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Farm Brought Back to Health -- A few years ago, Marvin Oldenberg's Dad bought a rough, eroded farm near Fish Lake in Scott County. Marvin was dissatisfied with the 35 to 40 bushels per acre corn yields and planned action. Later Dad moved to a valley farm whose good soil gave him 85-bushel yields, with little or no fertilizing. Imagine Pop's surprise when the hand who picked the corn on both father's and son's farms told him that his son's poor farm--buoyed up by the proper crop rotations, contour strip-cropping, sod draws and conservation steps--now was yielding 100 and more bushels of corn an acre. Marvin Oldenberg puts it this way: "I either had to farm the conservation way or move off." Dewey Hahn, SCS Farm Planner with the Scott County Soil Conservation District, told us this story.

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Deliberate "Wear Out" Gives Valuable Picture -- A small area on the University of Minnesota's Northeast Experiment Station at Duluth was deliberately "worn out" by overcropping--until oat yields were down to zero to 10 bushels an acre, no barley would grow and potato yields were about 10 bushels an acre--and the potatoes were just good-sized marbles. Could this soil be made productive again with fertilizer and lime? The area was divided into four parts, with four different treatments--nothing, "lime", "phosphate and potash", and "lime, phosphate and potash." It has been in hay since "rebuilding" began in 1939. The "check" area is mostly moss, with small willows starting and a thin grass stand whose 1955 yield was a ton of poor hay. The limed area has a few alfalfa plants left but mostly grass. This year's yield: two tons, fair hay. Area three, which received phosphate and potash, has no alfalfa but some red clover and a fair grass stand which yielded nearly three tons of hay in 1955. On area four, where lime, phosphate and potash went on, the alfalfa stand was good and the yield about four and a half tons of good hay.

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Contour Strips Pay Off Again -- A yield of 70 bushels of oats per acre was harvested off the contour strips and very little soil was lost by erosion. That's Harold Johnson's report from his Douglas County farm, where he added a 20-acre run-down tract a few years ago--neighbors told him he'd never "come out on it."

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