

# Our LAND



Appearing in newspapers of the Minnesota Editorial Association through the cooperation of the U.S. Soil Conservation service and conservation authorities at University Farm.

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

June 30 1955

Prepared and distributed  
by the Minnesota Agricultural  
Extension Service.

For use during week of  
July 25

Shelterbelt Learnings -- In the spring drought this year, you didn't have to look far for painful lessons on how shelterbelt area preparation may affect the start-off of young trees. Marvin Smith, extension forester at the University of Minnesota, says that the best survival was found on soils prepared the season before planting. Poor moisture conservation on hastily-prepared grass or hay sod accounted for death losses up to half the total baby tree planting. For farmers thinking "shelterbelt next spring," Smith suggests turning over the ground this month and letting it lay fallow until freezeup in the fall. That's the right way.

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Jingle Contest Winner -- "Once I had a hilly farm. I didn't plow it right. Along came a big rain and it washed right out of sight." That was a jingle entered in a contest about Plowville '55, coming up Sept. 16-17, near Rothsay. According to West Otter Tail extension soil conservation agent John Mulvehill of Fergus Falls, the soil conservation districts of Clay, Douglas, Becker, Mahnomon, Pope, West Otter Tail and Wilkin counties are helping sponsor the big soil conservation field days and ran this jingle contest. The winning jingles will be posted along farm tour routes where the plan for the farms will be on display. The West Otter Tail Soil Conservation District will award air-tour tickets of the field day area to contest winners.

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Hard Fight Against Wind -- April and May were months for playing leap-frog with the wind for many Minnesota farmers. It was jump here, jump there with spreader loads of manure to try and anchor down the boiling, blowing soil. SCS district supervisors had these suggestions, underlined by the spring drought: start soil conservation practices when conditions are favorable, so when conditions get not-so-favorable, they'll work.

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Tree Farm Pays -- A Beltrami County tree farmer during the past five years has harvested forest products worth nearly \$2,000 from a 20-acre tree farm. He has sold 9,910 board feet of lumber, some fuelwood, poles, railroad ties and Christmas trees under his harvesting program. But you have to do it wisely and according to good forestry practice--just like profitable crops or livestock farming. This story came to us from Parker Anderson, extension forester at the University.