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DAVIS SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT - 1956

Davis County Soil Conservation District Commissioners:

Dale Blackwell - Chairman
Harold Baughman - Commissioner
P. W. Spilman - Commissioner

County Extension Service:

William Byers, Co., Extension Director

Work Unit Staff:

Clay C. Barnett, Work Unit Conservationist
Jack D. Chamberlain, Conservation Aid

Eugene Francis, Conservation Aid
LaVern Weilbrenner, Conservation Aid
Larry Harper, Conservation Aid

LoRetta Jarvis, Clerk

We have always had the feeling that our annual reports are far in adequate to give the true picture of our accomplishments, as well as the benefits which will be derived from careful planning. Planning, current and long time, farming operations in a way that will stabilize the income producing ability of the farm.

Under the stimulation of a challanging war need of patriotism, and of price, farms underwent a rapid change. Some of these changes were of great benefit to agriculture. Now, we must learn to live with them - good or bad. This is a new challange of an entirely different set of rules. One of declining prices of products we produce and the ~~stable of~~ increasing price of products we must purchase.

Probably one good rule for following, would do more thinking and less doing until our appetite catches up with our production.

If it was only as simple as mowing the lawn, or trimming the hedge, or just gathering some of the 20 cent a dozen eggs, it would be wonderful, except there would be no profit in it.

So, in the report, you will find no standards to go by on how big or small your farm should be, nor how many acres of cropland you should have. But, a few conservation accomplishments are necessary either way.

When we get too big, we don't have time, when we are too small, we don't have the money. But, when we are just right, we spend the winters in the South. All of these conditions have their good and bad points.

Now, we have the farmers in all three of the above categories, doing a good job of conservation of soil and water. For example, in 1956, by pond construction, over 200 surface acres of water were added to Davis District's total. Of course, it must rain. And another 1350 acres of cropland are now protected by standard terraces.

We invite you to read between the lines as you review the 1956 Annual Report and get a real picture of the job you soil conservation district is doing.

CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

<u>PRACTICE</u>	<u>UNIT - 1956</u>	<u>TO DATE</u>
Contour Farming	(Ac) 378	32, 487
Strip Cropping	(Ac) 30	3, 306
Brush Control	(Ac) 167	1, 341
Pasture Planting	(Ac) 465	9, 307
Fencerow Improvement	(Rod)	413
Hedgerow Planting	(Rod) 800	6, 070
Wildlife Area Imp.	(Ac) 445	1, 135
Drop Inlet Structure	(no) 21	33
Land Smoothing	(Ac) 100	549
Pond Construction	(No) 245	850
Tile Drains	(Lin Ft.)	28,650
Diversion Construction	(Mi) 12.4	43.7
Open Drain	(Mi) 3.0	35.3
	(Cu.yd.) 15890	17,650
Farm Drainage	(Ac) 190	3066
Terraces	(Mi) 88.7	198.0
Waterway Development	(Ac) 70	183.0
New Cooperators	(NO) 53	
	(Ac) 10610	
Basic Farm Plans	(No) 32	388
	(Ac) 7333	78565
Revised Farm Plans	(No) 3	
	(Ac) 501	
Soil Surveys run	7210	145.012

Over 746 Davis County Farms were serviced and many of these, three or four times during the year or while conservation practices were being applied.

DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS' ACTIVITIES

1956

There were eleven regular business meetings, held by the Soil District Commissioners, during the year, as well as several special meetings.

The District, again, held the four-day conservation school, that has been held for several years.

Davis County Soil Conservation District was featured along with Wapello District, in the March issue of Iowa Soil and Water Magazine. This magazine printed many fine pictures and stories about Conservation work being done in Davis county.

A meeting was held with all the earth moving contractors that usually work in the County. This meeting was held for the purpose of explaining new techniques and procedures in constructing conservation practices. Also, technical requirements which must be met to qualify for payment under the ACP program.

A tour of Honey Creek Watershed, in Lucas County, was conducted by District personnel, and District Commissioners, with farmers from Wyacondah and Chequest Watersheds attending. Those making the tour were: Walter Dixon, Dale Dixon, Teddy Dixon, Walter Grim, Lowell D. Grim, Ernie Younkin, Jack Finley, Vern Randolph, Commissioners, Spilman, Baughman, Blackwell and SCS personnel, Clay C. Barnett, and Jack D. Chamberlain.

Stewardship Sunday pamphlets were sent to all ministers of the county prior to Stewardship Sunday.

Davis District furnished material and colored slides for use at the Ottumwa Sport Show, held at the Coliseum.

Twilight tours were held with both the Rotary and the Lions Club, with supper being served at the Wesley Chapel, and the Pulaski Methodist Church.

On December 12, 1956, the District Commissioners and the ASC Committee visited and inspected conservation practices on the following farms:

Robert Evans, structure (permanent), and terraces
Mrs. Minnie Emanuel, permanent structure, terraces
Dale Blackwell, waterways, drainage, and terraces
Ed Amstutz, waterways, pond and terraces
Cleo Rinkenburger, waterway, pond and terraces
Alvin Baughman, waterway, terraces, and contouring
Chas. Harsch, waterways, terraces and structure site
Earl Trachsel, waterways, ponds, terraces, diversions
Gene Grim, waterways, terraces, structure site
Russell Wuthrich, waterways, terraces, diversions
Richard Birchmier, waterways, pond construction, terraces
Dean Burton, waterways, structure, and terraces.
Don Harris, pasture seeding
Alvah Davis, waterways, terraces
Ray Luko, waterways, terraces
C.O. Harris, structure
Galen Cook, structure, contour strip cropping
Dewey Harper, structure, past, seeding, terraces
Milton Goodson, pond
Mildred Baker, waterways, terraces.

This tour gave the ASC Committee their first full day observation of the benefits of the cost-sharing program. While much work was observed that has been completed, the job yet to do became much more obvious and important to all who made the tour.

QUEEN OF THE FURROW CONTEST

Davis County held a "Queen of the Furrow Contest" with first and second place winners going to the Regional Judging Contest, held in Oskaloosa, Iowa. The contest was held at the Pulaski Centennial Celebration, with Miss Donna Payne placing first and Miss Velma Biles placing second.

SOIL CONSERVATION CONTEST:

The District again, entered the Des Moines Register and Tribune Soil Conservation Contest. Winners of this contest were:

Division I	Earl Trachsel
Division II	Burchette and Daughtery
Division III	Grover Gillaspie

We are proud to state that Earl Trachsel was also the regional winner of the Division I Contest and that he was entered into State judging. This makes the third year in a row, that Davis County has had a regional winner in Division I. This contest has been sponsored in the County by the Bloomfield Newspapers, and the winners were presented plaques by Keith Hawk, Editor.

CONSERVATION FIELD DAY:

On October 4, 1956, the District, cooperating with the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce, held a 10 county area plowing match and conservation field day, on the Dean Burton And Jack Finlay and Mrs. Elsie Finley Farms. They were also responsible for conservation work done on the Walter ^{Grim} and Vern Randolph Farms. Approximately 3000 people attended the Field Day and witnessed the contour and level land plowing contest as well as the installation of all the needed conservation practices on 480 acres of land.

4-H CONTEST:

The District sponsored a 4-H Soil and Water Contest during the year, and presented prizes to the three winners at the 4-H Achievement Night. The winners of this contest were: Gorge White, Doran Bollman, and Eddie Bachman.

James Melvin, Iles Heady, and Ed Amstutz served as a Nominating Committee to nominate a candidate for Commissioner, to fill the expired term of Commissioner, Dale Blackwell. Lionel Herteen, of West Grove, and Dale Blackwell, of Bloomfield, wer nominated, with Dale being re-elected.

The Annual Meeting of the District was held at the Christian Church, in Bloomfield, November 15, 1956, with Wayne Pritchard, Executive Secretary of the Soil Conservation Society of America being the main speaker. At the Annual Meeting, the District presented awards to three farmers for outstanding work doen this year. They were: Barton Cary, Ed Amstutz, and Robert Tomlin.

The Commissioners attended many meetings and conservation events all over the State, throughout the year.

LITTLE WYACONDAH WATERSHED

At a meeting at the Wesley Chapel Church, in June 1956, it was decided to submit to the Davis Soil Conservation District Commissioners, an application for assistance in Watershed protection of Little Wyacondah Creek, consisting of approximately 6800 acres.

The commissioners considered this application, and on the 23rd. day of November, 1956, the group from the State and Area offices, met with the Commissioners and the temporary representatives of the Watershed Group.

Many meetings were set up the the Extension Council in the townships for the purpose of disseminating information regarding the Extension, Soil Conservation Service, and ACP Program. Along with other duties and obligations, Mr. Byers has the responsibility for the interpretation of the fertilizer and lime needs for which ACP makes cost sharing payments.

FARMERS' HOME ADMINISTRATION:

The Farmers' Home Administration Office, located in the basement of the old Post Office Building, and under the supervision of Doyle P. Schmitter, offers a number of loans to assist farm operators in carrying out Soil and Water Conservation programs. In addition to the normal advancements for the purchase or refinancing of farms, livestock, machinery, feed, seed, fertilizer, household goods or any other needs in carrying out a farm and home operation. Funds are available for conservation purposes in the form of chattel loans, farm enlargement, tenant purchase, farm development, farm housing, and the strictly soil and water conservation loan.

These advancements are made on a basis that can be repaid over a period of years. Chattel loans are made up to a seven year term while estate advancements are up to a 40 year maturity.

VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE EDUCATES FARM YOUTH IN SOIL CONSERVATION

In a four year instruction program, in vocational agriculture, students learn first-hand about conservation and the needs for it. Special emphasis is put on the work during the advance classes.

Each student carries some improvement project work as a part of his supervised farming program. Students are doing soil and water conservation improvement work this year on their farm. Often, the decision for doing conservation work on the home farm is a result of the discussion and study in vocational agriculture by the students. They also learn about the services available for technical assistance through the soil conservation service, assisting the Soil Conservation District. Too, members learn that the ASC Program provides cost sharing to encourage farmers to do conservation work.

At present, the local vocational agriculture department holds the District Plaque, won in 1956, for judging soil on land use and management. The National FFA Foundation provides awards to FFA members for work accomplished in soil and water management. At present, Ed Bachman is working for state award. A chapter medal will be presented to a member of the local FFA Chapter for outstanding work at this years' FFA Parent and Son Banquet.

The department keeps hand levels on hand that the members may check out for use on their home farms. Recently, the department purchased a farm level for field trips and instruction work.

At the Area Field Day, Ed Bachman placed third in the terrace building contest. FFA members assisted in directing traffic and parking cars. The signs and markers for the AREA field Day were made by the vocational agriculture department.

The junior and senior vocational agriculture students chartered a bus and attended the National Field Day at Colfax, to observe latest techniques and practices in land use and water conservation.

At present, two past graduates, Larry Harper and LaVern Weilbrenner, are working, in addition to their farming, as Conservation Aids, with the local Soil Conservation Service. Also, Teddy Dixon, now farming 180 acres of land in Wyacondah Township, has one of the Conservation Farm Plans, and has assisted the District as a temporary employee.

Mr. M. H. Elson and his assistant, Kermit Howell, are the local instructors and we would like to add- doing a wonderful job. You will hear more regarding their achievements.

The Vocational Agriculture does a good job of living up to their motto of:

Learning To Do

Doing to Learn

Earning To Live

Living To Serve

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM: (ACP)

Our agricultural resources produce about 66% of the raw materials on which our national economy is based. This is a very large job and also responsibility in an ever expanding economy.

Therefore, all the people must share in the cost of protecting our most vital resources, soil, water and timber.

Surely, our local ASC Committee has been doing their best to give to the farmers of Davis Soil Conservation District, the best service possible. We can all depend upon this cooperative spirit and service to continue.

Members of the Committee are: Vic Cowles, Carlon Carey, Eugene Christy, and the Office Manager is Cargile Bollman.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE:

This group, headed by Clay C. Barnett, assists the District under a memorandum of understanding, between the District and the United States Department of Agriculture, Secretary, and has full responsibility of the technical program of the District.

This includes soil surveys, basic conservation farm planning or land use adjustment, with the necessary conservation practices, rotations and soil treatments.

This responsibility extends to non-cooperator farms as well as District Cooperators. Practices which they are responsible to the ASC Committee are standard terraces, diversions, ponds, waterways, erosion control dams, open farm drains, cropland and other practices that may be assigned to them by agreement.

There were over 500 cooperators' farms and 220 non-cooperator farms who made application for cost sharing under the ACP Program in 1956 and were serviced by the Soil Conservation Service.

Jack Chamberlain, Conservation Aid, with his crew, consisting of: Eugene Francis, Larry Harper, and LaVern Weilbrenner, all temporary employees, has the responsibility assigned to him, for practically all field work.

BLOOMFIELD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

We are glad to be members of the Chamber of Commerce, and appreciate the efforts being made by them, to ^{im}prove the job situation of the people of Davis County.

Also, for the splendid cooperation under the leadership of Dawson Bennett, the 1956 president, on the Field Day, held October 4, 1956.

Their tireless efforts to improve the well-being of the farmer and businessman of Davis County will some day, pay dividends.

All of us should get behind the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce and help in every way we can.

DAVIS COUNTY CONTRACTORS:

The District would like to take this opportunity to thank the Contractors in Davis District for the splendid cooperation they have given the Service in doing one of the best jobs of earth moving to be seen anywhere.

After our various tours of the many conservation practices and especially the one taken by the Commissioners and the ASC Committee of December 12, 1956, we want you and the farmers of the District, to know that you are "tops".

Again, on the Field Day activities, of October 4, you put on a terrific "show", which many are still commenting about. This was the real beginning of terrace construction with a motor grader, which was demonstrated by Mr. Bradley, of Milton, Iowa.

BLOOMFIELD NEWSPAPERS:

What would we do without Keith Hawk, Editor of the Bloomfield, Iowa Newspapers, and his group, who spread printers' ink just where it belongs, and in the right characters, etc.? And, Grandpappy Ben Heady, with his goings "on about this and that."?

Keith worked hard too, on the Field Day Program. Sending out information to some 29 papers in 10 counties in Area #11. But, it did not bring rain and it was a dry dusty day. There were many news items of the Conservation Program. Awards made to the top conservation farmers for 1956, at the District Annual Meeting, and the printing of our 1955 Annual Report.

Progress must be made through our local press, it may be slow, and sometimes discouraging, but there is ~~no~~ better way to do many things. Through research, and then the press, some of it will be accepted by the progressive.

IN CONCLUSION:

Many "thank yous" for 1956 will not be said to those who are deserving for their assistance to the District. Please ~~accept~~ our thanks now, for kind workds spoken or deeds done.

Remember the years ahead must be better, more accomplishments must be shown due to our increasing "know how". We ask your continued support.