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Contour Strips Make Efficient Pastures -- Seven acres of alfalfa on contour strips provided all the pasture needs for 30 Guernsey milk cows from May 20 to mid-July on the Russell Wirt farm in Winona County. Ration-a-day grazing made this possible. Wirt divided one contour strip and part of another into 4 fields with electric fences, then used a cross-wire to divide each lot into areas just big enough for 12 hours' feeding. This way, Wirt says he got by with three acres less pasture than he would have needed with conventional pasturing.

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Ungrazed Woodland Protects Wildlife -- Robert Miklya, Chisago City, reserves 40 acres of woodland for selected cutting and wildlife habitat. No cattle have grazed this area in ten years. Miklya was one of the first to use grass silage in Chisago county and now he plants all the legumes, soybeans and Sudan grass to improve his land and give him plenty of feed. Actually he has 75 per cent of his cropland in a county where there has been little gain in grass acreage for several years.

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Soil Formation Takes a Long Time -- It's the top 6 inches of soil that give us the productiveness on which the very lives of plants and trees depend. This 6 inch layer takes 3,600 years to be formed and it can be ruined in 20 to 40 years. If we continue our wasteful methods, we will lose the greatest source of wealth in our country--soil productivity. Those are the words of John Stuart Olson, Minneapolis, who won a state award for the 12th annual conservation essay contest, sponsored by the Minnesota Federation of Women's Clubs.

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Soil Needs Complete Conservation Plan -- The heavy flay Fargo clay or "Gumbo" soils of the Red River Valley suffer very little from wind and water erosion. But even this soil can deteriorate if the farmer doesn't use complete soil conservation practices. Mel Barnum, Breckenridge, farms several quarter sections of this type of soil. He keeps his soil in good condition and highly productive by a 4-point plan: (1) A crop rotation which includes seeding sweet clover for green manure plowdown every third year, (2) Plowing under all grain straw and stubble after combining, (3) A complete fertilizer mixture--mostly phosphate--and (4) Shallow surface drainage ditches. Barnum is a cooperator with the Wilkin Soil Conservation District.