

THE NEWS - RECORD

Volume 73, Number 11

Marshall, N. C.

15 CENTS PER COPY

April 11, 1974

Tight Fertilizer Supply Predicted; Conservation Urged

North Carolina farmers will be forced to adopt fertilizer-stretching practices this year due to the tightest supply situation in nearly 30 years.

North Carolina State University crops specialists say indications are that total supplies will about equal those available in 1973, but an expansion of acreages of some crops will increase total demand.

"It is apparent that we will have less fertilizer available per acre than we had in 1973," said Dr. Jack Baird, NCSU extension soils specialist. Baird said nitrogen will be the most critical element.

Farmers increased their use of nitrogen last summer on corn and used more of it to preplant last fall on a greatly enlarged U. S. wheat acreage. "This drew nitrogen inventories down to new lows," the soils specialist said.

NCSU specialists and county extension agents are suggesting a number of alternatives or adjustments to help farmers stretch fertilizer — especially nitrogen supplies.

One way is to cut back where excessive amounts of nitrogen have been used on corn in the past. Baird said nitrogen has been relatively inexpensive and plentiful until recently encouraging farmers to apply more than was needed.

"Nitrogen on much of the North Carolina corn grown for

grain could be reduced to 125 to 150 pounds per acre with careful timing and close attention to plant populations suggested by plant breeders," Baird said.

He said these suggestions are offered particularly to farmers who are expanding corn acreage. "They should use soil tests to identify other nutrient needs that may limit the crop's response to nitrogen," the specialist suggested.

Baird pointed out that many farmers could save nitrogen by splitting applications. He suggested using a fourth to a third of the nitrogen with the herbicide at planting time and delaying the remainder until layby time. This minimizes risk of losing fertilizer by leaching.

Another alternative is the use of sources of nitrogen other than solution. These include calcium, nitrate, sodium nitrate ammonia, ammonium sulfate, urea or other less commonly used sources of nitrogen for corn, cotton or grain sorghum.

These may be more expensive than nitrogen solution but could be a means of salvaging a crop and producing a good yield Baird commented.

The use of animal manure is another consideration. It not only provides from 10 to 50 pounds of nitrogen per ton but also supplies phosphorus and

potash. An analysis may be needed to determine the nutrient content of the manure.

Switching crops can help avoid a fertilizer problem. Planting soybeans for part of the corn acreage could reduce the need for nitrogen since soybeans do not require nitrogen.

Any residues of soybeans and peanut vines will supply

about 20 to 30 or 30 to 50 pounds of nitrogen per acre respectively for the following crop.

Over the long haul, Baird said farmers may want to consider the planting of winter legumes or other legumes for the production of supplemental nitrogen. The feasibility of this practice would largely depend on whether the shortage situation continued.

ASCS To Authorize Short Or Long Term Conservation

"The 1974 Rural Environmental Conservation Program (RECP) authorizes two different forms of cost-sharing agreements," reports Nita Mann, PAC of Madison County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

"Either one year or long-term conservation projects can be approved by county ASC Committees.

The annual agreement will be available in all counties, and the participant does not need an approved soil and

water conservation plan when applying. One change this year which should be noted is that all applications and practices will be checked prior to approval.

The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and the Forest Service (FS) will provide the technical services. They will be checking for practice need and satisfactory completion of the projects within the stipulated period.

The long-term agreements, covering periods from 3 to 10 years, are designed to assist farmers in making, in an orderly progression of years, such changes on their land as needed to accomplish the purpose of RECP.

While it appears the \$11.25 million set-aside for the long-term agreements is substantially less than that for the annual programs, it must be realized that these are only the funds actually to be paid during 1974.

For example (using the maximum amounts possible), assume a farmer has been approved for a ten-year agreement with costs incurred each year of \$5,000. He would be reimbursed \$2,500 each year for that approved work. While the total package, over the ten years, could amount to \$25,000 only his annual \$2,500 would be charged to the 1974 allocation.

Only those persons now holding an approved Soil Conservation District plan will be considered for 1974 long-term agreements. Participants must assure the county committee that work on the approved plan will begin this year.

At this time, the county office will accept the application and forward it to SCS for a conservation priority. Upon return to ASCS, a processing number will be assigned in preparation for the county funding allocation.

If the application is approved, it is returned to SCS for a definite work plan covering the allotted number of years. ASCS will then prepare the actual agreement, and once it is signed by both parties, work on the approved practices can begin.

"Due to the late start of this year's program and the necessary steps to be followed prior to acceptance into the program, it is important for all persons interested in participating in the 1974 RECP to contact our county ASCS office immediately. Any delay by undecided individuals could prove costly to them.

"Our offices are open and available to assist anyone with questions or wishing to apply for the RECP," she said.

Sign-up begins April 8 for RECP and REAP programs. Requests for long-term agreements will be accepted only through May 3, 1974, but requests can be made for the annual practices as long as funds are available.



Crop Production Acreage To Increase In State

By BILL BROWN

More than a quarter million acres of land in North Carolina that were covered with grass or trees last year will be converted into cropland during the 1974 planting season, according to a statewide survey by the Soil Conservation Service, and almost half of it may be threatened by erosion.

State Conservationist Jesse L. Hicks of Raleigh, who heads the SCS in North Carolina, reported today that 257 thousand acres in the state will return to row crop production. Of this, about 111 thousand are listed as sloping land which may be subject to unusually heavy erosion.

Most of the acreage which will be reconvered to cropland is former "set aside" land diverted from farm production, much of it for a number of years. More than 200 thousand of the 257 thousand acres are in this category in North Carolina.

In contrast, only 25 thousand acres will be converted from woodland—farmers evidently consider trees a valued crop as well—and about 32 thousand from pasture and other grassland, according to the SCS survey.

In addition to the land which may face erosion problems, a sizable portion of the land being returned to crops in North Carolina has moisture problems. More than 104 thousand acres may pose

difficulties for cultivation because of excess water during rainy periods.

For both erodible conditions and for those with water management problems, State Conservationist Hicks said that Soil Conservation Service people—working through local soil and water conservation districts which serve every county in North Carolina—can suggest practical conservation measures and remedies for problems.

"Such sensible devices as grassed waterways, terraces, field borders and a variety of other practices can do a lot to help with these problems," Mr. Hicks said. "Since North Carolina farmers have a very fine record in applying soil conservation practices, we are very optimistic that they will stick to recommended practices this year—no matter what crops they are planning to produce."

The Rural Environmental Conservation Program (RECP) for 1974, recently announced by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, is designed to assist landowners in establishing conservation measures that will help solve problems associated with the return of cropland to cultivation.

ASCS will administer the program and SCS, working through soil and water conservation districts, will provide planning assistance to

landowners in carrying out recommended practices.

The North Carolina ratio of land being reconvered to crops is comparable to the national figure. The national SCS field survey shows that 9.5 million acres of "set aside," grassland or forest will be converted to crop production during the current year, with the majority having been "set aside."

The SCS survey was done primarily to pinpoint converted cropland where critical soil erosion problems are expected. Of the 9.5 million national acres, about 4.3 million may have such problems.

The most critical areas posing problems are in the high plains of western Texas and Oklahoma and in eastern New Mexico.

SCS Administrator Kenneth E. Grant commented: "There are some areas that shouldn't be used for row crops at all. They ought to be left in grass and trees."

He added: "Local conservation districts and USDA technical people are going to have to redouble efforts to help farmers and ranchers to get additional cropland acres under a conservation plan, and to apply measures to control soil erosion. These include crop rotation, strip-cropping, terracing and contour plowing, as well as minimum tillage techniques."

Madison-Yancey Road Project Is Cancelled

RALEIGH — A road project which will serve an industrial park in Henderson County was approved by the N.C. Board of Transportation Thursday but another which was designed to aid a resort in Madison and Yancey Counties was deleted. Both projects were under the Appalachian Regional Development Program.

The Board approved a \$900,000 access road to serve the Cane Creek Industrial Park, which is located between Hendersonville and Asheville. This 1.8 mile project calls for the reconstruction of two secondary roads with less than one-half mile of construction on new location.

The project has been approved by the Appalachian Regional Commission but the action was taken subject to approval by the State Board of Transportation. The project will be funded on a basis of 70 percent federal and 30 percent state.

The Madison - Yancey project was for an access road from US 23 at Sams Gap to a proposed recreational development to be known as Big Bald Mountain Resort. The development was located in both North Carolina and Tennessee and the proposed road was a joint venture of the two states under the Appalachian Program. The 2.9 mile road would have cost North Carolina \$206,000 and Tennessee \$321,000 in Appalachian funds.

The project was opposed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Appalachian Trail Association because they said it would disrupt the Appalachian Trail. Since the development did not materialize, both states have agreed that it should be deleted from their programs. There will be no loss of Appalachian funds as the result of the allocation being withdrawn, highway officials said.



JIM LONG, of Mars Hill, first president of the Madison Boosters Club, is shown (left), handing the gavel to the newly-elected president, Lawrence Ponder, of Marshall, following the election here Monday night.



MADISON BOOSTERS CLUB officers and directors were elected here Monday night. Pictured above are the new officers of the active organization. Left to right, Lawrence Ponder, president; Mrs. Mona Flynn, vice-president; Jake Grigg, secretary; and Ed Howard, treasurer. They are shown holding a jacket similar to the ones which will be worn by varsity athletes at Madison High School. Directors elected are Dr. Reese Steen, Walter Harrell, Max Edmonds, the Rev. Jim Long, Jack Buckner, Ron Kiser, Herbert Ponder, Douglas Adams and Ted Flynn.

Home Gardens And Home Conservation Education

Reducing food bills is just one good reason for having a home garden, according to a local soil conservationist.

"Many young people, and adults too, have never had the satisfying educational experience of cultivating the soil," Bill Brown, Soil Conservation Technician with the Soil Conservation Service said.

"Children are pretty sick these days of being told that they are living in a pre-packaged, quick-frozen world — even if it is true. A small garden can teach a lot about soil-plant relationships, soil and water conservation, and an appreciation for the productivity of the earth," Bill continued. "This is a good enough reason for having a home garden."

"Another thing you hear a lot about these days is 'quality of life,'" Bill said. "And it is my view that the superb flavor of your own fresh wilted-lettuce salad, corn-on-the-cob, and homegrown tomatoes improve your quality of life. This is another good reason for having a home garden."

"When you put in your garden, don't forget the need for soil and water conservation," Bill said. "Contact my office, and I will provide you with two little leaflets that will give you some good suggestions on home-garden conservation. If you have questions on garden pests, varieties, or diseases, you should contact your University Extension Service office."

Pancake Supper At Mars Hill Wednesday

The Mars Hill United Methodist Church is having a pancake supper on Wednesday, April 17, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.

The cost is \$1.25 for adults and 75c for children.

The public is cordially invited.

Revival

A revival will begin at the Easter Gap Baptist Church on Sunday night April 14, at 7:30 p.m.

The Rev. Howard Self and Bill Brown will be the visiting ministers.

The Rev. Denver Hasty, pastor, invites everyone to attend these services.



PAUL MOORE, of Route 1, Hot Springs, has the enviable record of not missing a single day's work nor being late for work in the past three years at the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in Asheville. He drives more than 50 miles a day to and from work and starts work daily at 3:00 p.m. and gets off at 1:00 a.m. After cleaning the bottle washing machine (shown beside Mr. Moore) the faithful employee drives back to Hot Springs, arriving at his home about 7:00 a.m.



CORE DIGGING and pouring footing for the construction of the Hot Springs industrial building is now underway. When completed the building will contain 38,000 square feet and is located on the Barber Foster property.

Night Of Music Planned For Hot Springs Saturday

The Board of Directors of the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce is planning a night of music for everyone's enjoyment this Saturday night, April 13th, at 8 p.m. The music will be heard at the Town Theatre in downtown Hot Springs. The featured group will be Johnny Kiser and the "Southern Sounds." Just two months ago the group played at the Town Theatre and a good crowd was on hand. The group consists of Johnny Kiser and can play variety of songs and it is hoped that with the

good spring weather, an even better crowd will be on hand. The money that is taken up will be for the benefit of the Chamber of Commerce projects. A committee of three is organizing the evening. Mr. Doug Martin, Mr. Bob Brady and Mr. Bill Ferguson are in charge of the event. Tickets for the evening will be \$2.00, \$1.50 and \$1.00. Tickets will be on hand at both the Chamber of Commerce and the Town Theatre.