

University Farm News
University of Minnesota
University Farm
St. Paul 1 Minnesota

October 18 1951



Prepared and distributed
by the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service.

For use during the week
of October 28 1951

Not many farmers switch back to up-and-down-hill farming after they have farmed on the contour, but Charles Nelson of Dakota county did -- and he didn't like it.

Nelson began contour farming in 1945, then moved in 1948 to the Mary Barnard farm which did not have a soil conservation program. He farmed up and down hill for a couple of years but realized he was losing too much soil and asked the Dakota Soil Conservation District to help him lay it out on the contour.

Three first prizes for his contoured corn at the Minnesota State Fair this year suggests that he knew what he was doing. He reports that he has no more trouble with weeds than he had when his corn was checked.

* * * * *

Hugo Mueller of Dakota county found that soil tests paid him big dividends this past summer, reports Harold E. Jones, University of Minnesota extension soils specialist.

Mueller had a legume-brome grass pasture which his cattle refused to eat. Every time someone came down the road near the pasture with a wagon, the cattle hustled to the fence for a handout. He found it necessary to feed a very high amount of grain to his cattle, even though the pasture looked fairly good.

About the middle of July, Mueller had a soil test made on his pasture and also a plant tissue test. He found that the phosphate content, of both the pasture mixture and the soil, was very low. Potash was only about medium in the soil but fairly good in the plants.

He was advised by the University of Minnesota to topdress the pasture with 250 pounds per acre of 0-30-15 fertilizer. He clipped the grass and after about two weeks turned the cattle back in. They liked the pasture this time and stopped eating grain entirely.

* * * * *

Beef cattle pay their maximum dividends on a farm when they make maximum use of roughage, says the Bureau of Animal Industry of the USDA. Fattening calves can use the least roughage, older animals the most.

-rr-