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Consider Green Manure -- In making your plans, consider green manure to help solve organic matter and nitrogen problems, suggests Harold E. Jones, extension soils specialist at the University of Minnesota.

Sweet clover as a green manure crop has helped hundreds of Minnesota farmers solve their soil organic matter and nitrogen problems during the past few years. In 1950, more than 700,000 acres of sweet clover were used in Minnesota as a green manure crop.

For those farmers who do not have sufficient livestock to eat the legume hay which would be produced if alfalfa or red clover were used as a legume for building up the soil, the use of green manure crops planted with small grains will help save organic matter, according to Jones.

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Contour Strips Stop Water -- Carl Boehmke, a Soil Conservation district co-operator in Winona, recently presented interesting proof of the value of contour strips in retarding and reducing runoff water.

Some years ago a 26-inch road culvert would not carry the water from a 35-acre watershed on the Leo Heiden farm. Water washed over the road after heavy rains and caused severe washing on Boehmke's farm.

Last summer, Carl reports, heavy rainfall was practically "stopped in its tracks" by contour grain and hay strips in Heiden's field. Water in the culvert never was more than 18 inches deep.

Carl's story also illustrates something else--the value of community-wide interest and practice of soil conservation.

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Lost: 5 Billion Tons of Soil -- Through soil erosion, the U. S. is losing close to 5 billion tons of soil material from fields, pastures, abandoned areas and woodlands each year, according to the U. S. Soil Conservation Service. Not all of this material is carried into the sea. Much of it is deposited on lower slopes, over alluvial floodplains and in ditches, canals, harbors and reservoirs.