

Our LAND



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Strip-Crop All at Once? -- A question often asked on rolling southeastern Minnesota farms is "should I strip-crop all this hilly stuff at once or do it over a period of years?" One farmer, Emery Loqua of Goodhue County, says, "If I were starting my layout over again, I'd arrange my cropping program so that strips could be put on the entire farm at one time. It's far easier that way than doing it in chunks." He started to lay contour strips on his 160-acre farm three years ago. Because of a hay shortage, he has been laying out about 25 acres each year for strips. This year he plans to complete the job.

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Pre-Emergence Pigeon Grass Spray Ineffective -- Pre-emergence spraying of corn doesn't kill pigeon grass in Minnesota, reports R. S. Dunham, University of Minnesota agronomist who specializes in weed control. What's the answer? Harrowing with a spike-tooth harrow after corn is well-rooted is effective, Dunham says. After the corn is laid by, spray with five pounds TCA per acre, using drop nozzles to wet no more than the lower six inches of stalk. If you're troubled with broad-leaved weeds that can be checked by spraying, mix four ounces of 2,4-D with each five pounds of TCA. If the weeds aren't up, use a pound and a half of 2,4-D with five pounds TCA per acre.

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How to Use Wood Waste? -- How and where can you profitably use wood waste? Well, wood in the form of sawdust is an excellent source of much-needed humus. You can use sawdust as a mulch, livestock bedding, in compost, or put it directly in the ground. Sawdust and chips, plain or in manures, are good mulch for hay and pasture land. They quickly sift down to ground surfaces and don't interfere with haying as do strawy manures. These tips come from Marvin E. Smith, extension forester at the University of Minnesota.

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A Timely Tip -- "The land is ours only in trust. We must try to pass it on to our children and grandchildren in better condition than when it was passed on to us."