

Joe Tippett's Farm Shows How to Build the Land

Farsighted farmers will put back into the land as much as they take out, or more, thinks Joe Tippett of Zebulon, Route 3.

Applying the best of soil-building practices to his 223 acres, Tip-

pet says, "I know I can take care of myself. But I wonder how the children and their children, and future generations, will fare. How much will our population grow?" Such a philosophy prompts Tip-

pett to keep every acre as productive as it was the day he bought it, or even more productive, if possible. Keeping the top soil from washing away is his first concern.

To anchor the top soil, Tippett laces his field with terraces, runs row crops on the contour and seeds meadow strips in the low rounds to slow down the run-off and hold what soil leaves the fields. He even controls the water after it reaches the creek, for he impounds it in farm ponds that serve the triple purpose of irrigation, drinking water for stock and fire protection.

1,500 Farmers Compete

Such soil and water conservation practices make Tippett a prime contender in the "Finer Carolina" contest sponsored by Carolina Power & Light Company. Almost 1,500 farmers with a half-million acres of land are competing for \$2,800 in prizes offered for soil and water conservation practices to build a finer Carolina by building finer farms.

Deadline for the contest is December 31. Many farmers are just now getting back to some of the conservation practices they began last spring but which they neglected during busy crop-growing weeks.

Re-Working Farm

This fall the Tippetts are re-shaping their terraces, discing and re-seeding meadow strips that suffered the dry summer and impounding a new farm pond.

Working alongside his father is 37-year-old J. D. Tippett, who shares his father's enthusiasm for soil-building and who hopes that his 4-year-old son, Michael, will inherit lands even richer than the 56 acres he tends today.

Another son, Rex B. Tippett, is now serving in the Army but looks forward to returning to his 35-acre tract beside his daddy and expanding his beef herd. Young Rex started the family in the beef business when he won a prize bull in high school. Now the three Tippetts have 80 head of cattle and almost as many acres of permanent pasture.

Reclaimed Land

The pasture occupies land reclaimed from bullrushes and covered by swamp water. "I lost a pair of hipboots in the bog when we started clearing it," Tippett recalls. Today these low grounds serve as a model of good pasturage as promoted by the county Lions clubs.

Turning marsh into top grazing is typical of Tippett tenacity. The elder Tippett worked as a tenant farmer for years. He bought his first piece of land in 1928, and meeting the payments during the depression was an uphill struggle. But he not only met the pay-

ments; he kept adding more acres until today he and his sons have over 300 acres.

As it increases in size, it also increases in productivity. Soil-building pays dividends now as

well as tomorrow, Tippett says, estimating he will average 70 cents a pound and 2,000 pounds to the acre on his tobacco. Thanks to soil and water conservation, he adds.



TERRACES RESHAPED — After row crops are harvested, terraces are re-shaped to help control the winter run-off on the Tippett farms. The fall season has afforded conservation-minded farmers the chance to renew numerous soil-saving practices started last spring and neglected during crop season.



FARM POND FILLS — Joe Tippett points out the area being covered by his newest farm pond, which will be impounded by the dam in background. The pond is one of his projects in the soil conservation phase of Carolina Power & Light Company's "Finer Carolina" contest.

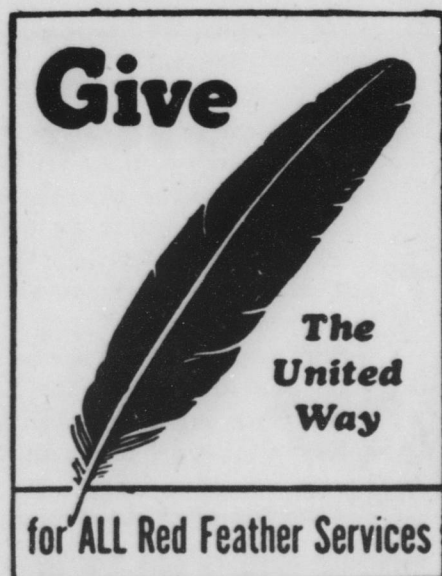


PASTURE TIPS — Conservationist George Winchester talks permanent pasture with two Wake County farmers who make good pasturage their business, Joe Tippett (left) and his son, J. D. Farm ponds such as one in background serve to irrigate pastures and also to water cattle that feed on these acres.



MEADOW WATERWAY — Fall affords J. D. Tippett time to disc and re-seed the meadowstrip which carries the run-off along the low ground between his row crops. Such soil-saving practices are part of the young Wake farmer's program as a contestant in Carolina Power & Light Company's "Finer Carolina" competition.

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