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Fall and winter are timber harvest seasons, and Parker Anderson, extension forester at the University of Minnesota, points out that as part of a sound land use system, farm woodlot owners should make a survey of their timber tract before any cutting is done. He urges:

"Cut the trees in such a way as to improve the woodlot's future. Mature trees should be turned into cash. Trees scarred by fire develop rot. "Wolf" trees and crooked and branchy trees rob other trees of soil nutrients and light -- get rid of them. Trees of low value should be weeded out, and diseased trees should be removed to protect healthy ones.

"When you turn trees into cash during the coming season, make sure you leave the possibilities for even greater cash returns in the future. When this year's crop is being cut, think about next year's harvest."

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Fifteen hundred farmers who attended the Walcott Colony Farm Field Day held near Faribault in September were treated to a novel "before-and-after" demonstration. This effective demonstration method was carried out in a number of ways.

At the pasture renovation site the farmers had an opportunity to see an area that had been seeded earlier. Brush killing was shown next to a plot that was sprayed five weeks earlier. Where tiling was being done to prevent hillside seepage, a tile was taken up from a line laid previously to show water running from the area where the machine was working.

Other demonstrations included fencing, standard windbreaks, and grass silage.

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Here's a reminder: Get your soil tested soon -- before freeze-up and snow. Doing so will enable you to do a better job of ordering fertilizer for next year. And order the fertilizer early, in order to be sure of getting the kinds you need, suggests Paul Burson, professor of soils at the University of Minnesota.

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