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Check Roughage ... It's not too early to check the winter supply of roughage for dairy cattle. If you're going to be short, one of three things may be done: (1) reduce the herd to meet the feed supply, (2) buy needed roughage, or (3) feed more concentrates, suggests Ralph Wayne, extension dairyman at the University of Minnesota.

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Soil is Bank Account ... Balanced farming is a term sometimes applied to soil conservation farming. The reason for this term is clear if you think of it the way you do your bank balance. "Your soil is just like a bank account," says O. A. Risser, SCS farm planner for the Steele county Soil Conservation District. "Keep drawing from it without making any 'deposits', and pretty soon your land is flat broke. Every harvest of grain, vegetables, hay or milk and butter takes plant food out of your soil bank," says Risser. "If this plant food is not restored, then surely the soil is headed for bankruptcy." Every "balanced farming" program should be designed to maintain the supply of plant food and to keep a high humus content, which makes the plant food available to growing plants.

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Don't Over-Graze ... Don't over-graze new seedings. The roots need to gather all the food they can to go through the winter safely and be ready for a big growth in the spring, points out S. B. Cleland, farm management specialist at the University of Minnesota. If a clover or alfalfa plant is clipped or grazed off, its first job is to send up new tops, using nutrients stored in the roots. If that happens in the fall, there is not enough time left before winter to refill the roots. Therefore, they go into winter in a weak condition.

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Dry Years Coming? ... Is the old cycle of dry years starting again in the South and South-west? If it is, how will it affect Minnesota? One result may be an increasing demand for hay for shipment into drouth areas. Feeder calves may be more expensive and cow herds more profitable. Farmers in some areas from which hay is being shipped are planning on putting up more corn silage than they usually do.

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