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Our LAND



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Twilight Tour in Lincoln County -- Tyler, Minnesota, businessmen were guests of Lincoln County Soil Conservation District supervisors on a "twilight tour" of soil conservation projects recently. They saw programs laid out on the Ernest Hollander and Walter Cyriacks farms near Lake Benton. Both farms will be sites of Plowville '54 events next September 17-18. The businessmen feel now they have a much broader understanding of conservation "from the farmer's point of view." The twilight tour sounds like a good idea in developing better rural-town feeling and understanding.

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Deep-Rooted Legumes Valuable in Drainage -- Farmers who have solved tough drainage problems and brought soggy land into production know the value of deep-rooted legumes such as alfalfa and sweet clover. Both are drainage "improvers". For example, in the Red River Valley, the difference in water absorption by soils with good structure compared to those with poor is often enough to keep the field from flooding. Tests by Norman County Agents and the East Agassiz Soil Conservation District show that good-structured soils take 3 to 5 times as much water without flooding or pooling as poor-structured soils. An alfalfa and sweet clover program often meant the big difference.

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Open Ditch Often Good Drainage Idea -- Alfred Holst, a Goodhue county farmer, deals not only with runoff water from his own place but that from adjoining farms. Recognizing that during heavy rains more water falls than can usually be held even under the best rotations and soil management, he hired a bulldozer and built an open-ditch waterway. Built on a $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 per cent slope, it has sloped sides and a 25-foot-wide grassed bottom. This summer's heavy rains "went through nicely" and 11 acres of waste land gave a good crop of corn--its first in many years. This story came from Arnold Wiebusch, Soil Conservation Agent in Goodhue County at Red Wing.

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More Evidence Strip-Cropping Helps -- His 58 acres of strip-cropping laid out this spring have proved their value in far less soil washing and a healthier soil that lets grain get the drinks it needs from below to stand dry weather. The farmer, James Riesdorf of Adrian, a cooperator in the Nobles County Soil Conservation District, had valuable help in strip planning from Harold Dineen of the SCS, and Ross Huntsinger, Nobles County Agent.