

University Farm News
University of Minnesota
Institute of Agriculture
St. Paul 1 Minnesota
March 31 1954



Prepared and distributed
by the Minnesota Agricultural
Extension Service

For use week of April 12

Advice for Starters -- Arnold Wiebusch, assistant county agent in soil conservation in Goodhue county, has these tips on starting a soil conservation program: "Plan a cropping system that brings a sod crop into each field often enough to protect the soil. Then plan for a livestock program that will utilize the increased grain and forage you raise as soil builders and holders. Grow the right kind of crops for each type of land--level, rolling, or heavily-sloping. That's good land use."

#

Ventilate Your Soil -- Last year, many farmers reported "negative" responses to fertilizer. Fertilized plants didn't do much better than untreated plants. But don't condemn fertilizers if they didn't work for you--other soil factors may be involved, says Charles Simkins, Extension soils specialist at the University of Minnesota. "Most of our crops grow best in well-drained and ventilated soils," he says. "Wet, poorly drained soils do not allow much air and oxygen below the first three or four inches. Lack of oxygen suffocates or poisons plant roots. It may be necessary to tile or dig drainage ditches. Deep-rooted legumes, such as alfalfa and sweet clover, often will improve tilth and drainage on poorly ventilated soils."

#

Speeds up "Slow" Farm -- Until 1947, when he "stepped on the gas", as he puts it, Henry Kubat of Owatonna had what he calls a "slow" farm. His land was poorly drained and the soil was wet and cold. As a result, planting had to wait two or three weeks later than his neighbors'. But in 1947, he signed up with the Steele County Soil Conservation District and farm planner Orville Risser showed him how to improve his "slow" land. First, came ditching and tiling for drainage. Then, good rotations and green manure crops. Now Kubat's getting as high as 110 bushels of corn per acre from land that once grew only worthless slough-grass.

#

Here's a Good One -- Learn from the mistakes of others--you won't live long enough to make them all yourself. Applies particularly well to bettering and saving our land and timber resources, doesn't it?