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Loss of humus in soil is one of the serious problems of the Red River Valley. Soils plow "one-bottom heavier" than 10 years ago, many farmers report. Soil Conservation Service men and farmers agree the cause is too much grain and not enough grasses and legumes in the rotation. Also, they feel there is too much summer fallowing.

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Afraid of a summer drought? Here are three things M. L. Armour, U Farm extension agronomist, says you can do to protect yourself against drought losses without decreasing crop yields:

(1) Work the soil at right angles to the slope. Contouring provides little dirt dams to hold water. (2) Leave the soil rough. The rougher the surface after seeding or planting, the more rainfall will be held on the field. (3) Work manure and crop residues into the soil. It helps check runoff. The organic matter also provides plant food for growing crops and decreases surface moisture evaporation.

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Q. How can a soil conservation district help me in my drainage problem?

A. By surveying and planning the type ditch needed and by giving you a cost estimate. The district SCS man does this as part of the help he gives on a complete farm conservation plan. It is up to you to do the work, or hire it done.

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To make maximum use of fertilizer on corn, be sure there are enough plants per acre to fully use the material applied. Good stands are important. Experimental work shows two stalks per hill won't completely use all fertilizer. The best recommendations are three stalks of corn per hill on light textured, or sandy soils and four on medium, or heavy textured soils.

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