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Our LAND

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Trees with smooth, thin bark are subject to a type of winter injury called sun scald. The sun, low in the southwestern sky and reflected off the snow, warms the cambium tissue just beneath the bark sufficiently to cause growth to start. A sudden drop in temperature in late afternoon kills this tender growing tissue. Soon the bark begins to curl and slough off. This occurs on the southwestern side of the trunk and on larger limbs.

This injury can be avoided, advises Marvin Smith, extension forester at University Farm, by loosely wrapping the trunk or limbs with burlap. Aluminum foil is also good protection. A board or lath secured so that it covers the southwestern side of the limb or trunk will also prevent sun scald.

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Fred Schumann and son, Alfred, Upper Zumbro Soil Conservation District, worked out a farm conservation plan with help of U. S. Soil Conservation Service in 1946. Since then corn yields have gone from 50 bushels per acre to 65, oats from 40 to 51, and hay from 2 ½ to 3 ½ tons per acre. Dairy herd has increased from 13 to 20 cows. More land is in hay and pasture, less in grain and corn. Four year rotation with 2 years meadow, contour strip cropping, liming, fertilizing, and pasture renovation make the difference.

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If woods are pastured, warns Parker Anderson, extension forester, trees die out, due to girdling and heavy packing of soil. Young reproduction is eaten off. Grazing results in a deteriorating timber tract, dying and diseased trees. Any vegetation which survives usually consists of noxious weeds, hazel brush, alder, prickly ash, or other vegetation which crowds out even the sparse grasses.

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