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Our LAND



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Can't Buy Tilth -- You know, a farmer can't buy good soil tilth -- and it's one of the very important factors in profitable crop-raising. One of the fastest and cheapest ways to improve soil tilth is by a rotation that has plenty of grass-legume sod crops. On some Minnesota soils, it may take up to a third of the land to keep a good tilth-building program operating. But plenty of farmers will swear that it's worth it. Melvin Trosvik, one of the five farmer-brothers on whose farm Plowville '55 will be staged next September 16-17, says they found it true.

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Contour Strips Prevented Soil Robbing -- In the summer of 1952, a 20-acre field near Lewiston lost so much soil in one rain that the roadside ditch filled level with good topsoil for nearly 200 feet. That "robbed" field was in corn, up and down the slope. When this rain came, the farmer had just finished cultivating the last time. It took a power shovel and two trucks nearly two days to clean out ditch. And as the farmer soberly watched truckload after truckload of his soil being hauled away, he decided then and there on contour strips for that fall. He had a hard time. Marking out the strip boundaries with a tractor and plow, he could hardly stay on the seat. For 400 feet or more the rain had washed small foot-deep ditches between each corn row. Next spring, he seeded alternate strips to hay and has cropped it this way ever since. -- and not a shovel full of soil has washed into that road ditch.

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Brome-Grass Success Story -- How's this for a success story in use of alfalfa-brome? Leonard Kennedy, a supervisor in the Rock County Soil Conservation District out near Luverne, ^{says} that his 47 acres of alfalfa-brome have been carrying 92 two-year-old steers. And this is under conditions of a very dry spring that has put the bluegrass pastures on the sick list. He rotates his alfalfa-brome pasture--using half, letting half grow.

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