

# Our LAND



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Contrast Good and Poor Farming -- Northwest of Lewiston, Winona County, is a small watershed of 560 acres in cropland and pasture. Some 480 acres are farmed wisely with contour strips and alternate strips in hay. The contoured pastures have good stands of legumes and grasses. The other 80 acres is farmed up and down hill. The slopes and soil types are about the same all through. The land drains into a roadside waterway. Last June, a two-inch rain fell in an hour and gave SCS men a chance to check the runoff. The runoff and soil loss from the 480 wisely-farmed acres was zero -- no water flowing in the roadside waterway at all. But the runoff from the 80 acres farmed up and down hill was heavy, flowing rapidly down ravines and carrying a big load of soil. This poorly farmed area also made the area flood problem greater in bottom lands.

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Manure Benefits Cow Pastures -- Two Pennington County farmers who tried 10 to 12 loads of fresh manure per acre on their pastures last year report some interesting conclusions to their successful experiment. In early spring, cows did not eat where manure covered the ground. But, when the grass was about six inches high, they paid no attention to the manure and ate all the tender grass they wanted. The manure greatly benefitted the pastures. Burtress kept 19 producing cows and six yearling heifers on 14 acres in early spring until late August. Mehrkens kept 20 cows and six yearling heifers on 16 acres all that time. Both feel, however, that 7 to 8 loads of manure would do just as well. Mehrkens was the first Pennington County farmer to have a complete farm plan with the county soil conservation district -- Burtress was the 41st.

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First Plowing Contest in Mahnomen County -- The Mahnomen County Soil Conservation District's first plowing contest was held in August on the John Geray farm near Beaulieu. County implement and bulk gasoline dealers joined the district in sponsoring it. As a result of the contour plowing contest on Geray's farm, he finished contouring 27 acres of rolling land. The system was worked out on two fields to combat water erosion and topsoil loss. Geray also anticipates higher crop yields and lower tractor fuel bills from the new plan.

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X-Tra Yield Winner Higher than in 1953 -- Harold E. Jones, Extension soils specialist at the University, says wise practices paid off better than usual this year. Winner of the University's X-Tra Yield Corn Contest, sponsored in cooperation with The Farmer magazine of St. Paul, harvested 161 bushels per acre -- nearly 20 bushels more per acre than 1953's winner.

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