



This light strip (center) on the Walter Reis farm was seeded 3 years ago. The grass eliminates weeds, forms sod, and—quite naturally—is preferred by cattle. Weeds at left.



Blow-outs on the Theodore Baumeister ranch. Left, before treatment; right, after sloping, seeding and mulching.

Grass Success Told

(Continued from page 1-B.)

vated grasses such as the bromegrasses, the wheatgrasses and rye grasses. Some work is being done with native grasses to find the better strains but this work is in its infancy.

The improved grasses that have been developed generally have certain specific or specialized requirements that makes it an "uphill pull" for them to compete with the native grasses in this area with its wide range of soil, fertility, moisture and management conditions to which they must be subjected.

Districts at Work

The Holt Soil Conservation district's program is trying to work with nature rather than against it to accomplish the district's objectives in conservation work. The grasses occurring in the native meadows and pastures have been studied and the most desirable ones selected for use in the district's program of seeding land to grass.

This all sounds easier and simpler than it works out. There are many problems and difficulties to overcome in carrying out such a program.

Seed of such grasses is scarce for several reasons. The grasses do not grow in extensive acres of pure stands. They do not set seeds every year. The seed is difficult to harvest and process and often requires special machinery. The Soil Conservation Service has been harvesting native grass seed for a number of years. The small all-crop combines have been the most satisfactory, although grass-strippers and binders work quite well for some of the grasses.

The distribution and scattering of the seed on the land at the time of sowing was another difficult problem to be solved. The seed of most of the native grasses is quite light due to the large size of the hulls in relation to the kernel. Many of them have awns or appendages which are feathery as in the case of the bluestems or large and bulky as on the needle grass. Machinery has been devised that is capable of satisfactorily broadcasting the light seeds.

One such seeding box has been purchased by the supervisors of each the Holt and the Boyd Soil Conservation districts. These seeder boxes are mounted on machines called treaders, which cover and pack the seed in the same operation as it is scattered.

Land to Seed
It is estimated that there are nearly 20,000 acres of land in Holt county that was plowed at one time, but since has been allowed to revert back to native vegetation. Some of this land now has a good stand of the desirable grasses that are producing satisfactory returns. On the other hand there is a large portion of this land that has a covering of vegetation but it is made up of poor quality grasses of low productivity resulting in unprofitable income.

This is the kind of land that the Soil Conservation Service representatives think would be profitable to reseed to a good quality of native grasses.

In addition, there is a considerable acreage of land still

Mr. Wagman had 20 acres of tilled land that he wanted to get back to grass. He seeded it 2 different years to grasses such as bromegrass and crested wheatgrass. As was the case with many others who tried such seedings on sandy land, he did not get grass.

In 1945, when he was working up his longtime, complete conservation program on his farm the Soil Conservation Service technician assisting him suggested using native grass on the 20 acres. Mr. Wagman purchased 100 pounds to try on a part of the field. He said the grass was slow in showing up and he began to think it was seed wasted. However, by Fall he saw quite a lot of grass, enough so that the following Spring he ordered enough more seed to finish sowing the field. By the Fall of the second year, Mr. Wagman was firmly convinced that the native grass was the thing for him to sow and he ordered more seed for his third seeding and now has a fourth order placed for enough seed to sow 20 acres this Spring.

Mr. Wagman says that the grass makes its greatest showing in establishing itself during the second year.

Walter Ries, also northeast of Atkinson, had a similar experience. The photo shows what his original trial seeding looked like in its third year. Not only did it establish a sod of good productive grass, but also eliminated weeds and provided a preferred place for the cattle to graze.

C. E. Pilcher, conservationist of the Boyd Soil Conservation district, reports that they are using the cool season grasses such as bromegrass, western wheatgrass and crested wheatgrass quite extensively in pasture seedings on their heavier soils but recommend the native grasses on the poor and light soils.

Earl Spendlove, conservationist of the Rock, Brown and Keya Paha district, states that they are recommending the native grasses on their sandy soils and the bromegrass and wheatgrasses on their heavy and better soils. He says that they have seeded some of the new intermediate wheatgrass which will be used for seed production.

Blowouts

The native grasses not only

FURTHER PLANS FOR HOLT FAIR

Revised Dates for 1948 Exhibition Are Sept. 1,2,3,4

Dates for the Holt county fair for 1948 will be September 1, 2, 3 and 4, it was announced recently following a meeting of the Holt County Fair association. September 1 will be entry day, and September 2 will feature 4-H, judging and school day.

Plans are being made for a rodeo, with substantially increased purses over last year's, which officials hope

are used for field seedings but are also capable of reclaiming blowouts if given a little help. In 1945 the Holt district worked with Theodore Baumeister, south of Atkinson, in treating one of the blowouts in his pasture.

The pasture shows the blowout as it was before it was treated. The steep banks were sloped down so that grass could grow on them, then rolled to pack the sand. It was seeded to a mixture of switchgrass, sandhill bluestem, sand lovegrass, sand dropseed and blue grama. It was then rolled to cover the seed after which it was covered with a mulch of old hay.

The second picture shows the blowout after it was treated. The grasses had completed one growing season. The right bank has a good stand of grass. The mulch was not heavy enough on the left bank and some of it blew off. This problem is now overcome by applying a slightly heavier layer of mulch which is anchored somewhat by treading it in with the district's seeding machine or the use of a weighted disc set straight.

Experience with native grass seedings in the Holt Soil Conservation district as well as many other districts in the state should serve as positive evidence that there is a future, I believe, in the harvesting of native grasses for seeding much of the misused land in the midwest in order to regain its productivity.

will bring more and better contestants.

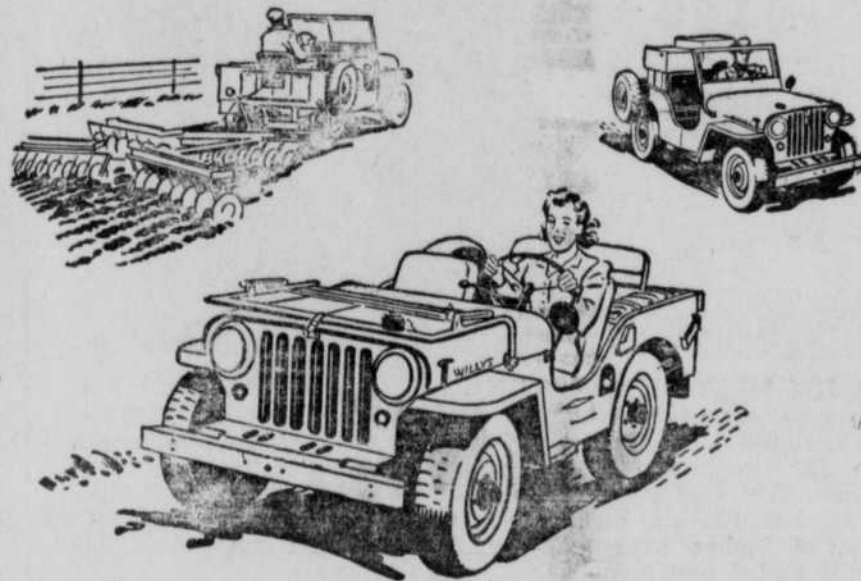
The rodeo pens will be rebuilt and relocated. Other plans call for better parking areas and the Silver States shows as a feature on the midway.

Special awards for members of 4-H project clubs are being offered by Ak-Sar-Ben. Ak-Sar-Ben officials feel the clubs are contributing to the development of 4-H livestock classes.

The fair has been entered in the National Needlework contest. The winner, whose crocheted piece is judged best at the fair, will be awarded a gold sunray loving cup. This in turn entitles the winning person to enter the national contest. The winning person in the national contest will receive \$200, plus a 3-day visit in New York with all expenses paid.

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