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# Our LAND



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Soil Conservation Work Speeding Up -- Farmers are moving ahead in soil conservation faster than ever, reports Tony Marini, soil conservationist located at Clarkfield, Minn. He says farmers are moving in great numbers to prevent soil loss. Paul Imes, farmer near Echo, says it's important to keep water up on the slopes. "We can't afford to lose any more topsoil," says Harry Kosen, Wood Lake. "We must get more of our land in sod to maintain yields," remarks Gordon Kraft, Canby. These thoughts are helping speed up soil conservation in the Yellow Medicine County Soil Conservation District.

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Complete Conservation Plan is Best -- Jim Anderson, East Fillmore soil conservation district cooperator, believes in a complete conservation plan. In addition to 125 acres of contour strip cropping on a four-year rotation, he recently completed a 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -acre wildlife area. Half of it is planted to new trees and shrubs. Anderson also has 81 acres of woodland protected and managed and has built two ponds, one for stock water and the other for wildlife. Deer, he says, make regular trips to the water.

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Field Cultivator Best for Renovation -- The heavy field cultivator and disk are still the best tools for pasture renovation, says A. R. Schmid, University of Minnesota agronomist. But plowing is all right if erosion isn't a problem. August is the best time to renovate pastures. Then the sod will rot before fall and make a better seedbed for next spring. Spring renovation isn't too effective because the old sod comes back so fast the seeding doesn't have a chance. For August renovation, have the soil tested and limed if necessary. Work the soil enough to loosen the sod this month, then every 10 days or so until freeze-up. Fertilize this fall or next spring.

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Shelterbelts Need Cultivation -- Newly-planted shelterbelts need cultivation, says Marvin Smith, extension forester at the University of Minnesota. Cultivate trees like any other crop, says Smith. Then around the end of August, you can stop cultivating. Otherwise trees will be stimulated to keep growing late in the summer and won't "harden off" in time to stand fall and winter temperatures.