

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

December 31, 1952



Prepared and distributed
by the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service

For use during week of
January 26 1953

More for the Livestock --- Cletus Small, who operates a 160-acre farm in the Upper Zumbro Soil Conservation District, has boosted his livestock carrying capacity nearly 50 per cent through increased yields from better rotations and other methods. His fairly steep cropland is in capability classes II, III and IV. In 1945 the conservation program for erosion control on the cropland was contour strip cropping with a 4-year rotation of corn-grain-hay-hay. This rotation gave good results, both in erosion control and increased crop yields. Corn and small grain yields increased 35 per cent and hay yields 50 per cent. The increased feed made it possible to boost the livestock carried.

Three years ago, Cletus became interested in terracing. He has now terraced 31 acres of the 76 in cropland. In the fall of 1951 he had a terracing bee and the neighbors built the terraces on one field. He is heading toward having terraces protect all his sloping cropland and replace the contour strip cropping. His purpose in the switch is that it will give him a more convenient pasture program and better erosion control. He is shifting his rotation to one of corn, grain and 4 years of hay.

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Soil Conditioners --- Infiltration of water into soil was greatly increased by use of a chemical soil conditioner in a greenhouse experiment at the University of Minnesota; it was reported by Wallace W. Nelson, research assistant in soils at the University. When the chemical was mixed into the top three inches of soil at the rate of 400 pounds per acre, the average time required for 2 inches of water to infiltrate the soil was 101 seconds, compared with 438 seconds for untreated soil. Economical use of these conditioners is limited at present to specialized situations such as potting soils, greenhouses, flower beds, gardens, lawns and erosion control on limited areas, said Nelson.

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