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Our LAND



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Farmer Knows Value of Lime -- Archie Roe, LeRoy, Minn., this year saw how lime makes a difference in crop fields. Last spring when the lime truck was spreading lime on a field before seeding time, it accidentally traveled along the edge of a field that was planted to soybeans. The soybeans came up several days earlier and harvested 10 bushels higher where the lime truck spread the lime. Roe says the beans responded to the lime like corn does to fertilizer. He is a cooperator in the Mower county soil conservation district.

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Autumn Raises Fire Danger -- Clean up around the farm buildings this fall, but don't burn the buildings or forests by starting grass fires on windy days. Farm fires cause rural America more than \$250 million yearly, or an average of \$16 per farm. Three thousand or more people burn to death annually in the United States, and the farm fire losses in Minnesota were more than 1½ million. Burn the leaves and rubbish on still days. And don't leave elderly folks alone around an outdoor fire, warns Glenn Prickett, University of Minnesota extension farm safety specialist. If a sudden gust of wind spreads the blaze rapidly, the results may be tragic.

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Soil Tests Don't Last Forever -- It's best to take a plant food inventory on every field when the rotation is completed, says Charles Simkins, extension soils specialist at the University of Minnesota. Sample each field just before it goes into first year corn. Reason for that is, corn is a high profit crop and should get the preference of fertilizer. Soil samples can be taken whenever the ground isn't frozen, but it's best to take them in the fall. Then there is more time to take the samples, you can do a better job, you'll get the results back earlier, and you'll have more time to order fertilizer.

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Drain Tile Saves Land -- Three thousand feet of drain tile are licking a land drainage problem on the Peter Perrotte farm in Wabasha County. Perrotte had 6 acres of "tight soil" that never got dry early enough in the year to work up and get the crop in on time. So soil conservation workers came in with a ditching machine and put in the tile, five feet under the soil's surface. Now Perrotte can plan on working the "wet" area as early in the spring as any other soil on the farm.