

University Farm News
University of Minnesota
University Farm
St. Paul 1 Minnesota

October 6 1950



Appearing in newspapers of the Minnesota Editorial Association through the cooperation of the U.S. Soil Conservation service and conservation authorities at University Farm.

Prepared and distributed
by the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service.

For use during week of
October 22 1950

Wilkin Conservation district's ~~emphasis on tree planting~~—especially for shelterbelts to check wind erosion—has led co-operating farmers to plant 430,000 trees since district organization in 1946. The district has two tree planters it rents to farmers. Last spring 58 district co-operators planted 57,965 trees, of which they bought 21,475 from commercial nurseries and obtained 36,500 from U. S. Soil Conservation Service through their local district.

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Loss of topsoil on a slope of 4 or 5 per cent during 75 years of farming was one of the most striking things observed on a tour of the Lac Qui Parle and Yellow Medicine County Soil Conservation districts, reports M. A. Thorfinnson, extension soil conservationist at University Farm. This was noted a few miles out of Boyd in an area of good heavy soil when virgin prairie soil near a town hall was compared with the same soil on the same slope in a farmer's field a few feet away.

It was found that even on this gentle slope, 5 inches of topsoil had washed away in 75 years of cropping. Significantly, no surface damage was as yet apparent because the remaining topsoil was still about 7 inches deep. Until the plow begins to turn up subsoil, most farmers are not aware of their loss. They may lose a third or more of their most fertile soil, as in this case, before realizing that erosion is gradually removing the most valuable part of their farms.

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Q. When is the best time to apply agricultural limestone to my fields?

A. The Soils division at University Farm recommends spreading on top of fall plowing when possible. It takes at least six months for lime to begin to correct soil acidity. If lime is applied in the fall, the seed bed will be in condition for a good catch of spring seeded legumes. Soil Conservation Service.

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