

LAUREN SOTH

Practical advice for farmers



Farm policy is being transformed into food-safety, natural-resource and international policy. If you are reading the new literature about the 1990 farm bill, you will agree that farmer and agribusiness organizations are not dominating the scene exclusively, as they did in the past. Consumer groups, worried about food safety; environmentalists worried about soil and water waste and pollution; and foreign-policy planners, concerned about the role of agriculture in overseas trade, development and repair of the economic systems of the ex-communist world, are getting into the act.

Farmers have thought about national farm programs and subsidies as their business. They didn't welcome intervention from public-health groups, environmentalists and world do-gooders. They wanted protection from import competition but free entry for their products in other countries. They resented statements that farming was the most subsidized industry in the country (Congressional Budget Office). They said they were providing cheap, abundant and healthful food and were entitled to government help to hold their own in an economy controlled by Big Business and Big Labor. Farmers also claimed that the cost of protecting the environment and public health was not their responsibility alone.

Farmers have some good points there. But they need to recognize that if the public is to pay them for doing things in the public interest, they must expect to have these "outsiders" expressing a voice in the nation's farm legislation.

An Iowa farmer phoned me the other day to argue that I (and the "media" in general) were not giving the chemical farming story a fair play. He accused

me of being an environmentalist, about the worst name he could think of. I admitted it and said I thought most farmers were, too. He said you had to be involved in farming to realize what it would mean to give up chemical control of weeds. He said people in the cities were causing a lot of the pollution of water by reckless use of chemicals on their lawns, and the media didn't report it.

I agreed, but reminded him that by far the largest share of the pollution comes from farm practices that result in silt loaded with chemicals seeping into surface waters and groundwaters. I also said that the environmental and health critics were not asking him or other farmers to give up chemicals altogether — just to be more restrained in their use and to take care of runoff.

He said he and other farmers were not getting enough credit for what they were doing to curb excessive dumping of poisons in the environment. I agreed. In fact, I said, you could make a strong case that farmers are ahead of the public in awareness of the problems and doing something about it.

To back this up, I suggest a look at the new booklet on Farm Bill 1990: Agenda for the Environment and Consumers. This concise report was sponsored and prepared by a consortium of environmental, resource, health and agricultural organizations. Farmers will find this report friendly to their concerns.

They also will learn that most farmers support public regulation and other action to protect the environment and reduce the dangers to health from exploitive and reckless farming methods.

Large numbers of farmers are practicing crop rotations to fight erosion and predatory insects. They are doing this at cost to themselves, since government supply-management programs have placed a penalty on such conservation techniques. The 1985 farm law, however, initiates steps toward requiring

conservation methods as eligibility for government benefits.

The Farm Bill 1990 report makes a strong argument for revising the 1985 farm law to encourage greater flexibility in cropping.

It also proposes that new incentives be provided for farmers to adopt less polluting farm practices. Why not pay farmers directly for reducing soil losses, for example, and lower their payments for producing surplus crops?

Here are the groups behind this booklet: Center for Resource Economics, Natural Resources Defense Council, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, Public Voice for Food & Health Policy, American Farmland Trust, Institute for Alternative Agriculture, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Soil and Water Conservation Society and Consumer Federation of America.

I am a member of the Institute for Alternative Agriculture and the Soil and Water Conservation Society, so maybe I am biased, but I think this partnership deserves a large voice in the 1990 farm bill.

"The best strategy for dealing with pollution is to prevent it in the first place," says the partnership. "In agriculture, source reduction involves cutting back on the use of pesticides and other potential environmental contaminants or reducing the generation of other 'waste' through modifications of farming systems and practices."

Good advice.

One more point made by the partners is to step up research and education funding for the development of environmentally secure farm methods. That's a good place for some of the "peace dividends."

Lauren Soth is a retired editor of The Register's editorial pages.

11-14-90

Lester Davison honored by Branstad

Lester Davison of Indianola was recently honored by Gov. Terry Branstad at the second-annual Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame awards luncheon. The luncheon was held at the University Park Holiday Inn Sept. 28.

Davison has done volunteer data entry computer work for the USDA Soil Conservation Service since 1988 and now trains others. As a

member of the Iowa Trailriders Association, he has made leather gifts for awards at events. He donates many hours as host at the Historical Society, is president of the Singles Club at his church and works on the building committee. He also gives talks to youth groups on problems and experiences of people with disabilities.



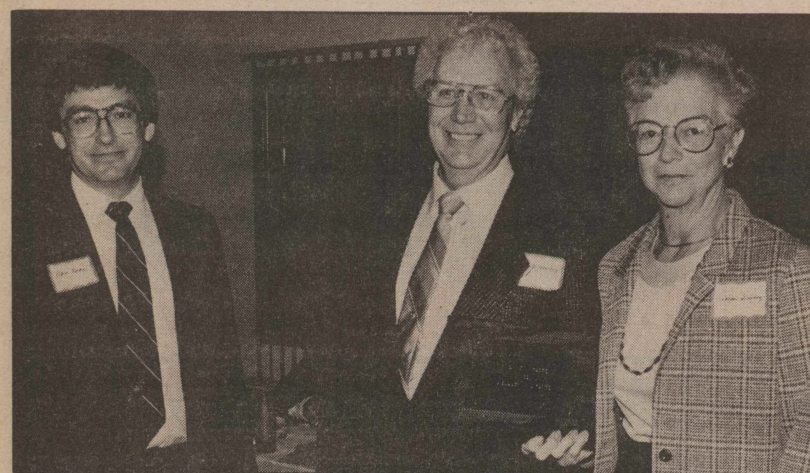
Lorraine Keeny was named Employee of the Year at the annual Indianola Chamber of Commerce dinner Jan. 23. Alan Pearlman, outgoing president, made the presentation.



Neale Sinclair of Laverty Elevator was chosen as the Volunteer of the Year.



The Simpson Achievement award for distinguished community service was presented to Henry and Mary Staubus of Indianola and to Keith Gaumer of Indianola (not present).



Ben Kern, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District, presented Paul and Colleen Irving of Des Moines with the Soil Conservation award.

RHT staff photos by Mark Davitt

'90 farm bill changes swampbuster rules

Washington, D.C. - Producers should be aware that the recently enacted 1990 farm bill significantly changes conditions under which a producer could lose many U.S. Department of Agriculture benefits because of "swampbuster" violations, Keith Bjerke, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said today.

"Under the new law alteration of a wetland may trigger swampbuster penalties for current and subsequent crop years, whereas under the old law planting of an annual crop on a converted wetland was the only trigger for penalties."

"Producers must be aware of this change," Bjerke concluded. "I strongly suggest that producers become familiar with the changes before undertaking the drainage or other alteration of lands that could be considered to be wetlands."

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Norwalk farmer Ben Kern is chairman of the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District. The district has purchased several tools this year to help area

farmers comply with government conservation programs.

RHT staff photo by Mark Davitt

County obtains federal funds for local flood repairs

By Deb Belt

Warren County has received \$61,000 to help farmers repair damage caused by June flooding, said Dan McGlynn, executive director of the county's Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service.

McGlynn estimates damage to terraces, waterways and other devices at \$225,000, although that will probably change once damage reports are complete. The damage estimate does not include crop losses.

The \$61,000 is coming from the federal government through the Emergency Conservation Program, he said. Eligible farmers can have 64

percent of the cost paid to repair terraces, waterways, ponds, gullies and other flood damage. Farmers will have to make up the rest of the cost.

A sign-up period for the funds should be determined later this week, McGlynn said.

Farmers must meet various restrictions in order to receive the funds. The property damaged must have been part of a farmer's conservation program, he said. Lands with flood easements are not eligible for the emergency funds.

Dale Faulkner, district conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service, said the estimate could go

higher if farmers have to hire private contractors to repair much of the damage. Some farmers may not get around to repairing the damage for a couple of years, which will lower the true estimate.

Many areas of the county received 8 to 10 inches of rain in 12 hours, he said. That is three or four times the amount of water terraces are designed to hold.

"It's a bad deal. It will set back new projects because contractors are tied up with repairs," Faulkner said. "We will lose topsoil and productivity on the steeper lands."

Crops in general are suffering from

a lack of sunshine and too much moisture, said Joe Narigon, Warren County Extension director. Soybeans, in particular, are being hampered by fungus diseases.

"I'd like a little sunshine," said Tom Hanks of Ackworth. "The crops that were under water aren't growing near as fast as those that stayed above water."

Land he farms near Hartford in the Lake Red Rock flood area is still under water.

Hanks replanted some of his soybeans and the new plants are up, although they were "drenched" with rain July 13, he said. His federal crop

insurance paid for the cost of replanting.

"In the fall I'll be able to tell you if it was economically feasible," he said.

The floods came too late in the year to replant corn. Hanks said some of his corn crop looks good, and some is questionable.

Some area farmers mowed off their corn plants to get rid of the dirt that coated them when the waters receded, Hanks said. He didn't do that to his plants because he isn't sure if the plants would grow again and produce ears.

"People followed all options," Narigon said. "Some beans were replanted but it was too late for corn. Some people are waiting to see what grows and some may have planted milo (for forage)."

Most of the damage was caused by the force of rapidly moving water, Narigon said.

"What really caused a lot of damage was when the water really moved. There are other areas where it stood and the sediment settled out of it."

Meeting to explain pilot wetlands preservation program

Iowa has been chosen as the pilot state to implement the Wetlands Reserve Program. Signup began June 1 and an informational meeting will be held Wednesday, June 3, at 7:30 p.m. in the basement meeting room of the USDA building, located on East Highway 92.

Anyone who is interested in the program may stop at the Warren County ASCS office to pick up an information packet.

In exchange for a permanent easement, ASCS will issue cash payments to landowners in the WRP contract. In addition, cost-share assistance may be available to the landowner for performing restoration measures.

To be eligible for WRP, cropland must have been planted to an agricultural commodity in at least one of the 1986-1990 crop years. Land that currently is protected by an easement of 30 years or longer is eligible for the program..

Landowners must have owned

the eligible land for 12 months before the end of the signup period, unless the land was acquired by will or succession, as a result of the death of the previous owner. To be eligible the owner must either have clear title to the land or be able to provide a consent and subordination agreement from each holder of the security interest.

Once a signup period is announced, landowners will be able to sign an intent to enroll in the WRP program. Landowners will then, with the assistance of Soil

Conservation personnel and the Department of Natural Resources, develop a plan of land operation.

The plan must be developed within 60 days after the signup. Once the plan is developed, the landowner will submit a bid for placing the easement on the eligible land.

After the landowner's bid is approved, a permanent easement must be filed with the land records. In the easement area structures may not be built; agricultural commodities may not be planted for harvest;

alteration of the hydrology may not be done except as outlined in the operating plan; and alteration of the wildlife habitat or other natural land features may not be done.

The easement also grants ASCS officials access to the affected property. The landowner may withdraw from the program at any time before the easement documents are filed. Once the easement documents have been filed, the easement cannot be removed.

9-26-90

Morrison, Goodhue win poster contest

Amy Morrison of Indianola won first place in the junior division of the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District poster contest. Morrison received a certificate and \$25.

She also received a cash prize of \$40 for placing first in a 10-county regional contest. Morrison is in fifth grade at Indianola Middle School and is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Morrison.

Rebecca Goodhue placed first in the senior division of the poster contest and received a certificate and \$25. She is in 10th grade at Indianola High School, and is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Goodhue.

Posters were judged on entry's conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal.

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Amy Morrison of Indianola was first-place winner in the 1990 Soil Conservation poster contest receiving \$40 at the regional level and \$100 at the state level. The contest was sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners and Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Co.

SCS to begin checking conservation plans

Farm program participants must begin conserving highly-erodible soil

By Ben Kern

In 1989 conservation plans were completed on nearly 1,800 tracts of land in Warren County. This represents almost 1,300 farms and farm operators. Conservation plans are required on farms with highly-erodible land if a farmer is to participate in government programs such as crop price supports, FmHA loans and all-risk crop insurance.

Of all the tracts of land in Warren County, 72 percent are enrolled in the government farm price support program with the ASCS office and of this group, 82 percent are classified as having highly-erodible soils. Jan. 1 was the deadline for developing a conservation plan with the local office of the Soil Conservation Service. Currently 97 percent of the farms that require conservation plans have completed them.

Farmers must begin now to implement the conservation plans in accordance with the timetable agreed to in their plan. The SCS will be spot-checking 5 percent of the farm program participants this year to see if they are meeting their conservation plans.

If the farmer is not in compliance with the plan, then the timetable can be amended or the plan changed to fit the farmer's individual needs. Plans that include a crop rotation involving grass or hay will be required to have the seeding made prior to Jan. 1, 1995

and this can not be extended. When the SCS spot-checks farms this summer, they will measure the percent of crop residue, compare crop rotation to plan and also look for ephemeral gullies. Ephemeral gullies are small gullies that are created each year and are usually removed with tillage. The '85 farm bill requires that gullies of this type be controlled.

Maintaining proper crop residue cover will be important because it determines the degree of erosion control and the conservation plan specifies the amount of cover. The level of crop residue required by the plan is the percent of ground covered by crop residue measured after planting. Many plans call for 40 percent to 50 percent residue cover after a corn crop.

Achieving this requirement will be challenging because each pass with a tillage tool reduces the cover. Tandem disks bury about 50 percent with each pass. Field cultivators tend to bury less and in some cases may even increase the amount by bringing buried residue back up to the surface. There are limitations to the amount of residue a field cultivator can handle. The newest models with shanks arranged on four to five bars can handle 50 to 60 percent residue levels while older three-bar machines will tend to plug. Combination one-pass tools with both discs and sweeps may be needed

to leave higher levels of cover.

The plans completed for Warren County will require approximately 90,000 acres of conservation tillage and no-till planting. Contour farming will also be planned for on 90,000 acres. When contour farming is used, the end rows or turn rows must be seeded to grass where slopes exceed 5 percent. This will result in 1.5 million linear feet of grass turn rows. When the turn rows are at least 33 feet wide, they may be counted as set-aside for the government price support program.

If a difficult-to-manage field requires terraces, no-till, meadow rotation or a combination thereof and the farmer would like a better option, grass buffer strips could be the answer. Depending on the slope, slope length and soil type, seeding from 10 to 30 percent of the slope to grass will allow the remainder to be planted with a less restrictive tillage or crop rotation. The grass could be counted as set-aside if at least 13.3 feet wide or could be harvested for hay. The width of the grass and crop strips will need to be calculated by SCS.

The Soil Conservation staff is ready to help farmers with layout and design of contours, buffer strips and grassed waterways but the amount of work that needs to be done will severely tax their availability. Because of this workload the responsibility for the implementation of the conservation

plans will fall heavily on the farmers themselves.

To help farmers with this task, the SCS has produced a self-help VHS videotape. The video demonstrates how to measure and manage crop residues, lay out contour lines, lay out contour buffer strips, build your own grass waterways and offers points to consider when contouring. The videotape is available at the SCS office, Extension office, most libraries and farm suppliers. The ASCS office has a video player with the tape set up in their lobby for you to view while you wait.

The Warren County Soil District will soon have some new tools to help with your conservation plans. The district has ordered several slope levels that can be mounted via suction cups to tractor cabs or pickup windows. The level is used to establish contour lines by driving around the hill while maintaining the bubble at the level position.

The district will also purchase a small grass seeder powered by a 12-volt battery that mounts in a pickup bed to be used to seed the slopes of terraces. The seeder should help to successfully establish grass on terraces. The funds for the seeder and levels are being provided by the Warren County Board of Supervisors.

Ben Kern of Norwalk is chairman of the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District.

12-19-90

Group forms to ensure soil law compliance

Representatives from conservation and farm organizations met on Dec. 4 to form a County Conservation Implementation Team. The Implementation Team is part of a statewide effort to help farmers apply the conservation practices they have scheduled in their conservation compliance plans and to reduce erosion on Iowa's land.

As part of the 1985 Food Security Act, more than 1,400 county farmers got a plan to protect their highly erodible land from erosion. Those farmers have until Dec. 31, 1994, to apply all the practices in their plan. County-wide farmers have to apply contouring and con-

servation tillage on more than 60,000 acres, plus most of all highly erodible fields require establishment of grassed waterways and headlands during the next five years.

The purpose of forming implementation teams is to improve communication about conservation compliance and to facilitate activities that will help farmers understand Food Security Act requirements and apply those conservation practices. "We also think we can do a better job of conservation with more people in the community well informed, working on it as a team effort," said Dale Faulkner, district conservationist.

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Chamber presents annual awards

The Indianola Chamber of Commerce announced recipients of major awards at its annual dinner Jan. 23.

Lorraine Keeny was named Employee of the Year out of a nomination field of 17. She has been an employee at Simpson College for 32 years, according to a release issued by the chamber.

Neale Sinclair of Laverty Elevator was chosen as the Volunteer of the Year. Sinclair has been active in his church, Rotary club, Indianola-Warren County Development Corporation, United Way, National Balloon Championship, Indianola Zoning and Planning Committee, Simpson fund drive and several agricultural organizations.

The Simpson Achievement award for distinguished community service was presented by Dr. Stephen Jennings, president of the college, to Keith Gaumer of Indianola and to Henry and Mary Staibus of Indianola.

Jennings told the crowd of about 100 that Gaumer is representative of good citizenship, leadership and dedication.

He is involved in many aspects of community life including Lions, church activities, Camp Wesley Woods, Eastern Star, local projects and several state and national professional associations, Jennings said. Gaumer received the Lion of the year award in 1989 and his attendance record has been perfect for more than 30 years.

Gaumer is actively involved in the Farmers Chapel and has served on

the board of director of Camp Wesley Woods for eight years, Jennings said.

He has also been a Worthy Patron in the Eastern Star.

Henry and Mary Lou Staibus are among the most energetic and motivated people in the community, Jennings said. Individually and together they are involved in numerous civic and church related activities.

Mary Lou has served as president of Indianola Monday Club; Warren County chairperson of Iowa Federated Woman's Clubs; president of FISH; and chairperson of Indianola First United Methodist Commission on Missions. She has also worked as a volunteer for Meals on Wheels for elderly and confined citizens. She has been president of Indianola United Methodist Women.

Henry has been involved with Heifer Project for many years at both the local and state levels. Also, he has actively supported Self Help tractor projects for developing nations. Henry has also participated in UMCOR hunger fund drives for third world nations. He has been active in Indianola Men's Garden Club projects such as helping to lay out and cultivate flower gardens on several corners in Indianola along Highway 65/69. He also worked on planting at the public library.

Henry and Mary Lou together have participated in several agricultural-related foreign missions, particularly in Bolivia and Ghana.

Ben Kern, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District,

presented Colleen and Paul Irving of Des Moines with the Soil Conservation award.

Sue McCoy of The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune was presented a plaque in appreciation for her commitment and service to Indianola's CBD committee.

Beth McGeough, vice president of Warren County Brenton Bank and Trust, was named the new president.

McGeough in her acceptance speech stated that she was committed to the promotion of community development through chamber involvement to enhance business growth, community pride and membership services.

The officers for the 1990 year will be Tim McConnell, Tim McConnell Photography, will be first vice-presi-

dent; Jerry Covington, Lentz Chevrolet, will be second vice-president; Gary Hoffman, Warren County Brenton Bank and Trust, will be the treasurer.

The new board members are Marcia Flory, Medical Arts of Indianola; Mike Gnagi, Marriott Food Service of Simpson College; Gerald Knoll, Kentucky Fried Chicken; Arlen Schrum, Shull and Co. P.C.; Mary Ann Waters, Peoples Trust and Savings Bank.

Chamber presents awards for achievement

CHAMBER

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of the chamber, said while presenting the awards that the selection committee found it difficult to choose a single deserving member for the award because the full group had contributed to improving the downtown area.

The Simpson College Achievement Award for Distinguished Service was presented to Maxine Weinman of Indianola; Janet Heinicke, head of the art department at Simpson College; and Laura Hicks of Indianola.

Dennis Hunt, vice president of development and college relations, made the presentations.

For Weinman he read: "Maxine Weinman has devoted herself to the community in many outstanding ways.

"The official opening of the National Balloon Museum in Indianola on July 29, was the culmination of one of her many community contributions. For nearly two decades she has collected, displayed and moved thousands of hot air ballooning artifacts as the museum moved from several temporary locations. She established an auxiliary of more than 140 volunteers to keep the National Balloon Museum and the gift shop open seven days a week all year.

"Weinman has served the local congregation of Trinity United Presbyterian Church faithfully. She has actively supported the Friendship Force, hosting visitors from foreign countries and traveling widely. She is a life member of Simpson Guild, P.E.O. and the American Red Cross."

For Heinicke Hunt read: "Dr. Janet Heinicke is a constant and tireless contributor to the community.

"One example of her vision and commitment came to fruition Nov. 12 when Indianola's first public sculpture was dedicated on the lawn at the Warren County Courthouse. As chairman of the Indianola Fine Arts Commission, she worked with the City Council, the Warren County Board of Supervisors, Simpson and Indianola schools and inspired the Commission to raise the \$15,000 for the bronze statue.

"As head of the Simpson College art department, she enriches the lives of students with her art and teaching. Heinicke also served as chairman of the Redeemer Lutheran Church building committee during a major expansion and remodeling project which was a success largely due to her leadership."

For Hicks Hunt read: "She is involved in several community organizations such as Score, Business and Professional Women, the United Methodist Church and Church Women,

Women's Club. She also volunteers her time and energy as an Indianola Chamber of Commerce ambassador.

"Hicks' involvement reflects not only her civic-minded activities but also her cheerful nature.

"She and her late husband, Corwin, operated the Sunset Florist for almost 40 years. Corwin was also a recipient of the Simpson College Distinguished Community Service Award. Laura has devoted her life to volunteer and community service and deserves recognition for her efforts and success."

Harold and Elaine Brown of rural Indianola were presented with the Warren County Division of the Iowa Soil Conservation Award. The award was presented by Ben Kerns, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District.

New leaders for the Chamber's 1989 year were also inducted into office at the meeting.

Alan Pearlman, director of Winifred Law Opportunity Center, will be the new Chamber's Board of Directors Executive Committee President. He replaces Tony Swarts, owner of the Unique Shop, who will become the Chamber's new chairman of the board.

"The monkey is on my back now and I accept that," Pearlman said to the crowd of about 100 attending the dinner. "I think the president should provide the leadership and I'll do that."

Pearlman noted that the Indianola business community is on a growth track.

"We must keep up the momentum," Pearlman said. "I'm excited that we're moving."

He said he backs the proposed residential housing building and improvement abatement program being considered by the Indianola City Council, an airport for the Indianola/Warren County area and an increase in tourism.

Chamber awards presented, Pearlman accepts leadership

By Mark Davitt

Groups of people were honored Friday evening for what are normally individual awards presented during the Indianola Chamber of Commerce annual dinner.

Carol Kenney, a teller at Warren County Brenton Bank and Trust and Reva Jones, a sales representative at J. Moureau's Family Footwear, were presented with the Chamber's employee of the year award.

Kenney is a 12-year employee of the bank and has participated in several community groups including the Chamber of Commerce and Business and Professional Women. She and her husband, Louis, have three grown children and one grandchild.

"Carol is always business-like, friendly, and cares about people she serves by knowing them and calling them by name, with a smile," read the her nomination papers. "She is efficient, accurate and careful to care for any request you have confidentially."

Jones is a 17-year employee of the

shoe store. She and her husband, John, have two grown children and five grand children.

She is "extremely dedicated to her job," it said in her nomination papers. "She has always enhanced this business with her personable approach in conducting business."

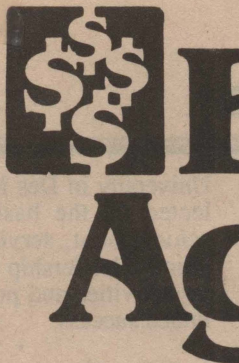
The volunteer of the year award was given to the members of the Chamber's Central Business District Committee, including Ruth Davitt, manager of Midland Financial Savings and Loan; Charles Beatty, who represented Simpson College; Maxine Edwards, manager of JC Penney Co.; Phyllis Utsler, treasurer of Utsler Electric; Mary Geiger, president and manager of Mary's Hallmark; Daryl Beall, publisher and editor of The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune; and Pam Merritt, formerly with Peoples Trust and Savings Bank.

Tony Swarts, outgoing president

CHAMBER

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Chamber winners

RHT staff photo by Shawn Plank

The Indianola Chamber of Commerce honored five city residents at its annual meeting Jan. 15. The winners are from left: (front row) Peg Mikulanec, recipient of the Simpson Achievement Award; and Marlene Crawford of the Indianola Veterinary Clinic, Employee of the Year. Back row: Henry Staubus, winner of the Soil Conservation Award; Neale Sinclair, recipient of the Simpson Achievement Award; and Mike White, Volunteer of the Year.

Minority population tiny in rural Iowa

Law addresses problems of minority farmers

By Gene Lucht

Iowa Farmer Today

The Minority Farmers Rights Act, passed by Congress in 1990, provides some support for Black, Hispanic, Native American and Asian farmers.

The act provides a solid first step toward addressing problems of minority farmers in the United States, proponents say.

"Basically, that's it," says Jerry Pennick of the government's attempt to help minority farmers.

Director of the Land Fund of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Pennick, says the law is the federal government's only major step to help minority farmers. It's good, he says, but more is needed.

The legislation was aimed at stopping the reduction in farmland owned by minorities in the United States and eradicating racial discrimination and indifference to special needs of minority groups by the USDA.

Goals included:

- Restoring the level of national black land ownership to 15 million acres by the year 2000.

- Increasing minority ownership of farmland to a level nearer the rural minority population in each region of the nation.

The law proposed staffing an agency within the USDA and at the state level to deal with the concerns of minority farmers.

It also included language establishing the national registry of minority farmers at the ASCS; establishing demonstration programs for minority youth and minority beginning farmers; and establishing a stronger appeals process for complaints of discrimination by minority farmers. ■

Iowa farmers not seen as prejudiced

By Gene Lucht

Iowa Farmer Today

BOONE — Black people working for government agencies and dealing with Iowa's white farmers report few race-related problems.

"The majority of the farmers I work with are fine," says Hal Cosby, Boone County Soil Conservation Service (SCS) director. "They accept me."

Others agree, saying farmers are generally open-minded about race.

"If you present yourself well and show you know the program, they accept you," says Ron Williams, Jones County SCS director.

Williams, who is black, says he has never encountered any overt racism in his dealings with farmers. Before coming to Jones County, he worked at SCS offices in Burlington and Council Bluffs.

The SCS, one of many government agencies dealing with Iowa farmers, is required to use fair hiring practices, and most of them employ blacks, Hispanics, Asians and other minority individuals.

BUT BECAUSE of Iowa's small black population, particularly on the farm, they often must recruit qualified blacks from other parts of the nation.

That process helped bring Cosby and two of his brothers from their family farm in Mississippi to SCS offices in Iowa: Earl heads the SCS in Wisconsin and Terry is SCS director in Des Moines County in Southeast Iowa.

A third brother, Willie, works in Mississippi and maintains the family farm.

"It was pretty interesting when all three of us (Hal, Terry and Earl) were in Iowa," Terry says. "We're a pretty close family."

Terry first came to Iowa when he was a 16-year-old college student. He spent a summer working for the SCS.

When he and his family moved here a few years later, time was needed to adjust to both the Iowa lifestyle and the lack of blacks and other minorities in the state.

"In some of the towns we were only the first or second black family to live there," he says. "There are fears, but we tried to prove those fears wrong."

Today, Terry helps the SCS recruit blacks from Mississippi colleges.

Hal took a different route to Iowa. After graduating from Alcorn State University in Mississippi, he took a job with the SCS in South Dakota. He came to Iowa in 1980,



Hal Cosby grew up on a farm in Mississippi. But today he heads the Iowa SCS office in Boone.

and says he enjoys life here.

But, he says, it is rare three brothers would choose the same area of expertise. That he and two of his brothers ended up in the SCS is surprising. It's more surprising they all ended up in the SCS and living in Iowa.

The Cosby brothers still return to the family farm twice a year, Terry says.

That farm is now mostly pasture land, with a few cattle grazing it. But it was enough to spur three brothers to join the SCS and head north. ■

Regardless of race, farming 'is a wonderful life'

By Gene Lucht

Iowa Farmer Today

Retired black Iowa farmer Henry Matthews, who's a rare commodity in a predominantly white state, wonders why more blacks don't farm.

"I just can't understand why there are not more colored farmers in Iowa," he says. "It's a wonderful life to have."

Farming is a life chosen by few blacks in Iowa, though.

Matthews, 80, grew corn and soybeans and fed hogs for more than 30 years near the Western Iowa town of Logan.

When his children grew up, they left the farm. None was left to continue the operation when Matthews retired in

1975.

The story is similar for Booker T. Winston, 71, who farmed near Ottumwa for 40 years before retiring in 1985.

Winston tells how his father, unhappy with his treatment by tobacco buyers in Virginia, moved to Iowa.

"HE GOT treated right here," Winston says. "He liked that."

Booker was born here and ran a small cow/calf operation on his hilly farm. One of his brothers also farmed until retiring recently.

"As far as fairness is concerned, I can't complain about the way I was treated," Winston says.

Yet, nobody took over the farm when he retired.

Statistics show few black, Hispanic, Native American and Asian producers live in Iowa.

"As far as fairness is concerned, I can't complain about the way I was treated."

Booker T. Winston
Retired black Iowa farmer

Soil Conservation Service statistics for Iowa show 39 black, 34 Hispanic, 27 Asian and nine Native American farmers.

Census of Agriculture figures show 47 farms in Iowa were operated by blacks in 1987. Only 35 of those were large enough to produce sales of \$10,000 or

more. Both totals were roughly half the 1982 Census of Agriculture figures.

Numbers declined for Native American farmers and for those of Spanish origin. They were up slightly for farmers of Asian or Pacific island origin.

Nationally, the 1987 Census of Agriculture shows about 23,000 black farmers. That total is down more than 97 percent from the 1920 estimate of 900,000 black farmers.

The majority of the remaining black farmers in the nation are older operators with small farms, often of less than 50 acres. More than 95 percent of them live in the South. Other ethnic groups gained varying levels of success in farming, depending on the region. Few minorities have ever farmed in Iowa, where Caucasians of European descent make up most of the rural population.

See back page: Minorities ➡ ➡ ➡

Entries sought for poster contest

The Warren Soil and Water Conservation District is sponsoring a poster contest for students in Warren County. There will be four divisions to judge: Division 1 — grades kindergarten through second; division 2 — grades third through sixth; division 3 — grades seventh through ninth; and division 4 — grades 10th through 12th.

Posters may cover any topic involved in the soil and water conservation field. Posters will be no smaller than 14 by 22 inches and no larger than 22 by 28 inches. They may be any medium such as paint, pencil, cut and paste, crayon or whatever inspires the student.

3-20-91
Judging will be based on each entry's conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal.

Each school in Warren County may submit a maximum of five entries in each division (total of 20 per school) to the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District, 1206 E. Second Ave. in Indianola, no later than April 15. Prizes will be \$20 for first place in each division.

The winner of each division will advance to regional competition. Prizes for regional winners will be \$35 for each division. State winners will receive \$85 for first place for each division.

The Record-Herald and Indianola
July 3, 1991

Business

Rick Streeter joined the Warren County Soil Conservation Service as a technician.

He is a 1986 graduate of Iowa State University and is from Runnells.

He worked previously for the SCS in Dallas County.



Rick Streeter

1-2-91

Sign-up for terrace work opens

Landowners should plan for 1991 terrace construction projects. Applications are accepted throughout the year, but early signups are encouraged to ensure funding is available.

The Warren Soil District Commissioners give first priority cost share for summer construction projects. Summer projects are encouraged on annual set-aside acres to spread before planting and after harvest workloads for conservation contractors.

Landowners can receive up to 50 percent of the total cost for

tiling, installing intakes and earthmoving. The Conservation District is promoting narrow base-type terraces. These terraces can be built for approximately half the cost of conventional grassed backslope terraces, making it possible to protect twice the amount of land for the same cost.

Landowners planning a terrace project for 1991 may sign up after Jan. 1 at the Soil Conservation District Office, USDA Building, 1206 E. Second Ave., Indianola.

RHT Business & Agriculture

The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
September 25, 1991

Couple wins award for tilling with future in mind

By Deb Belt

Harold and Elizabeth Wachter of Milo would find farming more profitable if they didn't plow their earnings back into improvements on the land.

But the Wachters aren't in farming to get rich. Their reward comes from leaving the land in better condition than they found it for their children and grandchildren.

"We've always contoured a lot and used conservation tillage," Harold said. "It made me sick when I was a kid to see soil wash away. My philosophy is I always wanted to leave the soil in better shape than when I purchased it."

The Wachters are the regional winners of the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program. They were nominated for the award by the Warren County Soil Conservation Service board of directors. As regional winners they will compete for the state award, which will be announced Dec. 2.

"I never thought about the awards," Harold said. "I do the projects because we think they're needed."



Elizabeth and Harold Wachter look out over their soybean field in rural Milo. The couple are regional winners of the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards program and are candidates for the state award.

RHT photo/Thad White

He started farming on his own in the mid-1950s after getting out of the military. His first land was 200 acres purchased from his parents; it had waterways that were put in by hand. Land he purchased later from various people wasn't in as good a shape. Harold said some of the ground wouldn't even grow grass at

first.

"Most of the land I bought, I bought so I could improve it," he said. "I never bought a farm to think how much money could I make."

Harold and Elizabeth farm 880

acres in the Milo area. Conservation practices they use include contouring, terraces and conservation tillage. They also raise purebred Angus cattle and rotate them from pasture to pasture to prevent overgrazing.

Establishing conservation measures such as water retention ponds, tiling and terraces can be expensive, Harold said. He prefers broad-based terraces, which allow him to farm both sides of the terrace, although they can cost \$500

to \$600 an acre to construct.

"These terraces and ponds make a lot of shelter for your wildlife," Elizabeth said. "It's a lot of extra work, but it's worth it."

One field they purchased had three gullies run through it, each of which was deep enough for a man to stand in and not be able to see over the bank, she said. Now that field is among their best-looking and productive.

To prevent wind erosion, the Wachters do not cut live trees and

have retained 2 1/2 miles of hedge rows. They also see growing hay and grass for cattle feeding as a way to save the soil.

"Farmers can't afford not to do something with the land," Harold said. So, if it isn't used for livestock production, especially in hilly southern Iowa, then it will be used for row crops.

"Soil conservation is like an insurance policy," he added. "You ensure the soil will be there for the future."



Despite the soggy turf and light drizzle, seven of the farmers and most of their wives who were invited to have breakfast with President Jimmy Carter at the Woodrow Diehl home Saturday morning gathered for this outside photograph before leaving Marywood Farm. Standing are Gary Kiernan, Booneville; Paul Wise, Avoca; Don Van

Ryswyk, Indianola; Farris Gray, Bedford; Joe Weisshaar, Creston; James Leach, Atlantic, and Darl Reynolds, Milo. Kneeling are Patsy Gray, Mary Jean Weisshaar, Barb Leach and Joy Reynolds. Missing are Mr and Mrs Joe Schmitz of Carroll, Mrs Kiernan, Mrs Wise and Mrs Van Ryswyk.

RHT photo.



President Carter embraces Wendy Diehl, 10, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ted Diehl, as he takes his leave Saturday morning at the front entrance to the Woodrow Diehl home where he spent Friday night. RHT photo.

of the Iowa Pork Producers Association.

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Host Woody Diehl beams as President Carter took time before leaving for the Des Moines Airport to greet Marywood Farm employees, neighbors and their families who had stood in the cold drizzle for more than an hour waiting for a glimpse of the president.

RHT photo.

Carter

(Continued from Page 1)

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Van Ryswyk said he had attended meetings where it was required to submit written questions in advance.

After the session with President Carter, Van Ryswyk stepped outside briefly and was invited over to the roped-off area where reporters and photographers were confined.

Obtains Autographs

In the discussion, he revealed that his 10-year-old daughter, De De, had obtained five presidential autographs.

"I'd venture that they probably are worth more than this year's crop," he said jokingly.

Darl Reynolds of rural Milo said he had expressed concern during the session with President Carter about a Food and Drug Administration proposal to ban, as a possible health hazard, the use of sodium nitrate as a preservative in curing bacon.

Carter indicated that he was not acquainted with the problem, Reynolds said, and referred it to Congressman Tom Harkin to get information about the subject and forward it to Reynolds.

Reynolds is a district director

As the President took his leave at the front door of the Diehl residence, he shook hands with Woody and Ted, kissed Mary, Ann and Christy and embraced Wendy.

"Stay right in there," said Woody.

"God Bless," said Mary as the President walked toward the waiting limousine.

After placing his bag in the limousine, he walked over to a roped off area and shook hands with Marywood Farm employees, neighbors and their families, who had been standing

in the light drizzle for almost an hour.

After the President's motorcade left for the return trip to the Des Moines Airport there were more interviews by reporters and TV personnel inside the Diehl home.



Despite the soggy turf and light drizzle, seven of the farmers and most of their wives who were invited to have breakfast with President Jimmy Carter at the Woodrow Diehl home Saturday morning gathered for this outside photograph before leaving Marywood Farm. Standing are Gary Kiernan, Booneville; Paul Wise, Avoca; Don Van

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Conservation achievement

Harold (right) and Betty Wachter of Milo were recently honored as first-place winners in the district and regional soil conservation contests. Ben Kern (left) of Norwalk, chairman of the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District, presented the award. Since Harold began farming in 1953 he has installed tilling and terraces on more than 200 acres. Pastures have

been renovated and seven ponds have been built to provide water for livestock. The Wachters annually plant about 260 acres of corn and soybeans. On the marginal, steeper land, they rotate pasture and hay ground for grazing by their purebred Angus cattle.

RHT photo/Thad White

The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
July 8, 1992

Emergency haying, grazing allowed in county

Warren County has been approved for emergency haying or grazing of ACR (set-aside) acres and Conservation Reserve Program acres due to the dry weather conditions that have affected hay land and pastures, according to a news release.

Producers may obtain information and permission to participate in this emergency program from the Warren County ASCS office. Permission must be obtained in writing prior to haying or grazing either ACR or CRP acres.

On CRP acreages, approved producers will be allowed to either remove one cutting of hay from 75 percent of the acres requested, or graze the entire acreage requested, but only up to 75 percent of the nor-

mal stocking rate as established by soil conservation officials and approved by the ASC committee.

Producers who are approved for haying or grazing on CRP acres will have their CRP annual rental payment reduced according to rates and yields set by the Warren County ASC committee.

On ACR acreages, operators may sign a register to request to hay and/or graze the ACR acres on participating farms during the remainder of the crop year.

Acreages of ACR or CRP containing standing oats, wildlife food plots or other locally-approved covers may not be hayed or grazed. CRP acres with a cover that has been established after Dec. 31, 1991, will not be eligible for haying or grazing.

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The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
November 18, 1992



Area farmers Steve Piffer and Larry Shivers of Indianola and Steve Heaberlin of Pleasantville planted demonstration no-till drilled soybean plots this year in cooperation with the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District. Bernard and Ethel Smith of Indianola did the field measurements several weeks ago during harvest.

Dale Faulkner, (from left) district conservationist, Bernard Smith and Heaberlin check the cover left on the ground after harvest. No-till drilled soybeans are planted directly into standing corn stalks to save time and soil.

RHT photo/Thad White

Farmers pleased with no-till bean yields

By Deb Belt

Three area farmers who tried the no-till drill planting method for their soybeans this year all give it thumbs up.

They agreed that most importantly, no-till reduces soil erosion and compaction. It also saves farmers time.

"I think the whole thing with no-till is it saves time, saves soil, the chemicals we use are safer for the soil. I can't see any reason not to," said Steve Heaberlin of Pleasantville, who also farms near Indianola.

Heaberlin and Steve Piffer and Larry Shivers of Indianola all cooperated with the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District to plant demonstration plots of no-till drilled soybeans in seven-inch rows. They were planted directly into standing corn stalks, so there is no need to chisel, disc, or cultivate a field before planting, said Dale Faulkner, county soil conservationist.

Heaberlin, who tried no-till for the first time this year, said the method "helps conserve soil, and we should be. I don't know why we haven't done it before."

His bean yields were comparable

'I think the whole thing with no-till is it saves time, saves soil, the chemicals we use are safer for the soil. I can't see any reason not to.'

— Steve Heaberlin
Pleasantville farmer

to other fields, running in the range of 52 bushels per acre. Heaberlin planted all of his beans, about 1,500 acres, and all of his corn, about 1,000 acres, with no-till this year for the first time, and will in the future, too.

Shivers, who first used no-till last year, said that overall his yields were better this year than last year.

"My main interest is soil conservation," said Shivers, who learned from his father and first landlord the importance of soil conservation.

"I was real pleased. These were probably the cleanest beans as a whole that I've ever had," he said. "As of this year I'm trying to make a commitment to total no-till."

Piffer, who was also trying no-till beans for the first time, said the

only drawback he sees to using it more in the future is gauging when the time is right to apply herbicides. But, he said he saved time in the field and bean yields in the demonstration plot were about 52 bushels per acre.

"I had a real good experience with it," Piffer said. "It was one of the best fields weed-wise."

Heaberlin said that he spent about the same amount of money on chemicals with no-till, but the types of chemicals used in no-till break down faster in the soil, meaning less chance of runoff or ground-water pollution.

One problem that farmers should be aware of as they make the switch from regular tillage to no-till is that there is usually a drop in yields the third or fourth year of no-till use, Heaberlin said. The drop occurs because earthworms haven't fully re-established themselves in the field, so the soil isn't as loose or aerated as it will become. In the end, farmers will wind up with more organic matter in the soil.

Marvin Mahr custom planted the demonstration plots for the three farmers, who received no-till incentive payments.

Poll says farmers working on conservation plans

Most Iowa farmers believe they can complete the conservation work called for in conservation compliance plans, a recent survey shows.

In a statewide telephone survey conducted in September and October, 48 percent of farmers with "highly erodible land" said they "definitely" will be able to complete conservation plans, and 32 percent said they "probably" could.

Other findings are that the majority of Iowa farmers:

- Support conservation compliance
- Understand and are on schedule with conservation plans
- Are practicing reduced tillage methods
- Still have measures to take before plans are fully implemented.

The majority of farmers, 58 percent, continue to support the idea of conservation compliance. Twenty-six percent opposed the idea, and 16 percent were unsure. Both the 1985

and 1990 farm bills included conservation compliance provisions which require producers to implement an approved soil conservation plan in order to participate in most federal farm programs.

"We've tracked farmer opinion on conservation compliance since 1983," says Iowa State University sociologist Steve Padgitt. "Early on, there was support for the idea. Support grew but then fell as filing deadlines neared. This survey suggests opinions have now been stabilized with a majority of farmers supporting the policy."

"The survey points out some special needs of some farmers," Padgitt says. "There's a group of farmers who tried no-till and it didn't work, for instance. It will take some solid information and support to rekindle interest and confidence in that practice for those people."

Farmers were also asked a series of questions on the type of assistance conservation districts, the

U.S. Department of Agriculture, agribusiness and related agriculture groups could provide. The top request was for more conservation cost-share monies, followed by help in substituting conservation practices for some of those in the plan that may not be consistent with current farming operations.

"The survey said that if a farmer were going to change tillage systems, the person to consult with first would be another farmer who is successfully using that tillage system. That's followed by chemical and fertilizer dealers and equipment dealers," says Jeffrey Vonk, state conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service.

"We've got to gear our operations more to getting our technical soil conservation information to the people farmers consult with most. We've already begun those efforts here, and are getting exceptional interest and cooperation from agribusiness and agricultural organizations," Vonk says.

Shivers wins soybean growers contest

By Dan Silvia

Overworked and underpaid — a common complaint, but Indianola farmer Larry Shivers is trying to make tilling the soil less pay off.

Shivers recently received a first-place award from the Warren County Master Growers Association for conservation tillage. Shivers harvested 66.92 bushels of soybeans from a 40-acre patch that he worked with a minimum amount of soil tillage. That was the highest yielding conservation beans in the county.

Shivers, who farms about five miles south of Indianola, said the no-till or minimum-till method has several benefits.

"In wet years it saves time," he said. "That was one of the main rea-

sons I went ahead and no-tilled the beans that I did. It was too wet to work the ground, but it was dry enough that I could drive over the top. I could plant when I wouldn't have been able to work the ground."

The technique can pay off in dry weather as well.

"In dry years it can save moisture," Shivers said. "The more you work the ground the more it dries out. In dry years that can really make a lot of difference in your stand."

Legislation passed in 1985 may encourage more farmers to try no-till or minimum-till farming.

"There will be a lot of ground that you won't be able to farm conventionally," Shivers said. "You'll either have to manage residue such

as minimum till or no-till, build terraces or not farm it. It's a pretty economical way to keep you producing."

Shivers, entering his 12th year of farming, said he is looking forward to the upcoming season and will use the conservation-tilling method on all 180 acres of his beans.

"There's definitely some fine tuning that I'd like to try," he said. "There will be different weed problems than with conventional tilling and I've got to get adjusted to those. I think you'll see a lot of no-till beans this year."

Farmers cautioned on fall tilling

Iowa farmers itching to right the wrongs done to their fields by the wet weather this year are being cautioned by conservationists and Iowa State University Extension officials to think through their options before tilling this fall.

"It's been a tough, frustrating year for most of Iowa's farmers," says Jeff Vonk, state conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service.

"I can understand a farmer thinking that he or she wants to get out into the field after harvest to do whatever can be done to be sure crops have the best chance next year. The thing is, we think the best thing to do in many cases after harvest is to leave the ground alone," he says.

Vonk and other conservationists believe tilling the soil could have the opposite effect the farmer wants.

"We know there's a lot of concern about compaction, and people want their soil to have a chance to dry out before next spring," said Jeff Zimprich, a crop residue management specialist with the SCS. "But tilling the soil could cause more compaction. Instead of breaking up compaction, tillage, especially deep tillage on wet soils, will drive the compaction lower and make it more serious."

Zimprich says other downsides to tilling this fall are

'Instead of breaking up compaction, tillage, especially deep tillage on wet soils, will drive the compaction lower and make it more serious.'

*—Jeff Zimprich,
SCS specialist*

increased fuel and machinery costs and the possibility of more soil erosion.

On the other hand, there can be advantages to doing some fall tillage on land that's not subject to erosion that's likely to be wet next spring, says Garren Benson, extension agronomist at Iowa State University.

"I wouldn't recommend tillage on soybean ground, or on steeper land that needs residues for soil protection," Benson says, "but there are situations where some primary tillage this fall could be helpful. For instance, with a corn following corn situation, where the soil is dry enough this fall, it isn't erosive, and you're in a mulch till system, it may pay to till the soil this fall so you're ready to just hit it once next spring before planting," Benson says.

Extension agricultural engineer Mark Hanna says the wet

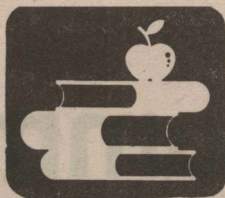
conditions this year point to shallow tillage, if any tillage is done. "Even though there is a lot of concern about compaction this fall, much of that problem appears to be in the surface layers of soil," Hanna says. "Freezing and thawing this winter could reduce most of that compaction problem before next spring. So for those who had planned to till this fall, in a cropping system that adequately protects their topsoil from erosion, they may well be advised to till only a shallow layer."

Dale Faulkner, district conservationist for Warren County, said "We are seeing a few farmers who are not following their compliance plans, and we want producers to be aware that fall tillage, especially on highly erodible soybean fields, may make them ineligible for USDA farm program benefits in 1994."

Faulkner suggests that producers contact the SCS office to develop plan revisions that may require more conservative crop rotation or tillage systems.

Vonk said farmers who don't till this fall keep their options open for next spring. "You lose the no-till option for next spring if you till this fall. Use of no-till by Iowa farmers tripled in 1992 over 1991, and there was another jump this year. It can be an efficient, economical system, and is certainly a way to save soil," he said.

tion



The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
January 20, 1993



Conservation contest

Ben Kern (middle) presents Angela Spangler (right) and Dianne Schlomer (left), the winners of the Soll Conservation Poster Contest, with

certificates and checks.

RHT photo/Thad White

Marshes win soil conservation award

A farm owned and operated by Carl and Pat Marsh of Lacona is a regional winner of the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program. It was chosen by the Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

This 643-acre farm includes 198 acres planted on the contour, 1.9 acres of grassed waterways and 175 acres protected by terraces. In total, they use conservation tillage on 537 acres of cropland, plus they have constructed three farm ponds.

FILED IN 1993
OCT 6 1993



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Lisa Niedermayer, a soil conservationist with the county Soil Conservation Service office, looks over the grass buffer strips Ron Tyler has planted on his farm near Norwalk. He has

also built waterways in his fields and grass borders along the edges to control erosion.

RHT photo/Deb Barber

Norwalk farmer works to halt erosion

By Deb Belt

While a summer as wet as this year's made it difficult for the grass in Ron Tyler's new waterway to take hold, in the long run the conservation measures he installs on his farm will benefit the land, he said.

Tyler, who farms east of Norwalk, has until January of 1995 to finish installing conservation measures on his farm. Any farmer who wants to remain eligible for United States Department of Agriculture programs must have a conservation plan in place by that date, said Lisa Niedermayer, a soil conservationist with the Soil Conservation Service in Warren County.

Last year Tyler built a waterway in the middle of his fields. The waterway is seeded with grasses and is a natural route for water to take as it runs down the hilly ground to a creek, and the grass prevents erosion. In spots there are signs of slight erosion from the volume of water the new waterway has handled this year.

"The ground has been disturbed and wet for so long that it'll make it hard to get (the grasses) going," Tyler said.

While Tyler has planted his

crops in a contour pattern across the hills rather than up and down for many years, last year he also added grassy buffer strips between fields following the contour lines.

Despite this season's rainy weather, Tyler installed additional drainage tile and another waterway along the east edge of his fields. He plans two more waterways on either side of a creek to control erosion.

Waterways are not farmable land anyway, Tyler said, and making sure they are in good shape helps production.

"It's improving the character of the ground so you can farm up next to the waterway and there are no wet spots to farm around," he said. "I had a little bit of erosion this year, but very little."

Tyler is also working on establishing grass borders along the edges of his field. More and more farmers are using the grass borders, Niedermayer said, in place of end rows, which run up and down hills. The borders allow contour rows to run right up next to the grass, which then gives the farmer a place to turn around his machinery and get back into the rows.

This growing season was the first year that Tyler has used no-till

to plant both corn and soybeans. Because the ground was not worked with machinery, it allowed Tyler to plant during the wet spring weather.

Without no-till, Tyler said he doubts that he would have had a chance to plant crops this year.



Winner

4-21-93

Winner of the poster contest held by Warren Soil and Water Conservation District is Amber Durfey, a sixth-grader at Indianola Middle School. Pictured with her are Linda Dittmer, Amber's teacher, and Ben Kern of WS&WC. Her design used cinnamon sugar to simulate sand. For her efforts, her poster will move on to a regional contest and she will receive a check for \$20. Nineteen students from Indianola Middle School and Interstate 35 Elementary School participated in the contest. The 19 posters will be on display at Peoples Trust and Savings Bank April 21-30.

RHT photo/Steve Wolf

SCS offers to purchase wetland easements

A 30-day sign-up for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program (EWRP) began Dec. 1, according to Jeff Vonk, state conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

Administered by the SCS through the Emergency Watershed Protection program, EWRP was established to give landowners the option of converting qualifying cropland damaged by the 1993 floods to wetlands. Iowa is one of the eight states eligible for EWRP.

Eligible land entered into the program will permanently be restored to wetlands, says Dale Faulkner, district conservationist for Warren County. SCS will purchase easements to the land and pay all wetland restoration costs.

"We think some farmers hit by this year's flooding will find this a good option to trying to restore and farm wet, flood-prone land," said Vonk. "They can save the expense of restoring cropland in flood plains, and the environment will also benefit. Wetlands will help control flood waters, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat for migratory birds."

'We think some farmers hit by this year's flooding will find this a good option to trying to restore and farm wet, flood-prone land.'

— Jeff Vonk, state conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service

To be eligible for the program, land must meet the following basic criteria:

- Must have been covered with flood waters in 1993.
- The cost of reclaiming cropland and/or repairing levees is more than the easement value of the land.
- It can be restored to a wetland.
- Must have been used for crop production at least once during the last five years.

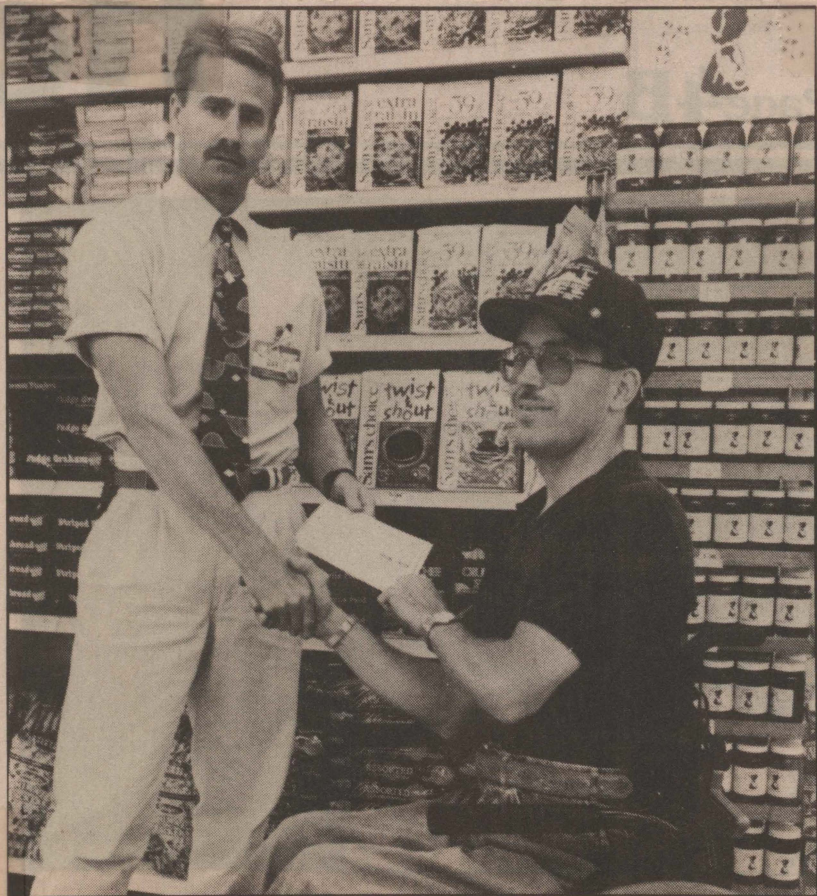
Land easement values were set on a regional basis by the SCS, which worked with other agencies, commodity and environmental groups as well as farm managers and appraisers. Easement values range from \$388 to \$962 per acre. Warren County's easement value is

\$388 per acre, Faulkner said.

During the initial sign-up, landowners in Warren County must indicate what land they would like to enter into the program and prove their ownership of that land. SCS technical staff from the Warren County office will then determine whether the land is eligible for EWRP, according to Faulkner.

Land is officially accepted into the program after the landowner records an easement. The landowner will then receive 75 percent of the easement payment. When wetland restoration is complete SCS will pay the landowner the remaining 25 percent, says Vonk.

"Farmers with land in river bottoms damaged by flood waters should stop by their local SCS office for more detailed information if they are interested in receiving payment for permanently retiring the land from production," says Vonk. "Costs to reclaim flood damaged land are often greatly underestimated. To determine eligibility SCS will be working with landowners to identify all reclamation costs including restoring fertility and restoring the flooded fields to pre-flood conditions."



Ahquabi cash

David Less of the Indianola Wal-mart hands over a check to Lester Danson of the Izaak Walton League. The money was raised money with a barbecue to purchase tables and chairs for the new shelter and fishing dock at Lake Ahquabi.

RHT photo/Deb Barber

8-24-94



SCS staff and commission

Current members of the Warren County Soil Conservation District staff and commission are (from left) front row: Mary Streeter, district secretary; Ben Kern, commission chairman; Arlan Becker, vice chairman; and Dale Faulkner, district conservationist. Back row: Richard Davitt, treasurer; Kevin Graham, board secretary; and Mike Finck, commissioner. The Soil Conservation Service is marking its 50th anniversary this year.

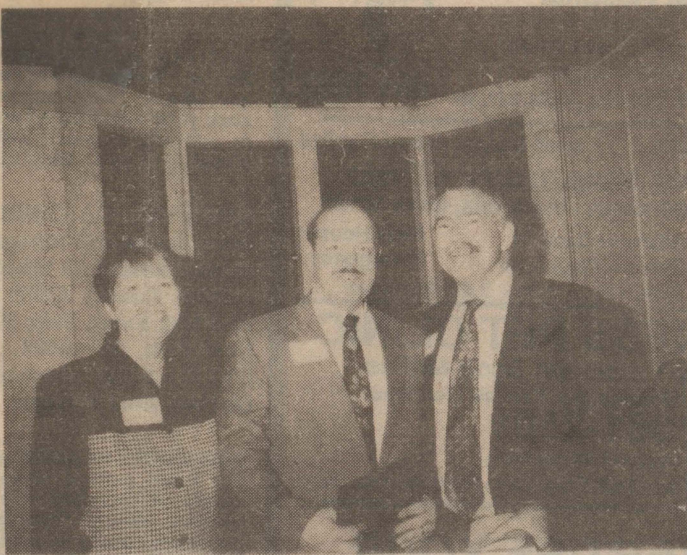
RHT photo/Matt Flatt

Warren County Soil Commissioners

J.E. Hatcher, New Virginia (1944-1950)	Wayne Dillard, Indianola (1974-1981)
W. Herbert Hastie, Indianola (1944-1948)	Darrell Goodhue, Carlisle (1975-1983)
Lewis P. Mead, Milo April 23, 2000 (1944-1946)	Roy Davey, Milo Jan 2001 (1979-1985)
Rex Richards, Hartford (1946-1952)	O.Ray Pehrson, Indianola (1979-1987)
Gilbert Fridley, Indianola (1948-1960)	Richard Davitt, Indianola (1983-Present)
James Middleswart, Indianola (1950-1956)	Marvin Mahr Jr., Indianola (1983-1987)
James Ginder, Ackworth (1952-1964 & 1970-1974)	Ben Kern, Norwalk (1983-Present)
Robert Morrison, Prole (1956-1981)	Kevin Graham, Ackworth (1987-Present)
Luther Williams, Indianola (1960-1973)	Arlan Becker, Milo (1985-Present)
Wayne Hunerdosse, Indianola (1964-1979)	Mike Finck, New Virginia (1987-Present)
J. Robert Downing, Milo (1972-1979)	• Information compiled by the Warren County Soil Conservation Service staff.
Gary Hardin, Carlisle (1970-1975)	

50 years of protecting the soil

A salute to the Warren County Soil Conservation Service was a joint effort between The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune and the Warren County SCS office.



(Left to right) Barb Moody, Rev. Robert Burkhart and Simpson President Steve Jennings.



(Left to right) Tom Hawley, Publisher, Record-Herald; Molly Bowlin; and Amy Duncan, Editor.

GLOBAL REPORT

Farmers and scientists work to save the earth, one acre at a time

By Scott Baldauf

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BOSTON

THIS year has brought some good news in the fight to save the earth. Measuring their successes by the acre, soil experts with the United Nations, the World Bank, and the US Soil Conservation Service say they are learning how to hold back sand dunes and keep steep, erodible hillsides intact. And, unlike the huge engineering projects of the past, the leading edge of today's soil conservation work is as simple as planting a tree.

But the scale of the problem remains huge.

In the last 50 years, the Earth has lost 11 percent of its vegetated land to human-induced soil degradation, an area about the size of China and India combined, according to a 1991 UN Environment Programme (UNEP) study. Much of the lost soil is irretriev-

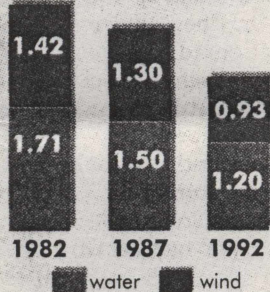
able. In the same period, the number of mouths to feed in the world has more than doubled.

The UNEP report, produced in conjunction with the International Soil Reference and Information Center in Wageningen, Netherlands, helped alert people to the severity of the problem, says Richard Grimshaw, a soil conservation expert at the World Bank in Washington. But, he adds, "it all comes back to the farmers, what they can do to improve the soil."

US Saves More Soil

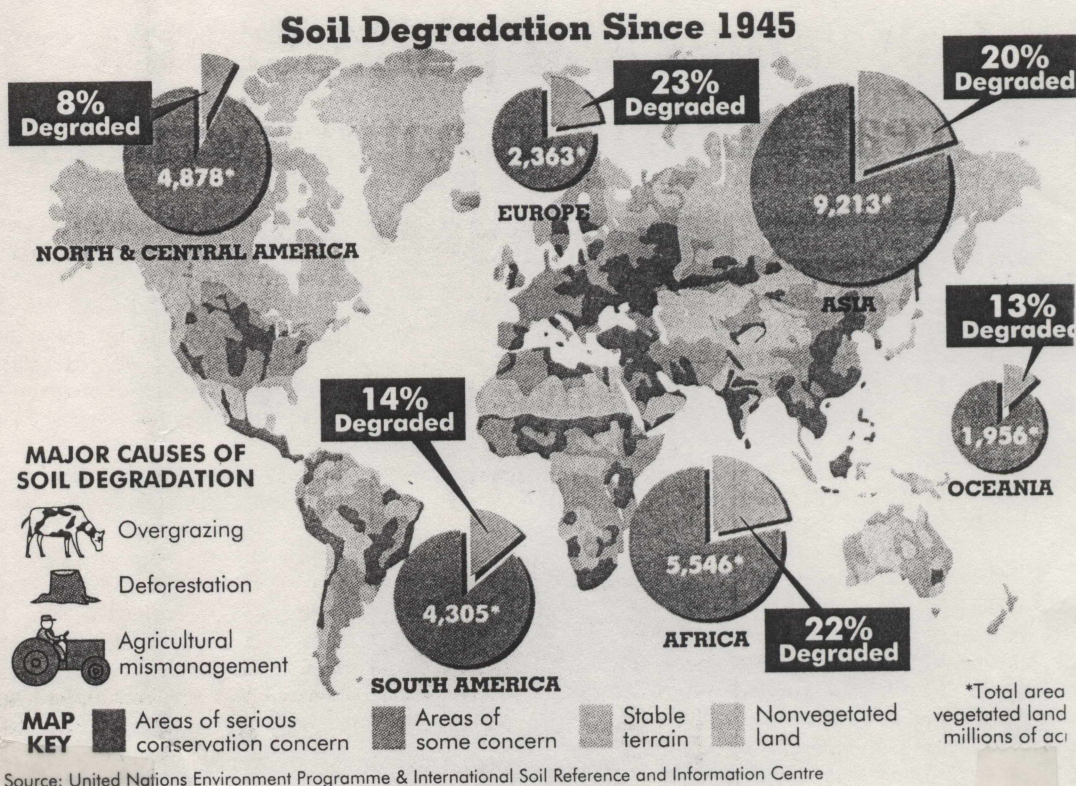
The rate of cropland erosion has been cut by one-third. Still, the US loses about 2 billion tons of soil per year to wind and water.

Billions of tons of eroded soil



Source: USDA

According to a study released last year by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome, soil degradation occurs most often when people clear-cut forested hillsides for timber or fuelwood, when they allow their cattle to compact soil or chew vegetation down to the roots, or when farmers grow only one type of crop (monoculture) on a piece of land, without allowing the soil to regain nutrients. As more land is cleared for development, wind and water erosion sweep away tons of top-



soil; degradation also occurs when pollutants are dumped or when poor irrigation allows salt buildup.

But Wim Sombroek, a soil expert at FAO, says: "It's time to show that not every influence of man is negative. Traditional farming methods have actually helped the soil by terracing hillsides and building up soil matter through the addition of composted vegetable matter and manure."

The problem with some of these traditional methods, Mr. Sombroek adds, is that they are labor-intensive, requiring long hours for distant benefits. Some farmers, for instance, balk at the costs of planting rows of anti-erosion vetiver grass on sloping

fields, a method that begins to pay for itself in higher yields only after three years.

In contrast to the grand engineering projects of the past, many of the new projects are simple, relying on native vegetation:

■ In Senegal, UNEP's Sahel Office encouraged villagers from Thiambene Till to plant native trees as windbreaks and enclosures for their domestic animals in 1986. Seven years later, the hedges have allowed natural vegetation to grow back and erosion has been reduced.

■ In Sri Lanka, the Tea Research Institute of St. Coombs planted vetiver grass hedges and leguminous shrubs between tea rows on the contour of hillsides, a

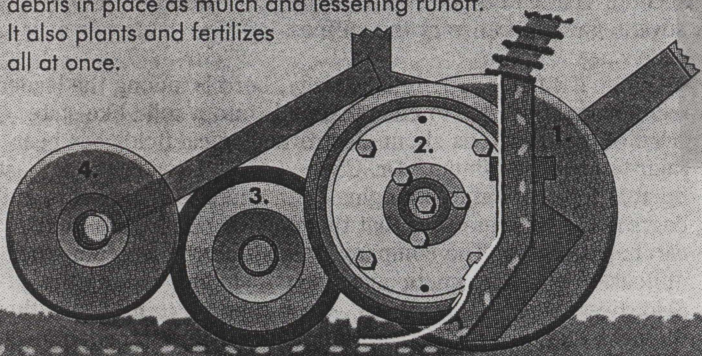
method that has helped add soil nutrients and deter erosion.

For its part, the US government, chastened in the Dust Bowl of the 1930s for ignoring the warnings of its own soil experts, has made remarkable strides in cutting erosion. This June, in its National Resources Inventory, the US Department of Agriculture said that better farming techniques and conservation policies had saved the US 1 billion tons of soil per year between 1982 and '92. (**Plowless farm, below.**)

But even such good news is tempered, Sombroek says: "The US has hidden degradation - the loss of organic matter [such as manure or compost] in the soil, and the overuse of fertilizers." ■

A New Way to Turn the Earth

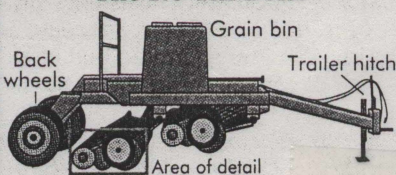
Unlike the plow, which breaks up and turns over topsoil, the recently invented 'no-till drill' digs a simple trench, leaving crop debris in place as mulch and lessening runoff. It also plants and fertilizes all at once.



1. 'Opener' disc digs a trench.
2. 'Gauge wheel' ensures accurate depth of trench.
3. 'Press wheel' pushes seeds and fertilizer into trench.
4. 'Closing wheel' crumbles soil to close trench.

Source: Deere and Company

The No-Till Drill



No-till farming methods gain ground, increasing yields, saving soil and labor

BOSTON

ACROSS the American farmbelt, the plow is meeting its match.

Though unrivaled at breaking up hardened prairie and ripping out weeds, the plow is a nemesis for soil conservationists, leaving behind loose, crumbly soil to fend with the spring rains.

In the last decade, engineers at some of the United States' largest tractor manufacturers proposed an alternative: no-till farming. With this new method, farmers are able to:

■ Reduce runoff by leaving the stalks of last year's crop in the fields as mulch.

■ Kill weeds with biodegradable herbicides rather than springtime tractor-cultivation.

■ Plant seeds and fertilize in a single trip, using a new generation of no-till implements.

For Dale Faulkner, a county agent for the US Soil Conservation Service in Indianola, Iowa, no-till farming is "the greatest thing to happen in soil conservation." The rolling pastures and cropland in Mr. Faulkner's area were particularly vulnerable to erosion and the response to the new

method from local farmers has been enthusiastic.

While the operating costs of no-till and conventional farming are roughly the same, many farmers receive equal or better yields by using the no-till method, Mr. Faulkner adds.

Larry Watts of Norwalk, Iowa, says he has been using a John Deere no-till planter for corn for the past 10 years and just last spring bought a Case International no-till "drill" for planting soybeans and alfalfa. (A drill, usually a combination of wheels and discs, is a farming implement used to dig furrows, plant seeds, and cover the seeds with soil.)

'YOU can tell the erosion has definitely been cut down," Mr. Watts says in a telephone interview. "Now we don't lose any soil to speak of." And while no-till farming requires greater amounts of contact herbicides than does conventional farming, it pays for itself in reduced labor. Unlike conventional farming, which requires several kinds of tilling, the no-till drill requires only one pass over the fields to plant and fertilize.

- S. B. ■

Farmers incorporate soil-saving measures

Practices gaining favor among Iowa farmers

Take a drive across the state and you'll see farmers are making great strides in protecting Iowa's soil and water resources.

Just last year the conservation efforts of Iowa farmers saved an estimated 20 million tons of topsoil from eroding into roadside ditches, rivers, streams and lakes.

"Conservation farmers are changing the face of Iowa, literally, and they deserve a friendly pat on the back from time to time," said Jeff Vonk, state conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in Iowa.

SCS provides technical help to farmers and landowners who want to protect water quality and use soil saving practices.

Four of every five of the 20.7 million crop acres planted in 1993 were planted using some form of crop residue management. This practice leaves the previous year's crop residue on the soil surface to protect it from erosion.

Iowa farmers led the nation last year in their use of mulch-till, with 6.9 million acres. Mulch-till, a form of crop residue management, is a planting system that reduces tillage across an entire field.

While there were gains in crop residue management in 1993, the establishment rate of other practices was dampened somewhat by the heavy rains last spring and summer.

Still, Iowa farmers are in a mode for establishing conservation at record rates.

SCS figures show in 1992, for instance, that no-till farming was seven times the traditional acreage. Other increases over traditional rates are contouring, four times; grassed waterways, nine times, field borders, 35 times, contouring stripcropping, two times; and terracing, a 30 percent increase.

This progress has been fueled in part by the conservation provisions of the 1985 and 1990 farm bills. One provision, called the Conservation Reserve Program, has helped Iowa farmers temporarily retire 2.1 million acres of the most erodible cropland to grass or trees.

Another provision of the farm bill, conservation compliance, asks farmers to reduce soil erosion significantly on highly erodible cropland in exchange for participating in federal farm programs.

Each participating Iowa producer is following a conservation plan developed in the late 1980s. Producers with these plans have until Dec. 31 of this year to complete them.

"Without question, these practices help the farmer. But they also benefit society," Vonk said. "Knowing there are costs involved in caring for the land, soil conservationists have developed a deep appreciation for conservation farmers."

Story and photos provided by the USDA Soil Conservation Service.

Soil conservation management practices



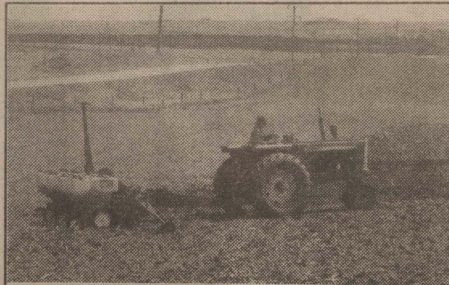
Crop residue management

Leaving previous crop residue on soil surface. Includes no-till, mulch-till and ridge-till.



Grassed waterways

Shaping and establishing grass in a natural drainage way to prevent gullies from forming.



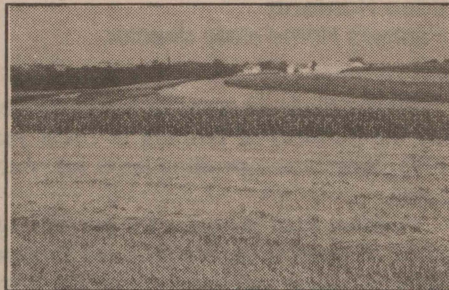
Field borders

A strip of grass or legumes at the edge of a field used in place of end rows.



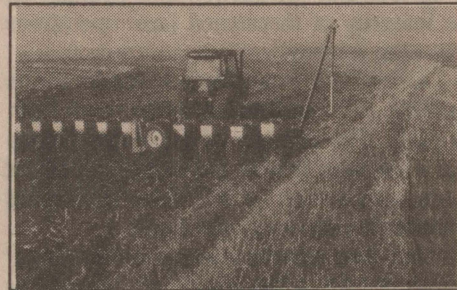
Contour farming

Farming with row patterns nearly level around a hill — not up and down a hill.



Contour stripcropping

Contouring combined in equal-width strips of corn or soybeans alternated with oats or grass.



Terracing

Earthen embankment around a hill stopping water flow and storing it off a field.

Mead helps initiate soil district's formation

By Brad Latcham

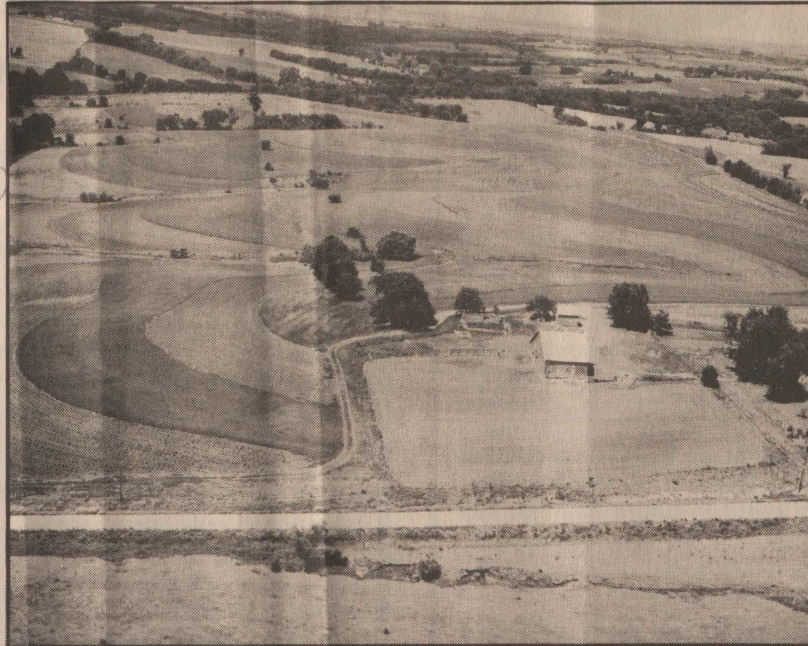
As the Warren County Soil Conservation District was founded Feb. 16, 1944, so was the birth of local soil conservation efforts for area farmers. One of those to initiate forming the district and serve on its first board of commissioners was Lewis P. Mead.

After moving to the county in 1941 to establish his farming operation six miles southeast of Milo, Mead became interested in soil conservation techniques after experiencing the benefits they could offer. Mead saw a neighbor use contour farming and noticed how each ridge or furrow acted as a miniature earthen dam to slow water and minimize erosion on sloping land.

"Something needed to be done, if the soil was going to be around long enough to pay for itself," said Mead. "My main concern, however, was how to get horses to follow the curve of the hillside."

To his surprise, the horses had no problem. As a result, he began using the contour method in 1942 and continued to implement it, as well as other conservation methods, for the rest of his agriculture career.

Prior to the district's formation, conservation planning and layout assistance was done by neighborhood groups and the local Extension office. Increased interest in soil conservation practices led to meetings scheduled through the Extension



An aerial photograph of the Lewis P. Mead farm near Milo taken in 1956 shows strip cropping and contour work Mead had done on his land to conserve soil. Mead was active in forming the Warren County Soil Conservation District and served on its first board of commissioners.

Photo submitted

sion office to see about the possibility of forming a local Soil Conservation District to be the governing body for the Soil Conservation Service. The SCS is the federal USDA agency which provides technical assistance to land users in the county.

The application for organization was approved by the state of Iowa

through the secretary of state on Feb. 16, 1944, to establish the Warren County Soil Conservation District. Elections for district commissioners were held with Mead, J.E. Hatcher of New Virginia and W. Herbert Hastie of Indianola being the first to serve.

In the early days of the district, the main emphasis was on contour

farming and strip-cropping. Although terracing was virtually nonexistent, the John Sayre farm near Ackworth had terraces which served as a model for those who would later become interested in this form of soil conservation. Most of these conservation methods were relatively new, which led many producers to be apprehensive of their use. Many wanted to see practices used on someone else's land first. With the help of the newly formed district, people were encouraged to use the techniques which have led to continually improved farming practices of today.

As the second youngest commissioner in the state at the time, Mead attended farm meetings to exchange ideas between other county offices and encouraged opponents to give these new practices a try. The first commissioners got the district started so it could begin operation. It became the job of those who followed to oversee the district to ensure continuation of good soil conservation practices.

"No big change has taken place from year to year (within the SCS)," says Mead, "but over the past 50, a lot of major changes have occurred. People have to see the need for soil conservation and want to do it."

Brad Latcham is a Simpson College intern with the Warren County Soil Conservation Service office.

Mead helps initiate soil district's formation

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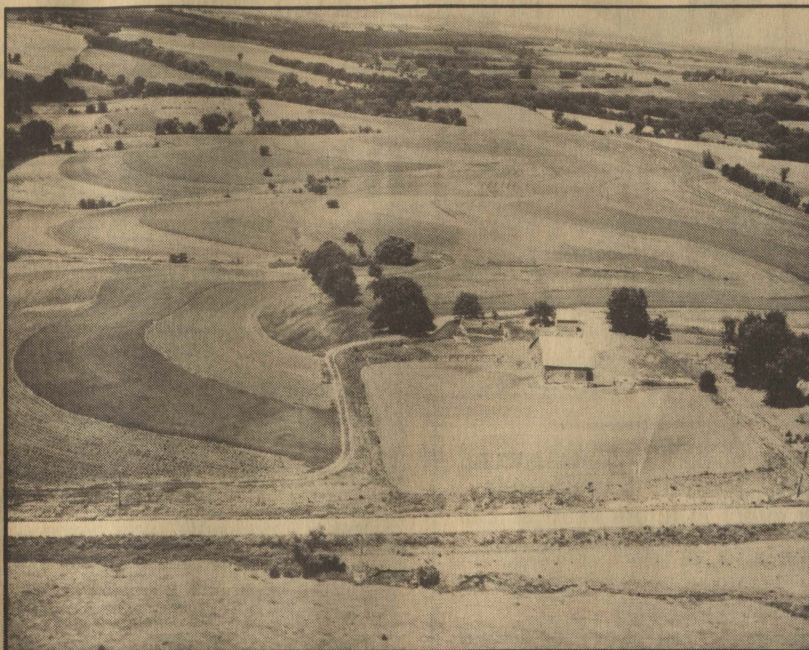
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Model brings soil conservation to life

EnviroScape can show pollution, erosion

By Deb Belt

Everyone knows pollution is harmful. But how do you demonstrate the benefits of terraced fields, or show the impact of yard fertilizers washing into the water supply?

The Warren County Soil and Water District recently received a model that simulates conservation practices and allows users to run demonstrations that show erosion and pollution in progress. The large plastic EnviroScape model was purchased with funds donated by the Indianola Wal-Mart store.

The model can illustrate soil erosion, water pollution and conservation practices, applied in rural, urban, industrial and construction settings. Lester Davison, an assistant commissioner with the soil and water district, said the lessons learned from the model can be adapted for use with school students of all ages, as well as businesses, service clubs and other civic groups.

"If we do a presentation at a school, the kids can get their hands dirty, you might say," Davison said.

The model contains different land elevations, a farm, pond and marsh areas, golf course, construction site, roads and other elements. It also comes with materials to demonstrate erosion or pollution problems.

For example, the user can mix a red

gelatin — representing a pesticide — and apply it to the land on the model. Then by using a spray bottle to wet the gelatin, the model simulates rainfall and students can see how the pesticide works its way into the pond or marsh area. The same sort of demonstration can be used to simulate urban fertilizer runoff.

The kit also comes with an oil to demonstrate oils infiltrating water supplies and felt pieces that students can put in place on the model to simulate terraces, grass strips and other conservation measures.

Davison said as far as he knows, no other Soil Conservation Service office in the area, possibly even the state, has a model like the EnviroScape. Until now Davison had used a video designed for children in his classroom visits to local schools. While the video does a good job of explaining the concepts so kids can understand them, a lifelike model will be even better.

"It gives them a more hands-on experience," Davison said.

It may also help make adults more aware of conservation issues, he said.

"I think we teach adults more through kids than if we teach the adults straightforward," he added. "It's going to really help out the county in education if we can get it out into the field."



Lester Davison, assistant commissioner of the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Anne Parmentier, a manager at the Indianola Wal-Mart store, show off EnviroScape, a model that can help explain soil erosion and water pollution problems. Wal-Mart gave the money to purchase the model for The Warren County Soil and Water District.

RHT photo/Deb Barber

Offices change names in USDA reorganization

A reorganization of the United States Department of Agriculture has changed the names of three local government offices and canceled ASCS community elections for 1994, according to a news release.

The offices affected by the reorganization are the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

The current Warren County ASCS Committee has been appointed the acting Farm Service Agency County Committee.

The reorganization abolished the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and consolidated the programs of the former-ASCS into a new agency, named the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Each year, ASCS elected community committee members from the townships in the area. The community committee members in turn elected a person to represent their area on the ASCS County Commit-

tee.

The elections were canceled after the local county office had already mailed the ballots to area producers. Producers who received a ballot to vote for community members from their township do not have to return the ballots at this time, the news release said.

The election will be rescheduled when USDA officials determine the process that will be used to elect the county committee for the new Farm Service Agency.

All producers who have questions about the election or reorganization can contact the Warren County Farm Service Agency at 961-2587.

Also as part of the restructuring, the Soil Conservation Service has been renamed the Natural Resources Conservation Service to reflect the agency's wide range of responsibilities.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service will continue to be responsible for all of the programs formerly run by the SCS and has

also taken on management of several other projects: the Wetlands Reserve Program, the Water Bank Program, the Forestry Incentives Program, the Colorado River Salinity Control Program and the Farms for the Future Program.

Also through the reorganization, the Farmers Home Administration and the Rural Development Administration are being abolished and most of their loan and grant programs are being taken over by the Rural Economic and Community Development program.

The farm lending, rural housing, water and waste disposal, community facility, and business and industry programs formerly administered by FmHA or RDA will still be available at the newly named RECD offices. The farm loan programs will be transferred to the new Farm Service Agency at a later date.

The local office supervisor is William E. Allen, who is located at 1208 E. Second Ave., Indianola. The phone number is 961-7473.

Narigon retirement reception planned

Joe Narigon, Iowa State University Extension field specialist/crops, has announced his retirement on Oct. 4. He will be honored at a reception Sunday, Sept. 18, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Carver Science Hall on the Simpson College campus. The public may attend.

In 1968 Narigon worked at the Cass County Extension office for



Joe Narigon

six months and then became Webster County Extension director later that year. He worked there until July 1, 1980, when he started as extension director in Warren County. In 1992, as a result of the reorganization of the extension service, he became a field specialist/crops, serving Madison, Clarke, Adair, Union, Ringgold, Taylor, Adams, Decatur and Warren counties.

Narigon has received numerous awards during his extension career: Public Information Award and the Distinguished Service Award of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents and the Dow

Study Award. He served as president of the Iowa section of NACAA.

Narigon, and his wife, Fran, will be moving to Holiday Island near Eureka Springs, Ark.

**Flexible Protection
Designed To Fit Your
Changing Needs.**

MSI's Universal Life Policy
See me for all the details.



Durfey wins Region 6 Soil Conservation Poster Contest

1-5-94

Amber Durfey of Indianola was the first-place winner in the Region 6 1993 Soil Conservation Poster Contest sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners and Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company.

Durfey received a \$35 cash award for the first-place entry in division 3 (grades four through six).

The topic of the poster contest was "Soil and Water Conservation." The contest was open to all students in grades kindergarten through 12. Posters were judged on the entry's conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal. Regional contest winners were entered in a state contest from which four winners were chosen.

2-16-94



Poster contest

Amber Durfey of Indianola won first place in the Region 6 1993 Soil Conservation Poster Contest with this entry. The topic of the contest was "Soil and Water Conservation." She received a \$35 cash award.

50 years of protecting the soil

A salute to the Warren County Soil Conservation Service

1947: Thousands of people gather to watch conservation practices being established

Looking back on the history of the Warren County Soil Conservation District, several happenings of importance have marked its progression. In retrospect:

February 1944 — Petition is granted by the state of Iowa to establish the Warren County Soil Conservation District. First Commissioners were: J.E. Hatcher, W. Herbert Hastie and Lewis P. Mead.

October 1947 — People traveled from throughout Iowa and neighboring states to see the Don Bellman farm transformed into one of the largest earth-moving demonstrations ever attempted in a single day. Clay Barnett, area soil conservationist, directed the project, with some 30,000 people in attendance. An estimated 150 people with tractors, dozers and other equipment converged efforts to establish conservation practices on the Bellman farm.

September 1958 — Arlie Tillotson is named State of Iowa Soil Conservation Achievement Award winner. Tillotson, his wife, and son are featured in the Farm and Home Section of The Register and Tribune.

1960 — Congress approves financing for the 34,000-acre Badger Creek Watershed improvement project, which is partly located in northwest Warren County. The project includes construction of waterways, erosion control dams, water impoundment structures and other conservation measures along the North River.

May 1962 — Wayne Hunerdosse is named Outstanding Conservation Farmer in the National Soil Conservation Award Program sponsored by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company.

August 1965 — Linda Mae Dillard, 17-year-old daughter of

Wayne and Mae Dillard, was crowned "Queen of Conservation" at the regional contest held in Des Moines.

July 1966 — Edwin Ohnemus of Otter Township will be the first cooperator of this district to build a new type of terrace with tile outlet and grassed backslope. Other farm operators soon join suit.

December 1966 — Luther Williams, district commissioner, and Arlie Tillotson, outstanding conservation farmer in the Warren Soil District, were honored by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company for conservation achievement. They participated in the annual vacation-study program at Goodyear Farms 14,000-acre ranch near Phoenix, Ariz.

1968 — Construction began on the present USDA building in late summer with hopes to be in shortly after the first of the year.

February 1969 — Open house is held upon completion of the new USDA building where the SCS will now be located.

July 1972 — A recognition ceremony is held marking completion of field mapping for the county's standard cooperative soil survey. Warren County becomes the 37th county in the state to complete its soil survey. The last acre was mapped on the Wayne Hunerdosse farm 5 1/2 miles south of Indianola. Those present at the ceremony were: Robert Morrison, district commissioner chairman; Arthur Bryant, soil survey party leader; soil scientists, Michael Wiemann and David Reeves. Also, James Ginder, Robert Downing and Wayne Hunerdosse, district commissioners; Luther Williams, retired commissioner; Henry Staubus, district conservationist; and supervisors Don Reynolds and Virgil Halterman. Cost of the survey was \$150,000

with Warren County's share totaling \$30,000. The balance was paid by state and federal governments. State Representative, James I. Middlewart, was credited with introducing legislation to fund such projects.

January 1974 — Robert Morrison, chairman of the Warren Soil Conservation District, presented the first state of Iowa terracing cost-share payment issued in the county to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Rodgers of Milo.

July 1976 — One hundred thirty people took a conservation bus and aerial tour around Warren County sponsored by the Indianola Chamber of Commerce and Indianola airport, in cooperation with the local Soil Conservation District. Following the tour, Leo and Diana Davey were presented with the Warren County Conservation Farmer of the Year Award.

March 1977 — The Robert Fiddle farm of rural Indianola is featured on the cover of Wallaces Farmer where conservation efforts are again under way. The 1,550-acre operation now includes a total of 13 ponds, 20 miles of tile lines and 500 acres of terraced land. Work has been gradually done over a 20-year period.

October 1978 — Actor Robert Redford and Congressman Tom Harkin viewed conservation practices on the John Walker farm near Indianola. Redford came to voice support for Harkin, the family farm and good conservation practices.

January 1979 — Henry Staubus, district conservationist, resigns after 30 years of service with the SCS, 10 of which were in the Warren district. He is succeeded by Dave Gibney, former D.C., Jones County.

May 1982 — A group of law-



Mapping the last acre

Robert Morrison, chairman of the Warren County Soil District; (from left) Wayne Hunerdosse, district soil commissioner; and Arthur Bryant, soil scientist; complete field mapping for the county's standard cooperative soil survey in 1972. Warren County was the 37th county in the state to complete its soil survey. The last acre was mapped on the Hunerdosse farm 5 1/2 miles south of Indianola.

Photo submitted

makers from various states tour the Ben Kern farm of rural Norwalk as part of the National Conference of

State Legislators. The group was given a demonstration concerning no-till farming, along with fuel and

labor savings, and conservation benefits.

1985 — The first sign-up period for the Conservation Reserve Program started. Bids are submitted by landowners to take highly erodible land out of production for a 10-year period beginning in 1986.

February 1987 — Paul Rogalla, Indianola science and biology teacher, received an Outstanding Conservation Teacher Award from Ray Pehrson, chairman of the Warren Soil Conservation District.

February 1987 — After receiving the Goodyear Soil Conservation Grand Award, Ray Pehrson won an all-expense paid vacation-study trip to the Goodyear Farm in Litchfield Park, Ariz.

July 1987 — New employees at the SCS office Bill Schnelle, Bud Butler and Dora Guffey, have been hired to help with making highly erodible land determinations and assisting producers with completion of conservation compliance plans.

1990 — The SCS announces it will begin spot checking conservation plans on 5 percent of Warren County land. Plans have been completed on 97 percent of the farms in the county and are required on those with highly erodible land for producers wishing to remain eligible for government programs.

November 1994 — The Warren County Soil Conservation District recognizes its 50th anniversary. Current SCS staff are: Dale Faulkner, district conservationist; Jeannine Spick, state technician; Lisa Niedermayer, soil conservationist; Mary Streeter, secretary; Martin Bown, WAE; Dennis Dittmer, conservation aide; Lester Davison, volunteer; and Brad Latcham, Simpson College intern.

Consider soil conservation before tilling

Producers should consider conservation compliance before cutting silage or fall tilling soybean ground on highly erodible fields, according to a news release from the Soil Conservation Service.

With the fall harvest season approaching, now is the time for producers to fully understand their conservation compliance plans.

Many of the compliance plans in Warren County have been prepared requiring minimum tillage or no-till farming.

Using a conservation tillage system to achieve conservation compliance, requires that crop residue remain after harvest on the soil surface until after planting in 1995 at levels ranging from 20 to 70 percent, according to the SCS.

Fall tillage on soybean ground is discouraged because any amount of fall tillage will make it extremely difficult to achieve compliance.

Producers chopping corn silage on HEL fields may need to revise their plans, if the original plan calls for leaving 40 to 50 percent corn residue.

Revisions may require seeding oats or rye for a winter cover crop. Other options may include a plan revision implementing a no-till system or establishing a crop rotation with hayland.

One way to avoid compliance problems is to cut silage on non-HEL fields or flatter slopes within an HEL field.



A fourth grade class watches Lester Davidson of the Soil Conservation Service demonstrate erosion and water quality using a colorful scale model.

9-29-94
Marion County News

1-26-94

Conservation tillage meeting planned for Feb. 15

A conservation tillage meeting will be held Tuesday, Feb. 15, from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the extension service meeting room in the basement of the USDA building, east on Iowa Highway 92, Indianapolis.

Topics to be covered are: "How to Re-Establish Alfalfa after Winter-Killing Occurs;" "Applying Fertilizer, Lime and Growing Worms With No-Till Systems;" "Conservation Compliance-Comparing Erosion Control, Production Costs, Yields and Profits With No-Till vs. Conventional Systems;" Achieving Weed Control With No-Till and Heavy Residue Mulch Tillage Systems;" and "How the 1993 Weather Will Affect Weed Control for 1994."

Speakers will include Joe Narigon, crop production specialist, Iowa State University Extension Service; Mike White, agronomist, Heartland Coop; Dale Faulkner, district conservationist, Soil Conservation Service; and Gary Sams,

DuPont agricultural product representative.

Anyone planning to attend this meeting should call the SCS office, 961-5264, or extension service, 961-6237, by Friday, Feb. 11, for meal reservations.

Tillotson an early pioneer in conservation

By Brad Latcham

When one thinks of soil conservation in Warren County, the name Arlie Tillotson may come TO mind, and rightly so. Tillotson began farming in the 1930s and has implemented various conservation measures to his farm over the past several decades.

The operation consists of 410 acres of corn, hay and oats, along with enough pasture for a 70-head purebred Angus cow/calf herd. Tillotson, his wife, Sarah, and son, Keith, have established their farm as one of the premier in the state using soil conservation techniques. The farm is picturesquely set with strips of corn, alfalfa and oats which follow the contour of each curved hillside.

The Tillotsons' soil conservation efforts began around 1950 with help from the Soil Conservation Service. Bob Bollman, district conservationist at the time, helped lay out plans for contour strip cropping, as well as construction of two ponds.

"Our grounds didn't lay the best," said Tillotson, "so this land needed improvements."

As a result, the Tillotsons teamed up with the SCS to help reduce soil erosion and increase productivity on their farm. "Bob Bollman and Harold Godlove had a lot to do with helping us establish these conservation techniques," he said.

Tillotson has remained a steward of the land ever since, maintaining the same contour strips under proper crop rotation. He has also constructed a third pond and tilled virtually the entire farm to ensure proper drainage. The Tillotsons credit the SCS with helping them improve their farming operation.

Their conservation efforts paid off in 1958 when their farm was selected as winner in the county Conservation Achievement Contest. They then advanced on

TILLOTSON

Continued on Page 9C

Tillotson receives Soil Conservation Achievement Award

TILLOTSON

Continued from Page 8C

to regional competition and eventually won the state Iowa Soil Conservation Achievement Award. The Tillotsons were the first people from the Warren County District to win the state contest.

"It was quite an honor when we won that award," he said. Ironically, Tillotson was initially unaware of the contest. "We didn't know anything about it," he said, "we just farmed."

"We didn't try for anything, it just happened," Sarah Tillotson added.

As far as being instrumental in the area of soil conservation, Tillotson projects modesty. He

'I guess I'm a believer in grass, hay and cattle on this kind of land,' he said. 'If I had to grow just corn and beans, I'd have quit when I was 65.'

*— Arlie Tillotson,
Martensdale-area farmer and early soil
conservation practitioner*

doesn't claim to be a local leader in soil conservation efforts, but rather an individual farmer who notices the need to sustain soil for productive agriculture in the future.

Tillotson continues to farm south of Martens-

dale where he, his wife and son live. Their method of operation has changed little over the years. They still strip crop, contour farm and manage a significant herd of Angus stock cows. Most of all they continue to follow good soil conservation plans established in the 1950s.

"I guess I'm a believer in grass, hay and cattle on this kind of land," he said. "If I had to grow just corn and beans, I'd have quit when I was 65."

Brad Latcham is a Simpson College intern with the Warren County Soil Conservation Service office.

1-18-95

Page 7A



50 years of leadership

District commissioners for the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District received a plaque recently recognizing 50 years of leadership in soil and water conservation. They are (from left) Kevin Graham, Ben Kern, Mike Finck and Arlan Becker.

RHT photo/Angie Heller

AG Reminder

CHECK WETLANDS BEFORE YOU TILE

Anyone considering tiling should check with the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District office to see if wetlands exist in the area to be tiled. USDA farm program benefits could be lost if wetlands are altered by drainage (tiling, or ditching), removal of woody vegetation, filling or other alterations. Be sure to check on wetlands status before tiling, not after.

REVIEW YOUR CONSERVATION PLAN

Anyone with a conservation plan on highly erodible land should review that plan regularly. Winter time is a good time to do that and plan ahead. The Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District office staff can review your plan with you if you have questions or concerns. Remember practices need to be maintained that have been initially applied. Also plans can be revised so long as the same degree of land protection is obtained.

961-2192

SCS RENAMED NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

President Clinton on October 13 signed the USDA re-organization bill which includes the name change. The change more accurately reflects what the agency does - helping people conserve all natural resources on private lands.

In the reorganization, NRCS will pick up the Wetlands Reserve Program and the Forestry Incentives Program from ASCS. Other reorganization changes include: most programs at the present ASCS and FmHA will be combined into the new Consolidated Farm Service Agency (CFSA), Nationally 1100 USDA field offices will be closed or combined (no closings in Iowa), staff will be reduced by 7500 over 5 years and the USDA national office will be streamlined. The NRCS plans to significantly reduce the size of its national headquarters, and plans to focus on better customer service at the local level.



Conservation contest

Ben Kern (middle) presents Angela Spangler (right) and Dianne Schlomer (left), the winners of the Soil Conservation Poster Contest, with

certificates and checks.

RHT photo/Thad White

Sign up now for conservation work

Landowners should make plans for 1995 terrace construction projects. Applications are accepted throughout the year, but early signups are encouraged to ensure funding is available.

The Warren Soil District Commissioners give priority to approval of projects that can be completed during the summer construction season. Summer projects are encouraged on oat, hay or annual set-aside acres to spread before planting, and after harvest workloads for conservation contractors. Other advantages are less compaction to crop fields and ground

conditions are usually more favorable for efficient, less costly earth-moving projects.

Landowners can receive up to 50 percent of the cost for tiling, installing intakes and earth moving to construct terraces.

Landowners planning a terrace project for 1995 may sign up at the Soil Conservation District office, USDA Building, 1206 E. Second Ave. in Indianola. Natural Resource Conservation Service staff will arrange to make farm visits to determine feasibility of projects and provide cost estimates.

Cost-share funds available for conservation projects ⁹⁻²⁷⁻⁹⁵

State cost-share funding is now available through the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District. Land owners can receive up to 50 percent of the cost for tiling, installing intakes and earth moving to construct terraces.

Land owners are encouraged to

apply now for after harvest terrace construction projects. Applications are accepted throughout the year and early signups are encouraged to ensure funding is available.

Land owners planning a terrace project may sign up at the Warren County Soil Conservation District

office, USDA building, 1206 E. Second Ave., Indianola.

Natural Resource Conservation Service staff will schedule farm visits to determine feasibility of projects and provide cost estimates.

Freeman retires from Extension Service

Linda Freeman, office assistant at the Warren County Extension Service, has announced her retirement effective Sept. 29. The community may attend an open house for Freeman on Wednesday, Sept. 27, from 3 to 5:30 p.m. at the Extension office, 1202 E. Second Ave., in Indianola.

Freeman began working for

Extension in February 1968 on a part-time basis doing the 4-H secretarial work. She claims to have had contact with at least three generations in several families as she started with parents and leaders with their children in 1968 and is now seeing the third generation as 4-H members. She continued as 4-H secretary until May 1, 1988, when

she became the full-time office assistant.

She and her husband, Don, raised three sons and now have five grandchildren and one great-grandson. They plan to remain as residents of Warren County, and would like to pursue hobbies of gardening, fishing, training ponies and traveling.

9-20-95



Master corn growers

Master Corn Growers receiving awards Jan. 10 for the 1994 growing season are (from left) Marvin Spear, Henry Staubus and Jim Watts.

RHT photo/Deb Barber



Master soybean growers

Master Soybean Growers receiving awards Jan. 10 for the 1994 growing season are front row: (from left) Marvin Spear and Henry Staubus; back row: Mark and Mike Goodhue and Merrill and Steve Henry. Spear was also District II winner for conventional soybeans. The Goodhues were District II winners for no till. Kevin Halterman, representing Homeland Bank, presented the awards to the master growers. The bank has sponsored the Master Growers awards since 1983.

RHT photo/Deb Barber

Crop meeting Jan. 27 at Extension office

A crop production meeting will be held Friday, Jan. 27, from 9:30 a.m. to noon, at the Warren County Extension Service meeting room in the USDA building, 1202 E. Second Ave., Indianola.

Topics and speakers will include:

- 1995 weed control issues, Gary Sams, sales agronomist, DuPont Agricultural Products.
- How producers will be affected by legislation of integrated crop management, Mike White, ISU Extension crop production specialist.
- 1995 feed grain and catastrophic insurance programs, Terry Pauling, county executive director, Consolidated Farm Service Agency.
- Conservation compliance and wetland issues, Dale Faulkner, district conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Presentations of Warren County winners in the Iowa Master Corn and Soybeans Yield Contest, Kevin Halterman, loan officer, Homeland Bank.
- Presentation of soil conservation achievement award, Ben Kern, soil district commissioner.

A lunch will be provided and those planning to attend should call 961-5264 or 961-6237 by Tuesday, Jan. 24, for a meal reservation.

Milo farmer honored for conservation efforts

Duane Ohnemus of Milo is the Region 6 winner in a program to encourage soil and water conservation practices that protect the environment.

The winning conservationists in nine regions of Iowa's Soil and Water Conservation Districts will receive their awards at SWCD fall regional meetings.

This is the 21st year the Iowa

Farm Bureau has sponsored these awards. The program is conducted by the Iowa SWCD and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

Ohnemus has hosted tours of his farms for four foreign delegations and six cattlemen's association field days, focusing on his cattle operation, facilities and rotational grazing system on his 1,053-acre farm. He

contour farms 175 acres, has 200 acres of terraces and uses conservation tillage on 460 acres.

9-20-95

9-13-95

[Signature]

Organic nutrient funds available

The Warren Soil and Water Conservation District now has Organic Nutrient Management Program funds available for anyone who wishes to sign up.

The program provides 50 percent of the estimated cost, or 50 percent of the actual cost, whichever is the lesser amount not to exceed \$7,500 per project. Livestock waste management projects

eligible for cost share include Department of Natural Resources approved earth or concrete storage structures.

To sign up for these funds, stop at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service), USDA building, 1206 E. Second Ave., Indianola or call 961-5264 for additional information.



Conservation poster contest planned²⁻¹⁻⁹⁵

The Warren Soil and Water Conservation District is sponsoring a poster contest for students in Warren County. The contest will be for grades two through nine only.

Posters may cover any topic involved in the soil and water conservation field. Posters will be no smaller than 14 inches by 22 inches and no larger than 22 inches by 28 inches. Posters may be made in any medium such as paint, magic marker, pencil, cut and paste, crayon or whatever inspires the student. Judging will be based on each entry's conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal.

Each school in Warren County may submit a maximum of five entries in each division (Division 2, 3 and 4) with a total of 15 per school to the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District, 1206 E. Second Ave., Indianola, IA 50125. Prizes will be \$20 for first place for division 2, 3, and 4.

The winner of each division will advance to regional competition. Prizes for regional winners will be \$35 for Divisions 2, 3 and 4. State winners will receive \$50 first place for each division.

Call the Warren Soil and Water District office at 961-5264 for more information.

Regulatory wetlands web continues to grow

A year ago the Clinton administration proposed a wetlands regulation policy that was termed simpler, fairer, better coordinated and more effective. Those who have been a part of the debate over wetlands regulations since the late 1980s thought a dose of common sense was finally being injected. But new details are beginning to show otherwise.

A Memorandum of Agreement was signed early in 1994 by the four federal agencies that claim jurisdiction over wetlands policies. The agreement was supposed to minimize duplication between wetlands regulations in the Clean Water Act and the Food Security Act.

But there were several things in the MOA that were of concern to landowners. And those concerns are expected to bubble to the surface as

Susan
Anderson

Guest Opinion



wetlands designations are unveiled.

Under the MOA, wetlands inventories and determinations will be conducted off-site. In Iowa, that means a nine-member "wetlands inventory team" will use aerial photographs taken in five different years to pinpoint what they believe are wetlands. Maps will be prepared and sent to county Natural Resource Conservation Service offices.

District conservationists can

modify the designations before landowners are informed of wetlands on their property. Appeals can be made to the state NRCS office, which would result in an on-site inspection. A national appeals process is still being designed.

Prior-converted cropland will be reviewed periodically. Officials involved in developing the newest set of regulations said this category of cropland would be removed from wetlands regulations. But since the MOA calls for periodic review, landowners have reason to be concerned this land could be redelineated as farmed wetlands and be subject to regulation.

The MOA raises many questions about how long the regulatory arm of these four bureaucratic agencies will become. This nation's wetlands program has grown not by design, but by default. It has been expanded

and modified numerous times by administrative action, not by congressional action. Private landowners have been shut out of the process.

In 1995, Congress needs to write legislation that will allow wetlands to be evaluated based on function and value. Greater protection is needed for truly unique wetlands, while less stringent regulations are needed for low value and marginally wet areas. And provisions need to be made to compensate private landowners for the lost use of their land.

The goal of preserving and enhancing wetlands is a good one. But the massive regulatory web that has been developed goes far beyond what is needed to reach that goal.

Susan Anderson is spokeswoman for the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.

NRCS WETLAND DELINEATIONS

The (NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) is responsible for making wetland determinations.

On April 6, 1995, Dan Glickman, new Secretary of Agriculture, announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture will make agricultural wetland delineations only on request, until Congress complete action on the 1995 Farm Bill.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement, NRCS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.D. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are cooperating to streamline and simplify wetland regulations.

Under the agreement, NRCS is

responsible for making wetland delineations on agricultural land for agricultural programs and for Section 404 permits required by the Clean Water Act. The decision to put advance delineations on hold does not affect these responsibilities. Current wetland delineations by the NRCS are still valid.

Please contact the NRCS and CFSA (Consolidated Farm Service Agency - formerly ASCS) offices to request a wetland determination, before clearing trees or completing any land disturbing activities or drainage projects. Notify the offices in advance, so alterations can be done with full knowledge of their potential effect on your USDA program eligibility.

AG Reminder

961-2192

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE LAND?

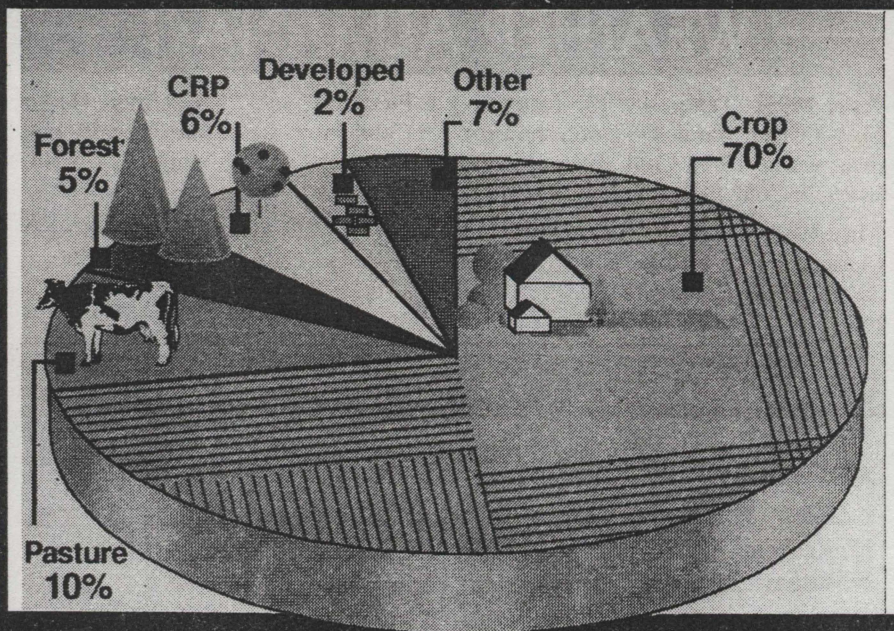
The nation has just witnessed perhaps the biggest conservation movement ever undertaken in this country. During the last ten years, through the conservation provisions of the 1985 farm bill:

- More than 35 million acres of highly erodible cropland were put into grass and trees, with enormous benefits for soil conservation, water quality, and wildlife.
- About 113 million acres of highly erodible cropland have been protected from soil erosion through conservation compliance plans implemented by the nation's farmers and ranchers.

This work is having an impact on the land. The 1992 National Resources Inventory shows that erosion went down by a third from 1982 to 1992, from three billion tons of soil erosion a year to two billion tons. And with that comes improved water quality, improved wildlife habitat, and increased sustainability.

These successes are due to the dedicated work of America's farmers, ranchers, and other land users; dedicated government and private sector employees; local conservation leaders; and the expanding conservation partnership that is going to be even more important in the years ahead.

What's on Iowa land?



Source: National Resources Inventory
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Nominations open for soil commissioners

The terms of two Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, Mike Finck of New Virginia (Virginia Township) and Alan Becker of Milo (Belmont Township), will expire at noon on Jan. 2, 1997.

Successors will be elected at the general election on Nov. 5.

Any qualified elector residing in the Soil and Water Conservation District, which is all of Warren County including cities and towns, is eligible for the office of commissioner, except that no more than one commissioner may be a resident of any township.

Incumbent commissioners are: Ben Kern of Norwalk (Linn Township), Kevin Graham of Ackworth (East Lincoln Township) and Patti Hill of Milo (Union Township); so residents of these townships are not eligible for office at this time.

Prospective candidates must file nomination petitions in the same manner as for other elective positions at the general election, except that no political party is designated. Nomination petitions can be obtained from the Warren County auditor.

These petitions, signed by 25 eligible electors, must be filed with the auditor at the Warren County Courthouse no later than 5 p.m., on Aug. 28.

Individuals elected in November 1996 will serve a term of six years starting Jan. 2, 1997. Soil Conservation District Commissioners serve without salary and guide the overall soil and water conservation program in the county.

For more information, contact the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District office, 909 E. Second Ave., Ste. B, Indianola, Iowa, phone 961-5264.

Farmer fiddling around with 'dozer

Schurmans honored for their dedication to soil conservation

By Daniel P. Finney

Record-Herald Staff Writer

LACONA — You've heard of the fiddler on the roof. Now meet the fiddler on the bulldozer.

For more than 50 years, Vitus Schurman used a Caterpillar 9G to practice soil conservation on his rural Lacona farms. Fifteen years ago, Schurman picked up a knack for playing the fiddle.

Last month his efforts — on the bulldozer, not the fiddle — won he and his son, Steve, recognition as recipients of the Warren Soil and Water District Commissioners Soil Conservation Achievement Award.

Winners are selected based on their commitment to soil conservation on their farms.

History

The Schurmans began cooperating with Warren Soil and Water Conservation in 1952. Vitus Schurman bought what was then a brand new Caterpillar bulldozer to build terraces and ponds on parts of his 328 acres to help stop erosion in the hilly farmlands of rural Lacona.

Though perhaps not the first, Schurman was a pioneer in soil conservation in Warren County and helped lead the way with nearly a half century of no-till farming, grassed waterways, grassed headlands and crop rotations.

"He's just a real neat person who is dedicated to soil conservation," said Dale Faulkner of the

soil and water district. "A lot of people hired those terracing and pond jobs done, but Vitus did them himself."

Vitus Schurman's efforts in the fields made a believer out of his son, Steve, 40, who now handles much of the work on the farms.

"It's really helped the land," Steve Schurman said. "This has made it last years longer than it would have without it."

Retired?

Vitus Schurman, 81, officially retired in the early 1960s, but son Steve said, "I don't know that he's really quit yet."

In 1982, Schurman, who still was active on the farms despite his "retirement," decided to fill his spare time by learning to play the fiddle. He now squeaks out romantic versions of old-time tunes like "Ol' Suzanna" and "She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain" at a local nursing home and care center as a hobby.

Still running

The old bulldozer has had its problems but still chugs along today — though the family now hires many of the terracing jobs out to contractors.

Steve Schurman overhauled the bulldozer last winter to repair a clutch. He went to several repair shops asking for parts to the 9G model. Each clerk had the same exasperated statement: "You mean there's still one of those running?"

Vitus Schurman has had the bulldozer for so long he doesn't remember when he bought it. Steve says he thinks he remembers it being bought within his 40-

FARMER

Continued on Page 2A



Vitus Schurman of rural Lacona demonstrates his two passions: farming and playing the fiddle. He learned how to play the instrument after retiring from farming and entertains at a

local nursing home. Schurman and his son, Steve, were recently honored for their work in soil conservation.

RHT photo/Deb Barber

Fiddler on a 'dozer saves soil

FARMER

Continued from Page 1A

year lifetime, but "you can't really go by the memories of a 1-year-old."

When asked, Vitus simply turns to his wife, Genevieve, who shrugs whimsically.

"Oh, Lord, it's been a long time since you bought that thing," she said. "A long, old time."

Fiddler

Vitus and Genevieve Schurman mostly watch as their son works the land. When not strolling some of their 328 acres, Schurman will play his fiddle for residents of a local nurs-

Quotable:

“ You know, me and this old bulldozer are a lot alike. We don’t look as good as we used to, but we’re still running. ”

— Vitus Schurman

ing home. When not doing that, Schurman works on his collection of fiddle-related ornaments.

Right now, his collection is up to three Christmas ornaments with various representations of his beloved fiddle. The pride of his collection is a miniature, reproduction fiddle — case and a bow — that he claims he received from Santa Claus.

"I didn't believe in Santa Claus until I got this," Schurman said. "The grandkids really surprised me with this one."

One day last week, while sitting atop his old bulldozer, he strummed his fiddle and thought aloud.

"You know, me and this old bulldozer are a lot alike," Schurman said. "We don't look as good as we used to, but we're still running."

What the swampbuster law means

THE FEDERAL WETLANDS conservation law known as swampbuster could go a long way toward preserving our remaining wetlands, yielding substantial benefits for wildlife, water quality, flood control, the taxpayer's pocketbook and commodity prices. The law is under continuing assault, however, and will not survive if farm drainage interests in Iowa and other Midwest states have their way.

Congress passed swampbuster as part of the 1985 Food Security Act to slow the headlong pace of wetland drainage. This country has lost about half of its original wetlands. Many states have lost 90 percent or more, with Iowa high on the loss list. About 80 percent of wetlands lost nationwide are drained for agriculture.

Taxpayers have spent, and continue to spend, huge sums for conflicting programs that affect wetlands. While paying billions in subsidies for crops grown on drained wetlands, millions more are being spent to restore and create wetlands, rebuild dwindling wildlife populations and combat other problems like flooding and degradation of water supplies that often are exacerbated by drainage.

Swampbuster was an effort to address some of these inconsistencies. It does not prohibit drainage. It does say that taxpayers will no longer underwrite the costs. Though the law is often misrepresented, swampbuster does not turn any land back into marsh that was being farmed regularly before 1985, when the law passed.

This is similarly true for the country's only other major program protecting wetlands, the 404 Program of the Clean Water Act, which only applies to agriculture when land is being converted to new

uses, or when a major wetland area is filled.

It must be repeated that under swampbuster, landowners still can farm any wet area as they did prior to December 1985. Maintenance of existing drainage systems is allowed. But the landowner is not supposed to increase the level of drainage.

If this sounds reasonable, particularly in light of President Bush's no-net-loss of wetlands pledge, consider that swampbuster has been virtually ignored in many areas. Relatively few farmers have lost any benefits because of the law. Consider also that the Soil Conservation Service has weakened the rules, largely as a result of agitation against swampbuster last summer from drainage interests in northern Iowa. Senator Charles Grassley's office supported the wetland foes, who were successful in getting SCS to recategorize many wetlands to completely exempt them from swampbuster.

This has not appeased the law's opponents, who portray themselves as farmers but are often led by drainage engineers and land contractors who operate tiling equipment. They want to exempt any wetland that has ever been drained, or slated for eventual drainage, or come under the jurisdiction of a drainage district. To do this would eliminate from protection nearly every wetland in Iowa.

Faced with such demands, the public has a right to ask if any reasonable measure could satisfy pro-drainage appetites.

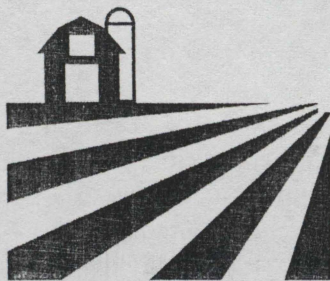
The farm community keeps lobbying for compromise, but it wants everything to go its way. For example, many in the conservation community have been supporting the notion of a greatly reduced penalty for first-time swampbuster violations, on the condition that the wetland is restored. After all,

conservationists don't want penalties for farmers — we want wetlands protected. Unfortunately, there has been little interest in this change that would address concerns on both sides. Instead, we have touted as a "compromise" proposals that would exempt all small wetlands, that would allow expansion of drainage on any wetland that has a farming history, and allow state Agricultural and Stabilization Service committees to use their discretion in setting penalties. These are the same committees that generally have shown little interest in enforcing the law. One can easily imagine the results. In one Minnesota swampbuster case under appeal by the Izaak Walton League and the National Wildlife Federation, an ASCS committee suggested \$1 per acre as a reasonable penalty. What a deterrence.

Wetlands advocates have been working vigorously to develop programs that better share the costs of protecting wetlands and other natural resources with farmers. There are more of these incentive-type programs than ever before — in the form of Water Bank, the Conservation Reserve Program and state initiatives like Iowa's Resource Enhancement and Protection Act.

It is ridiculous to continue pouring government money into paying landowners not to drain, if through our farm programs we perpetuate a strong encouragement to ditch and tile. Presumably, farming interests want to maintain public support for commodity program subsidies and conservation-related incentives. If so, it's time to show some good faith in defining when enough drainage is enough.

Ann Y. Robinson is agricultural specialist for the Izaak Walton League of America.



January 1998

Warren County FSA News

Warren County FSA
909 E 2nd Ave
Indianola, Iowa 50125

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

County Committee
Don Berry
James Gavin
Kent Ruble

Staff
Nancy DeLay
Becky Eckhoff
Marcie Freeman
Connie Hancock
Bob Miller, ACO
Terry Pauling, CED

Farming Changes

Please notify the FSA office of ANY changes to your farming operation. Failure to do so could affect your eligibility for the PFC payments. Changes that affect your farming operation include:

- a change of owner, operator, or other producers sharing in the crop,
- an increase or decrease in the amount of land being operated, or
- any revision of a lease that changes the way the crops are shared

Do not assume that other producers on the farm have notified our office. Notify our office as soon as the changes become effective.

PFC Contracts

Advance payments have been issued to all producers with updated contracts. Those producers who have not yet updated their contracts for the 1998 year may soon receive a letter from our office informing them of the updates necessary. Advance payments cannot be issued on contracts updated after January 15. These farms will receive their entire 1998 payment in September.

CRP Continuous Signup

Continuous signup for CRP is intended to be available for those acres and producers who meet eligibility requirements of the CRP program.

The continuous CRP signup process does not have a competitive bidding process. The acreage designated for enrollment is evaluated

and a maximum payment rate is calculated for those acres. If all requirements are met, the land can be approved for immediate enrollment in a 10 - 15 year contract.

Eligible land for enrollment in the continuous CRP includes cropland planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity in any 2 of the 5 crop years 1993 - 1997, and that is physically and legally capable of being cropped.

The acreage must also be determined eligible and suitable by NRCS for any of the following:

filter strips
riparian buffers
shelter belts
living snow fences
field waterways
grassed waterways
shallow water areas for wildlife.

The effective date of the contract is the first day of the month following the month of approval. Producers may defer the effective date for up to six months. The contract shall not be less than 10 nor more than 15 years in length.

Incidental grazing of land enrolled as *buffer strips* and *waterways* will be permitted for up to two months each year in conjunction with the grazing of crop residue in the remainder of the field. There will be a payment reduction of 25 percent of the annual rental rate charged for the grazing option.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

CRP Signup 16 Offers

CRP Signup 16 Offers have been submitted to Washington, D.C. for final evaluation. All offers will be ranked according to total EBI scores. As soon as the determination is made on the number of acres to be enrolled, our office will notify all producers as quickly as possible.

Check Stored Grain

All producers are reminded to periodically check their farm-stored grain. Grain that is placed in a bin on warm days during fall harvest may not have been cooled sufficiently. This may cause the grain to go out of condition very rapidly. Periodic spot checks of the grain permit the owner to catch potential problems early.

The Warren County Loan Rates for 1997 crop are Corn \$1.73/bu. and Soybeans \$5.15/bu.

Direct Deposit Payments

Congress has mandated that ALL payments issued after January 1, 1999 be made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). In addition, all producers who request program benefits for the first time, including renting or buying a new farm, are required to receive all payments through EFT.

A transaction statement detailing the program payment and the amount of the deposit is mailed to each producer after each payment. Keep this statement for your records. EFT payments are deposited in your account as early as the next day, but in rare instances, may take as many as three days.

Once you begin receiving payments through direct deposit it is your responsibility to notify the County Office when you:

- close an account;
- change account numbers;
- your bank changes its routing number or
- you change banks.

We cannot guarantee you will receive payments promptly unless we have current and correct information.

Ag Census

Agricultural producers should have received the 1997 Census of Agriculture in the mail. The census of agriculture is a complete accounting of United States ag production. The census is the only source of uniform, comprehensive ag data for every county in the Nation.

The census includes as a farm every place from which \$1,000 or more of ag products were produced and sold or normally would have been sold during the census year.

The census of agriculture is taken every 5 years covering the years ending in "2" and "7".

The census is used by Agribusinesses to determine the most effective locations for service to ag producers and by Farm organizations to evaluate and propose programs and policies that can help ag producers.

Your elected representatives use census data to develop programs to protect and promote United States agriculture.

Rural Electric companies use census data to forecast future energy needs for ag producers and their communities.

Colleges and Universities use census data in research programs to develop new and improved methods to increase ag production.

For the first time, the census of agriculture is the responsibility of the United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). In prior years, the ag census was conducted by the Bureau of the Census.

NASS has the legal authority and an unblemished record for maintaining confidentiality of individual records. All information will be used only for statistical purposes.

It is required by all producers receiving the Census of Agriculture to complete and return it by February 2, 1998. Our office is available to help if you need assistance in completing the Census of Agriculture.

Farm Loan Programs

FSA's Farm Loan Programs (FLP) are designed to assist producers who are unable to obtain conventional financial aid. Producers who need financial assistance should contact the FSA office to determine program eligibility. Both Direct and Guaranteed loans are available to eligible producers. Loan funds are not always available. However, once an application is filed, funding will be monitored and you will be notified when your loan can be approved. Contact the FSA office for additional information.

County Committee Elections

Local Administrative Area (LAA) 3 conducted an election in December to elect a new representative to the Warren County FSA Committee. The election results are as follows:

Kent Ruble, Regular Member

Duane Ohnemus, First Alternate

John Dittmer, Second Alternate

Velma Shepherd, CMC Member

We thank each of these individuals for their willingness to participate in the administration of USDA programs and are looking forward to working with each of them over the next three years.

FSA County Committee

The Warren County FSA Committee held its organizational meeting on January 5, 1998 and elected Don Berry as Chair-person, Jim Gavin as Vice Chair-person, with Kent Ruble as regular member.

The committee will meet on the First and Third Monday's of each month at 8:30 a.m. to conduct regular business. If anyone has any concerns or questions about USDA programs please feel free to discuss them with your County Committee representative.

Dates to Remember

Jan. 19

Office Closed
Martin Luther King Day

Feb. 16

Office Closed
Presidents Birthday

This check could have been deposited days ago.

The money could be available to you right now.

Get your next payment Direct Deposited.

Ask about it at your Farm Service Agency Office.

DIRECT DEPOSIT





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Sign Up Now for Conservation Work

Landowners are encouraged to make plans for ~~1998~~ ²⁰⁰¹ terrace construction projects.

Applications are accepted throughout the year, but early sign ups are encouraged to ensure funding is available.

The Warren Soil District Commissioners give priority approval of terrace projects which can be completed during the summer construction season. Summer projects are encouraged on oat or hay ground to spread before planting and after harvest workloads for conservation contractors. Advantages are less compaction to crop fields; and ground conditions are usually more favorable for efficient, less costly earthmoving projects. Another strategy is for landowners to install tile and intakes prior to planting so that earthmoving can be completed after harvest.

Landowners can receive up to 50 percent of the cost for tiling, installing intakes and earthmoving to construct terraces.

Landowners planning a terrace project for ~~1998~~ ²⁰⁰¹ may sign up now at the Soil Conservation District Office, USDA Building. Natural Resources Conservation Service staff will arrange to make farm visits to determine feasibility of projects and provide cost estimates.

NRCS Introduces Two New Programs

1. WHIP

NRCS is bringing to your attention the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). WHIP is a program that emphasizes wildlife and fisheries habitat of National and State significance and promotes practices to establish habitat.

The objectives of WHIP is to work with participants to create and enhance wildlife habitat, and enter into WHIP agreements to provide financial assistance in the form of cost-share payments which range from 5 to 90 percent. Priority will be given to prairie restoration and shelterbelt development. Eligible participants could also include schools, churches, etc. This program will get started in the early part of 1998.

2. Floodplain Easement Program

Another new program beginning in 1998 is the Floodplain Easement Program. All cropland being farmed within a floodplain is eligible. A permanent easement is purchased for 100% of the agricultural value. The land is then restored to prairie vegetation at a 100% cost share rate. The purchased easement prohibits crop being grown in the field, however, the landowner retains ownership and the right to hunting.

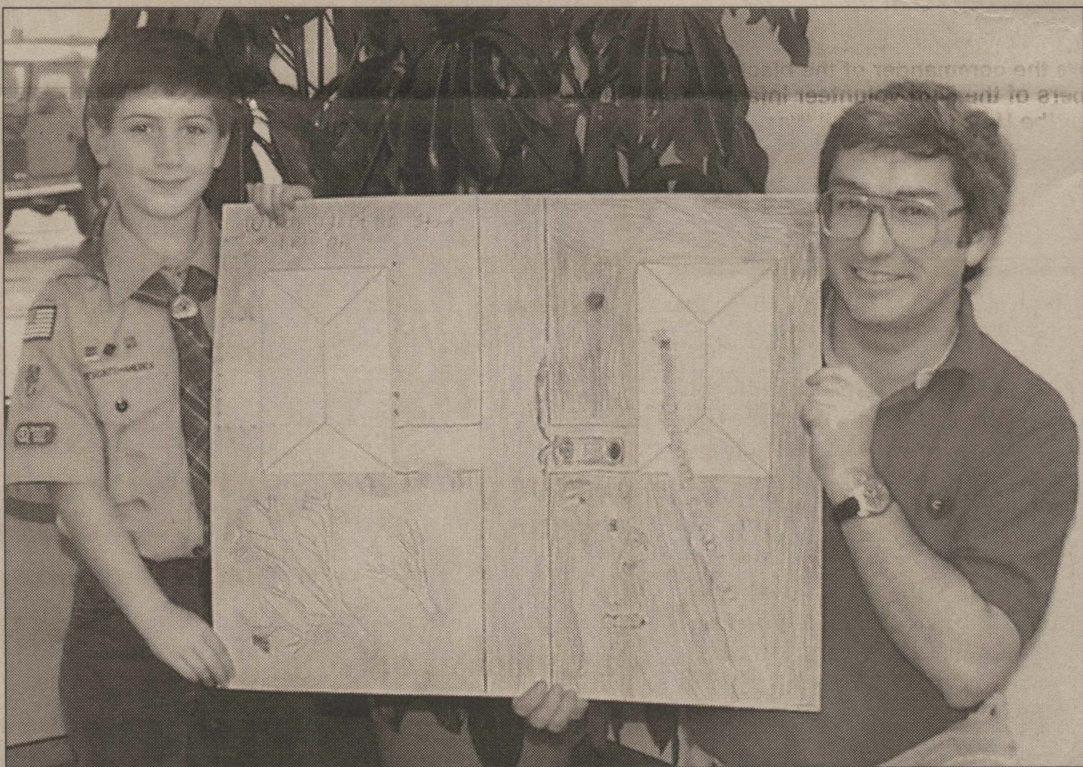
Cropland fields along rivers and creeks that occasionally flood are ideal for the floodplain easement program.

If you have any questions about either of these programs, feel free to call the NRCS Office at 961-5264.

Custom Operators Needed

NRCS is making a list of producers who have the necessary equipment to complete the seeding enhancements to Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage. Many producer's offers to enroll land into CRP included the requirement to enhance the existing cover to benefit wildlife.

Any producers who are willing to custom apply seeding enhancements are encouraged to contact NRCS.



Poster contest winner

2-18-98

Danny Dunn was the 1997 poster winner of the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District. The topic was Backyard Stewardship. Dunn, son of Ruth and Robert Dunn, is a fourth-grader at Norwalk Lab School. He received a \$20 check from the district. Ben Kern is the

chairman of the WSWCD. Entries are now being accepted for the 1998 contest. Students in grades two through six can enter the contest. Deadline is March 15. Local entries should be sent to soil and water conservation district offices.

RHT photo/Deb Barber

Fall soybean ground tillage is discouraged

Producers should consider conservation compliance before fall tilling soybean ground on highly erodible fields. Many of the conservation compliance plans in Warren County have been prepared requiring minimum tillage or no-till farming.

Using a conservation tillage system to achieve conservation compliance, requires that crop residue remain after harvest on the soil surface until after planting in 1999 at levels ranging from 20 to 70 percent.

Fall tillage on soybean ground is discouraged because any amount of fall tillage will make it extremely difficult to achieve compliance. Farmers need to follow compliance plans in order to remain eligible to receive USDA program benefits.

Conservation Options *FSA Newsletter* NRCS 1-99



Consider Your Spring Tillage Options Carefully

Project "MAINTENANCE"

We have noticed that several landowners have been repairing some of their conservation practices. Maintenance is a measure that we all need to look at to keep these systems functioning properly. Many cost share practices require that you maintain these practices for 10-20 years. For example, on terraces and grade stabilization structures it is important that a landowner establish and maintain grass cover on the front and back slopes. Trees, brush, and noxious weeds can be controlled by chemical or mechanical means. Earthen ridge heights, storage capacities, intakes, tile lines, under ground outlets, and principle spillways should be maintained to function as intended.

Keeping conservation practices maintained and applying more to our land will reduce soil loss, improve water quality, and influence your neighbors that you value natural resources.

Producers should check their conservation plan before considering spring tillage options on highly erodible fields. Many of the conservation compliance plans in Warren County require conservation tillage or no-till farming. Using a conservation tillage system to achieve conservation compliance requires crop residue remain on the soil surface after spring planting. Since we have had an open fall, many producers have already fin-

ished tillage operations that may have limited their options for residue management. To control erosion, residue levels ranging from 30 to 70 percent are typical. Each tillage operation can reduce the amount of available residue on the soil surface by 15 to 40 percent so caution should be taken when planning spring tillage in order to achieve compliance plan requirements and remain eligible to receive USDA program benefits.



COST SHARE SIGN UP

The Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District are still accepting cost share applications for conservation practices. These practices include: terracing, water impoundment structures, water and sediment basins, grassed waterways, tree plantings, and conservation cover.

Priority is given to projects that can be completed in the spring or summer months to reduce the workload on our contractors in the fall and increase the number of conservation practices accomplished each year.

Contact NRCS for additional information on cost share available from State funding.



wide variety of congenital, acquired and behavioral causes.

•
The Warren Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will approve state cost share funding for conservation projects in August. Landowners can receive up to 50 percent of the cost for tiling, installing intakes, and earthmoving to construct terraces.

Landowners are encouraged to apply prior to July 30 for after harvest erosion control projects. Other projects available for cost share are:

water impoundment structures, water and sediment basins, grassed waterways, tree plantings, and conservation cover.

Landowners may sign up at the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District office, USDA building, 909 East Second Ave., Ste. B., Indianola.

Natural Resources Conservation Service staff will schedule farm visits to determine feasibility of projects and provide cost estimates.

7-7-99



Looking west are two farmers pointing out a gully which will be planted with trees next spring for a wild life preserve. Over the hill, a crowd of spectators watch a gully being bladed in.



Warren County farmers Harold Wachter and Betty Wachter received their Century Farm family award at the 1999 Farm Progress Show. Also pictured is NRCS State Conservationist Leroy Brown (center) and Idals-Division of Soil Conservation Official Ken Tow.

Photo submitted

Wachter family to represent Warren County

The Harold Wachter family was selected to represent Warren County as one of Iowa's conservation farm families of the century.

The Wachter's are one of 78 farm families from across Iowa honored at the 1999 farm progress show in the Amanas on September 19. They were officially recognized in a brief ceremony at the show. They were nominated by the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District for their efforts to protect the water, air, and land that will produce our food into the next millennium.

Each conservation family received a limited edition wildlife print by well known Iowa artist Larry Anderson and jackets and certificates signed by Governor Thomas J. Vilsack and other state conservation leaders.

This recognition of Iowa's conservation farmers caps the year long conservation milestones at the millennium campaign that honors the conservation work of Iowa's private landowners and the local, state, and federal conservation agencies and organizations which help them.

RHT **Business & Agriculture**

The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
October 20, 1999



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