs, and a closer working relationship with county and township P.M.A. committeemen in adjusting work loads and proper notification of where and when work is to be done, that more total conservation will be accomplished.

District Equipment

The district has a whirlwind terracer for use by district cooperators and others in shaping waterways, constructing terraces, drainage of pot holes and construction of small drainage ditches. Equipment available on rental fee basis. Contact either one of the Commissioners or SCS office, Tipton - phone 385.

District also has been working with local contractors in surveying, staking and checking of construction on farm ponds, gully work and tile drainage.

Problems in Conservation Farming??

1. Consideration be given to longer term loans for purchase of Bangs tested beef and dairy cattle in place of one year loans on livestock. This would aid in utilization of roughage (meadow crop), a part of conservation farming.
2. Wider use and adaptation of longer term leases. Leases to be adapted to conservation program.
3. Further consideration be given to meadow crop as part of soil building program. More information needed on the value of a 2 ton meadow crop left on the land.

Looking Ahead for 1952

Our 1952 objectives are very similar to 1951 in that every effort will be made to aid a maximum number of Cedar County farmers to meet the demand for production. This production to be met insofar as possible without unnecessarily depleting our resources for future years. Motto to be "Farm for tomorrow and not just for 1952".

The district to stress the following to achieve maximum long time production.

1. Higher acreage of clean tilled crops (corn & beans) on the contour. State tests show that contouring of corn increases yields up to 7 bu. per acre.
2. Reduce soil & water loss through the establishing of more permanent type conservation practices as terraces and strip cropping.
3. Encourage establishment & use of good quality forages as a means of raising crop yields and overall production.
4. Improving of permanent pastures for higher production. This could be the place for extra corn acres in 1952.
5. Present cooperators to encourage their neighbors to start farming the conservation way.
6. Make greater use of local committees to assist the district toward carrying out a soil and water conservation program.

Acknowledgements

The Commissioners wish to acknowledge the assistance given to the Cedar County Soil Conservation District by the Soil Conservation Service and their staff at Tipton, along with the local County Agriculture Extension Director. Also wish to recognize the assistance rendered by the following organizations and agencies in assisting with the soils work in Cedar County. These being P.M.A., Voc. Agriculture, State Conservation Commission, Farm Loan Association, Farm Bureau, Production Credit, rural and urban schools and local civic and commercial organizations. Also we wish to express our appreciation for the fine cooperation and assistance received from the Banks in carrying out our program.

Commissioners

Arnold Meier, Clarence, Iowa
George Kiser, Wilton Junction, Iowa
Wm. Wertzbaugher, West Branch, Iowa