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When to Plow Green Manure? -- Green manure crops, legumes planted with grain for turning down into the soil before the next year's crop, should be plowed under during the fall of the year in which they were seeded in order to obtain best results on heavy soils.

According to Harold Jones, University of Minnesota extension soils specialist, waiting until spring to do this adds very little to the soil improvement value of the green manure and generally results in poorer seedbeds. Old legumes and grass sods give the best response as a soil-improvement crop if the second cutting is permitted to grow up and is then plowed under. On sloping lands, where erosion is a problem, it is generally necessary to delay turning under green manures until spring to prevent soil loss, says Jones.

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Looking Ahead -- Marvin Smith, extension forester at the University of Minnesota, mixes a bit of philosophizing with some tips on tree planting: "The wisdom of intelligent pre-planning is demonstrated again and again in whatever we do. And it would seem logical that we plan with special care for those projects of a long-term nature.

"Certainly our tree planting projects deserve careful thought beforehand. A tree planted one year will endure many decades, so it is up to us to plan well in the beginning if we are to avoid regrets later. Shortcuts may have a place but not where the consequences of poor judgment will endure so long as they will in a shelterbelt or windbreak planting."

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500,000 Trees Planted -- Sherburne County Soil Conservation District may have established a record by planting 500,000 trees this last spring. All the trees were planted for soil conservation purposes such as wildlife protection, field windbreaks and gully control. About half of the total were set out by cooperators with the district on their own farms, according to Henry Wilson of the SCS.

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