

Among Friends Of The Soil

BY FRANK GLOVER
 (Editor's note: This is No. 9 of a series on ways your Soil Conservation District is helping farmers in this section where the land is not as steep or rolling as in the counties farther west.)

Farmer C. "My trouble is that my ditches don't drain out. The land in the swamp stays water-logged and I guess that is our main problem. I'm not the only one around here that has trouble even with good field ditches."

Technician. "Who owns the land here and immediately downstream?"

Farmer C. "There is actually no stream here—not until this swamp joins with the main creek a mile or so down the swamp."

Technician. "Are those other landowners the ones you mentioned who have a drainage problem, the same as you have?"

Farmer C. "Yes, I have heard all of them mention it."

Technician. "This appears to be a community problem. Do you think all those other landowners would be willing to share in the expense of a small canal down the swamp to the main creek?"

Farmer C. "I believe they would if it didn't cost them too much. What would such a canal cost, and would that make our field ditches drain out?"

Technician. "A survey would have to be made to be sure of the answer to your last question. The cost would run, basing my estimate on other jobs about like this, about 25 cents a running foot. If it were, say, 400 feet to the creek the total cost estimated on that basis would be about \$1,000 for a drag-line ditch of a size that would work. If there are four of you to share the cost and the benefit, if on an

equal basis, it would cost each of you about \$250."

Farmer. "There are actually six who would be concerned. Would all six have to agree to join in on cutting the canal?"

Technician. "It's always well to have everyone enter into an agreement. However, if one or two have no cultivated land to be drained it might be well not to expect those to make a cost contribution. I would suggest a split in the cost according to the acres to be benefited by such a canal. A simple agreement of that kind is easy to make and would not necessarily have to have the red tape of court approval. It would be a binding agreement all right, but a simple one."

Farmer C. "I believe we could get all six to make such an agreement, but I would hesitate to undertake to get them all to agree. They might think I had some private axe to grind. How would you undertake going about it? Could you get them to agree?"

Technician. "No, I would prefer not to undertake that. I would suggest you talk to several of them. Then if it looks like they might join in I can run a preliminary survey to check on the amount of fall, etc. If the job looks feasible I would be willing to give them a technical opinion. You could get them together at a sort of informal meeting when we could all do some talking."

Farmer C. "That is probably the best idea. I will see some of the others, and if they seem interested we will call a meeting."

(Editor's note: Thus the one interested farmer starts a movement to do a job which is logically one needing the cooperation of the several landowners concerned. We will not follow any more of

the details about this example of how your soil conservation district works. Water regards no boundary lines. It is not uncommon for neighboring farmers to club together in an undertaking of this kind which is of mutual benefit. Next week cropping systems will come in for some discussion.

(Editor's note: Farmer D and the Soil Conservation Service technician are in the field going over his (Farmer D's) farm to plan conservation measures to fit each place.)

Technician. "What sort of cropping system do you follow?"

Farmer D. "I don't know if you would call it a system or not. Sometimes I decide at night what I will start planting on a certain field the following morning—but then get up and plant something else. Labor is short with me these days, and some of the land gets a chance to take a rest. I just don't plant anything on some places."

Technician. "Don't you plant anything to turn under?"

Farmer D. "No, I never saw much pay in raising something and then turning it under. I do turn under soybean stubble where I have cut it for hay; and such things like cotton and corn stalks get turned under. I don't make a practice of burning stalks like I have seen people do."

Technician. "I'm glad to hear you say that about burning, which is a mighty bad example of destroying something you already have and which the land needs to make better crops."

Farmer D. "I guess maybe it would help the crop some to have more to turn under, but I doubt if it would help enough to pay. There's the expense of seed, the labor to fix the land and plant them. On top of that is the use of the land would do for nothing, and then there's the work of getting the crop turned. If much growth was turned it would make the land hard to work."

Technician. "Let's do a little figuring. You said a while ago you could realize your land was washing a little at a time and getting thinner. But let's disregard the erosion problem for the moment. There are many ways a cropping system to change with regularity the sort of crops grown pays. Insect damage is reduced. Disease of various crops cause less damage. Then any system that provides something to go back to the land helps in numerous ways."

Farmer D. "In what ways would you say a crop turned under would help?"

Technician. "That's a right sized question. I doubt if I can name all the ways a turned crop would help the land and the crops to follow. I can give you some which, from my observation, add to the productivity of the land. Notice first of all, I've said productivity. We should be concerned more about productivity than fertility. You can put fertility into land out of a sack, but you can't always make it produce the way it should with purely chemical fertility.

Dewey-Warren Ticket Nominated On G.O.P.



THOMAS E. DEWEY

Trees May Die Of Mower Cuts

Davey Expert Advises Extreme Care In Handling Lawn Mowers Around Shade Trees

Careless handling of lawn mowers chalks up much needless shade tree damage. Whirling blades that bite savagely into bark often cause wounds that soon become infected with decay.

Thin-barked trees such as apples, beech and some of the maples, are particularly susceptible. But all young trees which have not yet developed heavy protecting bark are likely to be victims of lawn mower injury. Much of the damage results from nothing more than banging the lawn mower against the bark in an earnest effort to cut the grass as closely to the tree as possible. The bruised bark springs loose, dies and drops away, leaving the unprotected wood exposed to infection and decay.

W. C. Lauck, Davey expert, points out that most injuries are inflicted by outside help hired to do the mowing. Worst offenders are teen-age boys. As a rule, home owners themselves are careful wielding the mower. They are responsible for but few tree mishaps.

If you're too busy to do your own grass cutting and yet would like to play safe, there is a simple solution to your problem. Simply remove some of the soil in a six to eight inch area around the base of each tree. Then fill in pea gravel, which keeps the lawn mower at a safe distance from sensitive barks. The gravel fill also saves back strain and the laborious chore of hand-cutting around the tree since grass will not grow in pure gravel.

Mr. Lauck urges home owners to get the protective gravel around tree bases as quickly as possible. During the Spring damage to bark is particularly common for the sap flow is heavy and even a rather light blow may cause it to spring loose from the wood.

New York Governor Nominated On Third Ballot Unanimously After Taking Big Lead On First Vote

GOV. WARREN TO RUN AS VICE-PRESIDENT

Convention Adjourned Friday Noon As Presidential Nominee Makes Plans For Campaign

PHILADELPHIA, The Republicans made it a Thomas E. Dewey-Earl Warren ticket Friday and closed their convention cheering for a coast-to-coast victory hope in November's presidential elections. California's Governor Warren got the vice presidential nomination by acclamation nomination once New York's Governor Dewey unanimously nominated on the 3rd ballot Thursday night for the presidency, pointed him out as the man he wanted for a running mate.

The gavel ending the 24th national Republican convention banged down at 12:30 p. m., (EST) Friday.

Chairman Joe Martin ended it on the same note hit on last Monday when it opened—victory. Just before the session's end he introduced Warren as the "next vice president of the United States."

The cheering delegates left no doubt they believed him—that this is the year the GOP can end 16 years of Democratic rule.

Warren in an acceptance speech pledged "every bit of loyalty in my make-up."

Martin pounded for order and broke his fourth gavel. It's been a tough convention.

Dewey is expected to select a successor to national Chairman Carroll Reece of Tennessee as one of his first moves in planning the election campaign.

ANNOUNCE BIRTH

Mr. and Mrs. Kale P. Conner, of Richmond, Kentucky, announce the birth of a daughter, Friday, June 11, in Gibson Hospital, Richmond, Kentucky. Mrs. Conner is

the former Miss Beth Hawes of Shallotte.

VISITING IN KENTUCKY
 Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Hawes of Shallotte left Saturday for a two weeks visit in Richmond, Kentucky, with their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Kale P. Conner and their little daughter.

Sea Scouts Are Back From Trip

Members of the Whiteville Sea Scout Ship returned Saturday from the Senior Scout Rendezvous at the Naval Air Station at Jacksonville, Fla.

Two members of the Southport Sea Scout Unit went with the Whiteville group to the rendezvous. They were William Dozier and Robert Spencer.

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EFFECTIVE TUES., JAN. 20, 1948
WEEK-DAY SCHEDULE

LEAVES SOUTHPORT	LEAVES WILMINGTON
** 7:00 A. M.	7:00 A. M.
9:30 A. M.	*9:30 A. M.
*1:30 P. M.	1:35 P. M.
4:00 P. M.	4:00 P. M.
6:00 P. M.	6:10 P. M.
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4:00 P. M.	6:10 P. M.
6:00 P. M.	10:20 P. M.

Organic matter, rotted, makes humus. Humus mixes with the soil particles and improves the functioning quality of soil. Humus feeds the sort of soil bacteria which help plants to grow. Certain elements of plant food are acted upon by these soil bacteria and helps put them into a condition to be absorbed into the plant roots.

During excessively wet weather crops seem to stand the water better if there's plenty of humus in the land. It may be that some of the excess water is drawn into the particles of organic matter and so are a held a little off from the roots, permitting air to reach them. On the other hand, when dry weather comes along the organic matter or humus has stored up more water inside the particles than could have clung to the outside only of soil particles. You know soil is, after all, rock in small pieces, and moisture can only cling to the outside of these particles. It can't get inside.

As organic matter decays, it naturally finally breaks down into the chemical elements that made it in the first place. In the case of legumes—plants like soybeans and Austrian winter peas—much of the nitrogen going into the growing of the plant has been taken from the air. That sort of nitrogen comes free, so to speak. When the plant rots the nitrogen is released to be taken up by some plant, say like corn, that can't make its own nitrogen.

Those are some ways turned crops help, but after all the results are what count. The increased crop yields makes something you can spend. You can't buy a new automobile with ways, but you can with big enough crop yields.

Now let's go back to the erosion problem. You have some land that is being damaged, as you know, by a little of the surface being washed off every year. We call it sheet erosion, and that is the most dangerous sort because it is not always noticed until too late to save the best of the land."

(Editor's note: Next time we will listen to some more of the discussion, especially as to how a cropping system may conserve soil and moisture.)

Technician. "Terraces alone would not be enough, but would at least do two things. They would divide this long slope into several sections so there could never be a big volume of water crossing it anywhere. It would take the surplus water off slowly and get it where it wouldn't hurt crops or land further down. Then the other big advantage would be that the terraces would be a good guide for laying off your rows."

Farmer E. "What about the outlet you mentioned?"

Technician. "I've been standing here looking. You have actually two small fields here with a small ditch down through the middle all grown up in weeds and briars. I bet it takes a lot of hand labor every year to keep it cleaned off."

Farmer E. "It does take work to clean it off, but we have to have that ditch."

Technician. "Sometimes I have to make a little survey to be sure about a close decision, but this is not that close. I am positive that by building terraces, emptying the water at both ends you could take all the water off the field without a ditch in the middle. That would throw what is now two small fields into one, save the labor of cleaning off the middle ditch, make your rows twice as long, have a much nicer looking field, and—"

Farmer E. "Wait, you don't need to go any further. I never thought I would have a trace but on this side where we just crossed the ditch I notice the ditch is dry and there is a sort of drew here. This ditch could be my place, but you have already told me enough. I'm ready to start building them."

Technician. "We can't go too fast. The water must be taken safely away."

Farmer E. "There is a ditch at both sides. We could empty the water into them."

Technician. "You could do that be made with very little work—just with your play—into a broad flat ditch and sowed down to something that would not have to be planted every year. Then it could be moved instead of having to be cleaned off by hand and the crop moved used for hay."

Farmer E. "That does sound mighty fine the way you put it, but does sort of outlet work for other farmers?"

Technician. "Sure it works. I don't think it would work on the other side of the field, but know it would work here."

Farmer E. "What would you

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BURNED BOAT REBUILT

It is understood that the menhaden boat, Gifford, practically destroyed by fire last fall and towed to New Bern where she was rebuilt, will be brought back here this week and will start fishing. Capt. J. B. Church, veteran Southport skipper, will be in command.