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Our LAND



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Christmas Trees are Big Business -- Christmas tree farming is getting to be big business in Minnesota. Nearly 2,000,000 baby trees were planted this year in four counties just north of the Twin Cities for Christmas tree harvesting a few years from now. Christmas tree farming can be good conservation farming, making wise use of land that can't or shouldn't be cropped. But you have to consider lots of factors--how close you are to profitable markets, how well your land is adapted for this type of tree growing, how many trees you can grow and many other things. Such good tree growing techniques as shearing, can double the number of premium-grade trees and raise your income a good deal.

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Off to a Good Start -- Ben Mann of Princeton asked SCS for a soil survey when he bought his farm--such requests usually come into the office for some solution of a problem. But Mann wanted to get off to a good start. He had had one on a farm in Dakota County and when he sold it and bought another in Mille Lacs County he wanted to know what soils he was dealing with. The inventory clears the way for Ben to get recommendations on the best use of his several soil areas--he'll then be on his way to conservation farming.

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Silage Show Results -- In the recent Silage Show at the University of Minnesota's Farm and Home Week, the judge, extension agronomist Rodney A. Briggs, noted the preservative-treated grass-legume silages always came out a good deal higher on the score card. Briggs' big grading job took him all one day--he had to judge nearly 250 samples of silage sent in from all corners of the state. Each entrant now gets a written evaluation of his silage entry and suggestions on what might make it better.

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Soil Testing is Damage Preventer -- The soil testing idea is based on the idea that an "ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." That is, it's easiest to prevent errors in feeding soil properly if you know exactly what that soil lacks in the line of plant food.