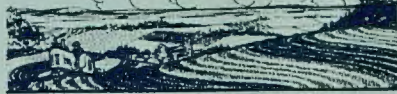


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Our LAND



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Contour Strips Prove Practical -- Ewen Martin, Lake Benton, finished 140 acres of contour strips on his Lincoln County farm this year. Extension Soil Conservation Agent Arnold Claassen says short rows are no problem in Martin's system--the strips on his 320-acre farm are up to 4/5 of a mile long. He likes the strips for two reasons: One, he didn't notice any sign of water runoff or soil erosion on his long three per cent slopes. Two, his cropping system is planned out for each strip according to his five-year crop rotation of corn, grain, grain, hay, hay. Martin already has found his yields rose considerably under the rotation and he is looking forward to even better yields with the new strip system. Howard Stevermer, SCS soil conservationist for Lincoln County, helped with the planning.

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Nitrogen "Carryover" Proven -- University of Minnesota field tests find a good "carryover" effect on yields of non-legume crops the next year after ammonium nitrate goes on a field. According to Jack MacGregor, a University soils professor, the "carryover" was found where less than 200 pounds per acre of ammonium nitrate was put on medium to fine-textured soils in corn. MacGregor says that where these medium to fine-textured soils are frozen in winter, late fall applications of nitrogen are practical. He adds that the way nitrogen moves through the soil will vary with the form--it moves less in the ammonium form and more as a nitrate.

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Flushing Bar is Wildlife Saver -- You've heard about kind farmers thinking up the idea of a "flushing bar" on a tractor mower to warn nesting hen pheasants. Well, Rudolph Holmberg of Vesta has one and estimates it prevented his mowing into 75 per cent fewer nesting hen pheasants than he would have with no such warning bar. Holmberg is a supervisor in the Redwood County Soil Conservation District and obviously believes in conservation in its broadest sense.

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Farmer Gets Better Flax with Spring Plowing -- Oscar Hegland, an East Polk Soil Conservation District member near McIntosh, found his alfalfa ground too hard and dry to plow last fall so he left it until this spring. Then, he plowed, packed and seeded his flax all in one operation. He reports he didn't encounter the usual cloddy conditions and is growing a good, even stand of flax.

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