

# 'Grass, More Grass' Urged in Holt

By C. R. HILL  
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Holt County SCD

It is apparent that there will be more grass seedings made this spring in Holt county than for several years, especially if weather conditions are favorable. There are two main reasons why this may be true. The first of course is the acreage allotments that will be imposed on corn and those that were set up for wheat last fall. The second is the fact that payments, especially those for converting cropland to grass land are more liberal than they have been in the past. There has been considerable talk about diverted acres, and that is an important subject.

However, that is not the object of this article. We will deal here with the conversion of cropland to grass to be used permanently for hay or pasture.

According to estimates made last year, there are some 97,000 acres that should be converted from cropland to permanent grassland for hay or pasture in Holt county.

As a result of 10 years of trials and observations and by a few examples we hope to point out some of the most essential principles that need to be followed.

Usually the first question to be decided is whether to seed a mixture of our native grasses or a so-called cool season mixture such as bromegrass, crested wheatgrass, etc. The soil survey made by the Soil Scientist for the U. S. Soil Conservation Service will aid in assisting the co-operator to make this determina-

tion. However, roughly speaking, if the land to be seeded was not fairly productive as crop land the native grasses will probably be the better of the two choices.

**Cool Season Grasses**  
If on the other hand it is determined that it will support cool season grasses there may still be sound reasons for choosing one over the other. If it would be to an advantage to be able to have a pasture that could be used earlier in the spring and again late in the fall and cut down on the season of use on the native grass available then of course the decision will rest with the cool season grasses.

However, if the area to be seeded is or will become a part of a native grass pasture then by all means it will be essential that the seedings be native grass. It also may be desirable to increase the acreage of native grass so that the season of use of the various pastures may be rotated from year to year.

While this article will deal primarily with native grasses it is well to point out that if cool season grasses are chosen their treatment will be somewhat different than for native. Under favorable conditions the cool season grasses will be expected to produce more than native grass. If they do so and continue to maintain a high yield they will take more fertility from the soil and therefore commercial fertilizers may be needed to maintain these high yields. If this is not done weeds and weedy grasses will quite often invade

the field and it will need to be cropped a year or so and reseeded. This should not be considered as a reason for seeding native grasses in all cases for often the higher yield of the cool season grasses will be sufficient to offset these added expenses.

**Maintain Selves**  
However, native grasses established and given proper use will continue to maintain themselves year after year. Native grass is what nature grew in this area through countless centuries and unless it is disturbed by overuse or cultivation is what will maintain itself on the land indefinitely. Nearly any area if completely abandoned would eventually revert to native grass, however the time required to do this can be greatly reduced by seeding.

One of the principles is that a good seed bed must be prepared to have any assurance of a good stand. Any method of ground preparation that will leave as much of the residue on the surface as possible to prevent blowing is preferable. Following this the seedbed should be firmly packed. The importance of these two operations cannot be stressed too much and should be done just prior to seeding.

Native grasses, sometimes called warm season grass, should be seeded in late spring. Being a grass that grows during the "warm" season they have much in common with corn as to habit of growth, and the best seeding date compares with corn planting time. Ground preparation just prior to seeding will reduce the competition of annual weeds and weedy grasses. If the residue cannot be left on or near the surface with the equipment available seedlings should be made in strips with alternate untilled, unseeded strips to prevent serious wind erosion. A firm seed bed is important because it will help prevent the seed from being placed in the ground too deep. It will also prevent the young seedling root from growing through an air space in the soil and becoming dried out and dying.

**Failures Traceable**  
During the 10 years the district has operated nearly every grass seeding failure can be traced to poor ground preparation. In one instance a field was seeded at least four times in the past 10 years with no ground preparation with the result that every attempt was a failure.

The use of commercial fertilizer at the time of seeding has resulted, in general, in better stands and more vigorous growth, especially where the fertility of the field was low at the time of seeding. Madison vetch has also been used in combination with grass seeding with encouraging results. Not only does it add to the fertility of the soil but it appears to reduce the competition of weeds. At the same time its habit of growth does not seem to offer severe competition to the grass seedlings. Vetch also offers a cash crop in the form of seed, or may be pastured moderately in the late fall. Normally it takes native grasses two or three years to become well enough established to be used for hay or pasture.

Fred Carey seeded a small acreage to native grass in 1946. After the stand was well established he made the statement that he wished his native meadows would produce as well as his new seeding. Joe Wagman, northwest of Emmet, has made several seedings of native grasses. His first was in 1945, when he seeded an area that contained several active blowouts. Part of his mixtures included grama grass in the mixture while others had only the taller growing bluestems, Indian grass and Switchgrass. Complete ground cover was obtained earlier where the grama was included but forage yield appears to be somewhat more where it was omitted from the mixture. Joe has taken some good seed crops off these fields in the past, and last year used it for pasture. He is mighty happy to have that blowout permanently controlled.

**Caster Shows Success**  
Arlen Caster is having good success with a mixture of sand-lovegrass and alfalfa. Cal and



Don Burzloff, extension agronomist, and C. R. Hill inspect results of grass seeding on Clarence Ernst place west of O'Neill.

Jim Allyn of the Cleveland community, Bruce Johnson near Star-Louis Siebert of Atkinson, H. J. Harte of Inman, Ed Gallagher on his ranch near Page, Walter Sojka of Page have all had nearly pure stands of sand lovegrass that have made good yields of seed.

Skrda Bros. have made considerable seedings and have even made some seedings with their airplane. These are only a few of the successful seedings in the county. Following are some others who have made native grass seedings and will be glad to discuss their methods with friends and neighbors.

Glen Grimes of Chambers, Clarence Ernst of O'Neill, Lawrence Chippis of Chambers, J. F. Alderson of Chambers, Albert Cason of Dorsey, E. W. Reed of Spencer, R. E. Tunender of Atkinson, H. H. Miles of Dorsey, M. G. French of Page, Wm. J. Froelich of O'Neill, O. J. Druke of O'Neill, Mrs. Alice Matthews of O'Neill, Harold Melcher of Page.

## Sergeant Keyes Goes to Ft. Monmouth, N.J.

INMAN—M/Sgt. Cecil Keyes, who has been stationed at Ft. Knox, Ky., spent a few days last week visiting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Hansen and family here and with relatives in Valentine. Sergeant Keyes left Sunday for Ft. Monmouth, N.J., where he will go to school for four months. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Keyes of Valentine.

Ralph McElvain and his sister, Mrs. Ted Platt of Chambers, visited their sister, Mrs. Zada Russ, Sunday at Our Lady of Lourdes hospital in Norfolk.

Mr. and Mrs. J. L. McCarville, sr., visited Mrs. McCarville's father, Joseph Keller, in Humphrey Sunday. He has been ill for several months.

## INCOME TAX

For assistance in filing your reports call on —  
**Geo. C. Robertson**  
Phone 534 O'Neill, Nebr.

## Letter to Editor

Dear Editor:

We are very happy to again contribute material to The Frontier for this, the fifth annual Soil Conservation issue. We feel very fortunate in having your interest and cooperation in making this editorial matter possible in this form.

Our 1954 joint annual meeting with the extension service features an appearance by Everett Mitchell, the agriculturist of NBC radio fame. The meeting will also include a panel discussion on local conservation highlights and problems.

The material for publication is somewhat along this line: It will include the Holt district's activities, accomplishments and services. Among other things the report will draw attention to the first year's results of a surprisingly successful research project on grass and legume seeding on de-

pleted soils.

We hope and believe that the editorial may include information that should arouse the reader's concern for our natural resources, and should further acquaint him with the help he has available in carrying out conservation practices, be it on a backyard garden plot or a multi-section ranch.

We submit this material and again thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
Holt Soil Conservation District

## 'Backwards' Party Planned by Club

The Eagle Creek 4-H club met at the home of Brenda and Bonna Margritz Sunday, February 21. All except four of the members were present.

The club books were distributed by the leader, Mrs. Dan Rakes. Candy hearts were exchanged by the members.

The next meeting will be at the home of Rita Vquist. It will be a "backwards" party on March 21. — By Betty Curran, news reporter.

## Attend Sale

Saturday Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Kraft attended a sale south of Orchard.

## DANCE

— AT —

Chambers

Legion Hall

Friday, March 5th

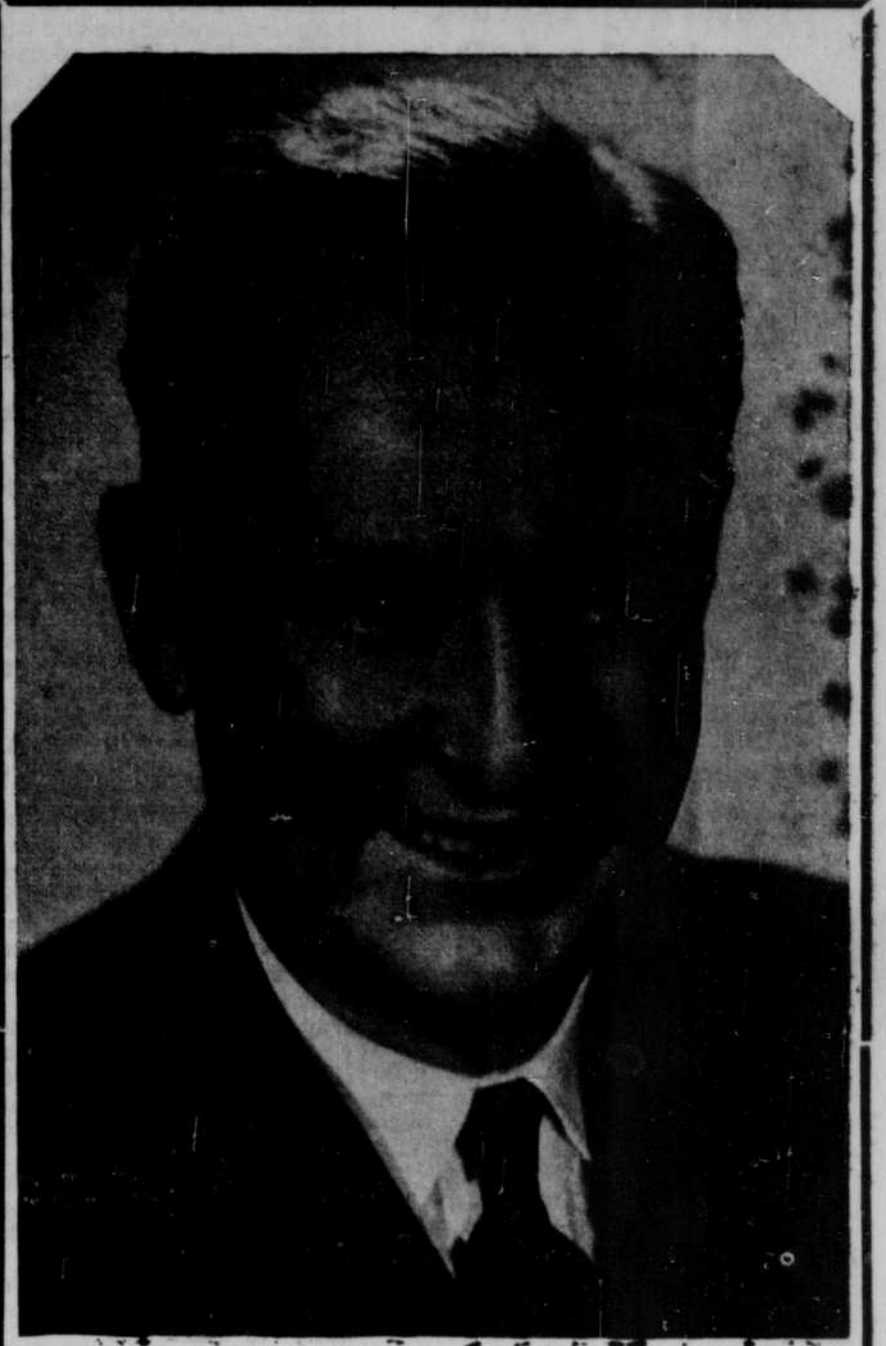
Music by —

NIGHTINGALE'S

## A Word to Butterfat Producers

- Avail yourself of the many services that can be yours by patronizing the Ewing Co-Op Creamery.
- Now that the hot weather is coming up and through the hot months cream must be delivered twice a week, let the creamery worry about it for you—so you won't have any rejected cream. Also, sell your cream to a creamery that has consumer demand for all its butter and does not rely on the government for its market.
- We pay as high as any and more than many. Also at no cost you can have your feed delivered to your door.
- So if you are interested, call or write the Ewing Co-Op Creamery and give us a chance to prove to you we can make you more money by marketing your cream here.
- We handle a complete line of Purina Chows for Poultry, Hogs, and Cattle. Let us prove to you that Purina can do it better and cheaper.

**EWING CO-OP CREAMERY**  
EWING, NEBRASKA



Everett G. Mitchell

... in Person ...

— AT —

ANNUAL MEETING

OF

Extension Service

AND

Holt Soil Conservation District

Tuesday, March 9

American Legion Club

O'Neill, Nebr.

Program Starts 10 A.M.

Noon Lunch Available in Building

Note: M. B. Marcellus, local Allis-Chalmers dealer assisted in securing Mr. Mitchell for this program

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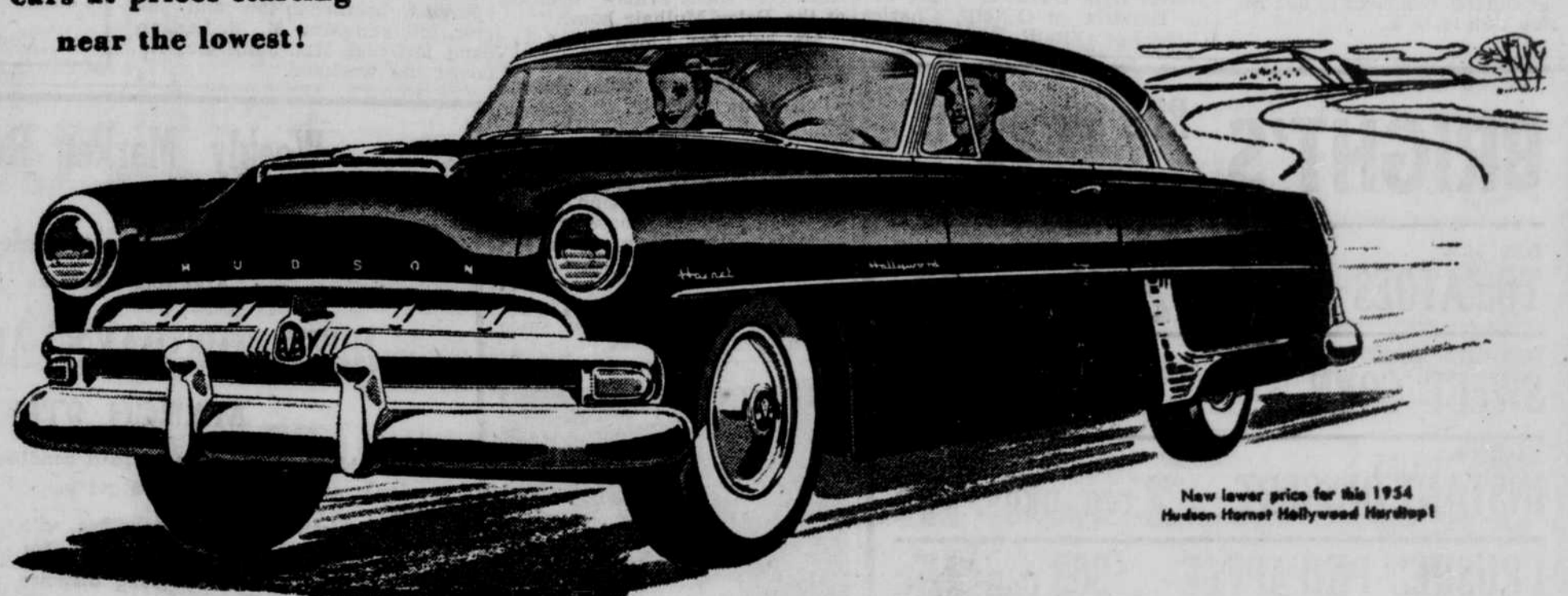
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Sales Manager  
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