

## Nebraska Leads States West of Mississippi In Voting All Its Land Into SCS Districts

By E. G. JONES  
State Conservationist  
U. S. Soil Conservation Service

Soil and water conservation have come a long way in Nebraska in the last decade. Ten years ago, only 1 1/2 percent of the state's farm and ranch land had been voted by landowners into soil conservation districts. Now Nebraska stands as the first state west of the Mississippi and ninth in the nation to have voted all of its land in such districts.

Only one-third of 1 percent of the land was under complete conservation plans a decade ago, but now nearly one-fifth of the land has been brought under such conservation plans—worked out with the help of the Soil Conservation Service technicians, and founded on the physical characteristics and capabilities of the land and diagnosis of the conservation problems.

During this period, too, research into soil and water conservation by the Nebraska experiment station and SCS, working cooperatively, has resulted in great improvements in conservation work. Among these are introduction and establishment of new grasses, but probably most notable in the development of a system of stubble-mulch farming. This has spread until it covers at least a million acres of the state's cropland.

Assets of soil conservation districts have risen during the 10 years from only \$24,821 in 1940 to more than \$400,000 at present. This is remarkable, since the districts cannot by law levy taxes, or make assessments. The assets are entirely earnings from the rental of special equipment, development of grass seed sources, tree planting operations, and so on.

Today there are 435 soil conservation district supervisors in Nebraska, compared with only 60 in 1940. There are 5 supervisors on each district board, all farmers in their districts. One is appointed by the state soil conservation committee, and the others are elected by farmers in the districts.

Too much credit cannot be given to the district supervisors for their leadership in the state's conservation progress. Serving without pay, they have spent many days annually on district activities. Many used their personal credit in order to enable the districts to buy needed machinery. The cost of such equipment was paid for entirely by rentals.

Cooperators with soil conservation districts, who now number more than 22,000, have made good progress in the application of their conservation plans to the land during the past 10 years. A few examples will show this.

Grass seeding by district cooperators totaled only 3,721 acres in 1940, but by 1949 the annual seeding amounted to more than 250,000 acres. Total seeded to date is 900,000 acres. Half of this seeding, particularly in recent years, consists of grass-legume mixtures in the crop rotation.

Contouring applied in connection with these conservation plans amounted to 30,936 acres in 1940, but as of today it totals 1 1/4 million acres. No grassed waterways had been established by district cooperators by 1940, but today the area in waterways exceeds 36,000 acres.

A total of 579 miles of terraces had been built by district cooperators by 1940; today the total is more than 18,000 miles. Tree planting has risen from 662 acres in 1940 to a total of 15,276 acres to date. Farm drainage, of which none had been done by district cooperators before 1940, now amounts to over 70,000 acres.

Improvement of existing irrigation systems and development of new ones as parts of the conservation plans has become increasingly important in soil conservation district activities.

By 1940, only 1,327 acres of irrigated land had been improved. Today the total stands at 320,000 acres. In this, land leveling has risen from 1,126 acres in 1940 to nearly 100,000 acres in 1950.

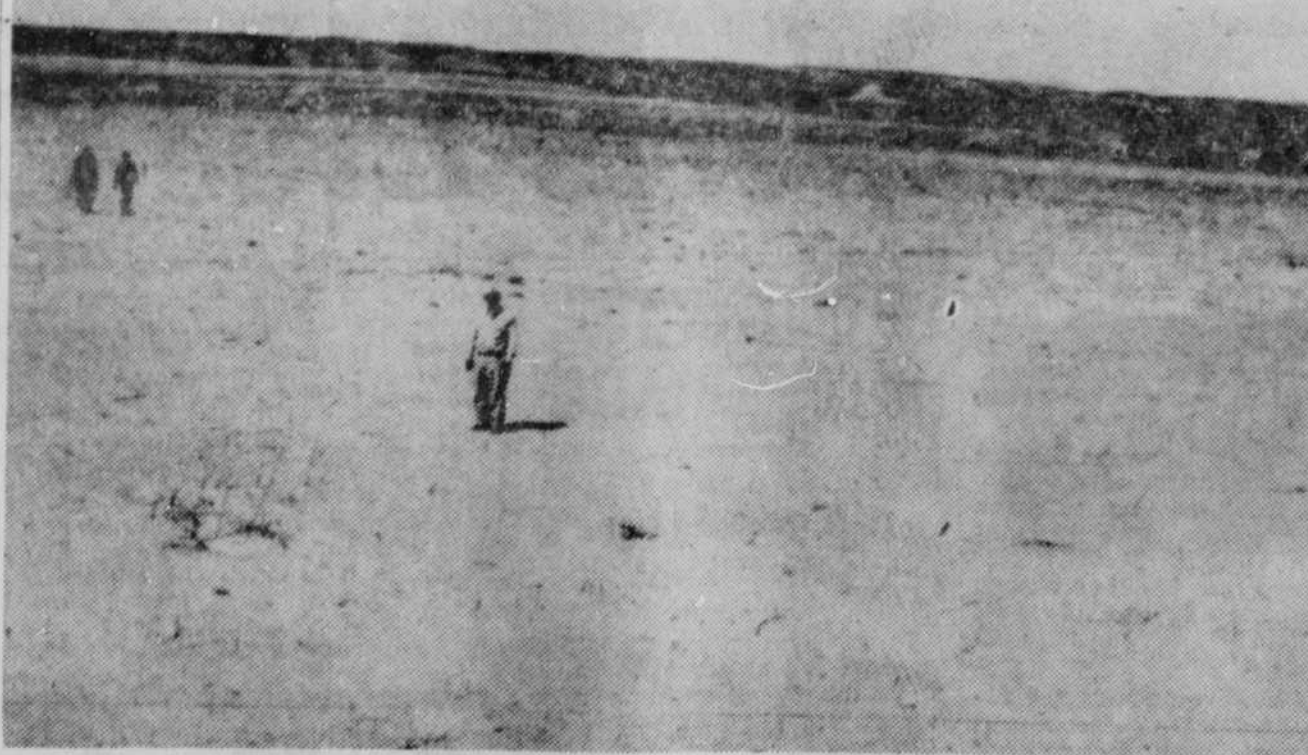
In connection with the conservation of water and soil fertility on the irrigated lands, the SCS technicians aiding the districts have helped district cooperators bring nearly 180,000 acres of new land under irrigation.

Of this, more than 60,000 acres are in farms that were already under irrigation, where improvements made it possible to get water to land that previously could not be irrigated. The rest, 120,000 acres, is in farms where the SCS technicians helped to develop the water supply and prepare the land for irrigation.

During the years there has been a steady increase in the rate at which farmers and ranchers have applied to their soil conservation districts for assistance on their lands. In 1940, the districts received 1,094 requests and the SCS technicians helped 491 farmers and ranchers work out the conservation plans their land needed.

This year, both the number of requests—4,709—and the number of farmers and ranchers aided in working out conservation plans—4,234—was the highest in the state's history. Still the number of requests for aid in the hands of the districts at the close of 1949 was 8,904, indicating the large amount of work immediately ahead for the districts.

Also, the last year saw the completion of the Mirage Flats



**BLOWOUT IS TRANSFORMED . . .** Top panel is view of a blowout on the Fred Lundberg place near O'Neill. Harold Young is in the foreground and Mr. Lindberg and L. F. Bredemeier are in the background inspecting a 1-year-old planting of cedar, locust and elm. Top picture was taken in spring, 1948. By fall of 1949, when

lower photo was taken, the black locust were from 8- to 12-feet high and cedar were knee high. The blowout has been "tied down." Between the rows of locust are rows of cedar. "Three growing seasons have made a great change," according to Mr. Lindberg. (See story on page 11.)



## Gain New Affection for 'Belts

By ROSS A. WILLIAMS  
Former Regional Forester  
Soil Conservation Service

Blizzards during the last winter made news because of the hardships they caused.

But they also made the Northern Great Plains, of which Nebraska is a part, something of a proving ground of the value of trees to farmers and ranchers.

Here are some of the things that trees planted in properly located and properly designated farmstead windbreaks and field shelterbelts did for Great Plains residents:

1. They kept routes from feedlots to food supplies open.
2. They kept farmyards and feedlots free of drifts so that winter work could be carried on without undue discomfort.
3. They kept side roads open for travel to main highways, where road clearing equipment was used.
4. They stored vast quantities of water in the drifts that piled up in them.
5. They did much to prevent snow from being blown off the fields they protected, thus saving moisture for the crop to be grown there and also helping to prevent soil blowing such as that which occurred where the land became uncovered.

Many farmers and ranchers gained a new affection for their trees as they went about caring for the livestock under the most severe weather conditions in many years.

Clarence Ernst, near O'Neill, a cooperator with the Holt county Soil Conservation District, is one of many farmers who entered the winter with his haystacks some distance from the farmstead. But, a half-mile-long shelterbelt protected both the farmyard, the haystacks and the space between them. Ernst was able to haul hay without difficulty all winter. His neighbors had to go to the expense of having trails to haystacks opened repeatedly, and when snow moving equipment wasn't available, the livestock went hungry.

But the fact that they couldn't get to their livestock didn't mean they went hungry. This is the report of the Dartman brothers, who live near Creighton, and are cooperating with the Knox Soil Conservation Dis-

trict. They wintered their cattle on land in Antelope county, 6 miles from where they live. A 10-row shelterbelt across the north side protects the field. A straw stack was in the protected area.

"The heavy snows blocked roads so that we couldn't get to the cattle for as long as a week or more at a time," said Joe Dartman. "This shelterbelt drifted full of snow, but prevented drifting for several hundred feet on the lee side so the cattle were comfortable and could get to the straw stack. They came through the winter in fine shape."

A graphic example of how much a good windbreak reduces air movement in a farmyard comes from the Christ Jorgenson farm, near Hurley, S. D., cooperating with the Turner (S. D.) county Soil Conservation District, not far north of the Nebraska line. Jorgenson remarked that the north wind can be blowing hard enough out in the open to straighten your coat tails, but there won't be much air stirring in the farmyard. His two sons, Kenneth and Waldo, put it differently.

Conservation has come far during the last 10 years. It is likely to go much farther during the next decade.

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shelterbelt on the John Dick farm near O'Neill, a cooperator with the Holt County Conservation District, kept the highway open where the trees paralleled it.

The former E. A. Edmisten farm, near Page, has a system of shelterbelts extending through land at regular intervals. The outer belts in both cases were drifted full of snow from unprotected areas, but on the fields there was little snow movement. The outer shelterbelts are 10 rows wide, with dense shrub rows properly placed. The interior belts are narrower, but each has a shrub row.

An interesting sidelight in the protection given by shelterbelts came from a man who didn't have one. He is the late Fred Drayton, near O'Neill, who gazed longingly at the grazing land on the Joe Turney place across the road. Turney's field is protected by a wide shelterbelt.

"You ought to have seen it," Drayton said. "Joe had good grazing land when there wasn't another quarter section within 5 miles that could be grazed."

Measurements of the amount of water stored in the tree plantings were made last winter by the Soil Conservation Service. It was found that in Nebraska alone the tree plantings over 5-years-old held snow that contained over 440,000 acre-feet of water. An acre-foot of water is enough to cover an acre a foot deep or to cover the average city block 6 inches deep.

Water in the snow held on the fields on the Edmisten farm, where there is a series of shelterbelts, amounted to 353 acre-feet. The snow was kept rather evenly distributed over the land, there being only a few small bare spots midway between the belts.

Largest amount of water held in the shelterbelts measured was in the John Dick planting. The drifts in that mile of 10 row-wide trees contained 73.6 acre-feet of water.

Since the ground beneath the snow wasn't frozen, most of this snow water soaked into the soil.

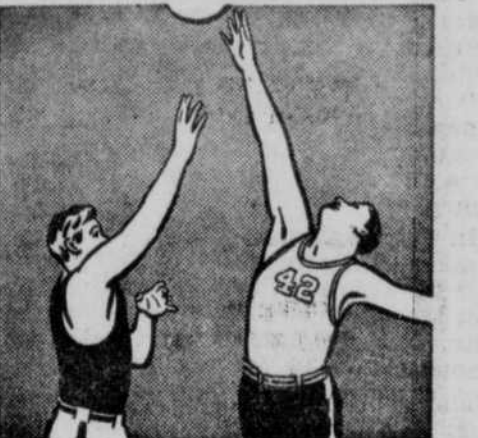
In addition to protecting fields during winter, farmstead windbreaks and shelterbelts serve well in helping control wind erosion, wind damage to crops, and gales buffeting buildings. They also attract many birds, a large share of them making insects a principal part of their diets. This makes living on the farm more cheerful.

A large proportion of the farmstead windbreaks and field shelterbelts include plums, chokecherry, Nanking cherry or other such fruit-bearing shrubs in the shrub row. These

supply farm families with fruit for jam, jellies and for canning.

Properly located and properly designed tree plantings will give good protection to land, farmsteads and livestock, and make life much more cheerful around the farm home.

Soil Conservation Service technicians aiding the Holt Soil Conservation District are ready to furnish the needed technical aid in developing successful tree plantings the same as they give technical aid in developing other parts of farm conservation plans.



### WHY IS A CHAMPION?

The outstanding athlete instinctively knows what to do . . . does the right thing at the right time . . . makes very few mistakes.

Usually, he has attained leadership because of unusual ability to observe other performers—absorb the teachings of coaches—and put into practice the things he has learned.

Similarly, the tavern owners of Nebraska are trying to apply the methods of other successful taverns, absorb the helpful suggestions given by the brewing industry, and put this knowledge into practice.

The result is cleaner, more wholesome places—and increased law observance.

Cooperate with your tavern man in these worthy endeavors.

**NEBRASKA DIVISION**

**United States Brewers Foundation**

710 First Nat'l Bank Bldg., Lincoln

Estate of John Krohn at

# Public Sale

The following described property will be sold at Public Auction at the farm located 3 miles Northeast of O'Neill, Nebraska, on

**FRIDAY, FEB. 24TH**

SALE STARTS AT 1:00 O'CLOCK P. M.

## 25 - HEAD OF CATTLE - 25

12 head 3-year-old Whiteface Heifers, 1 Roan Milk Cow; 1 Holstein Milk Cow; 1 Hereford Bull, 2-years-old; 1 Roan Stock Cow; 4 Yearling Heifer Calves; 5 Yearling Steer Calves, 1 Registered Brand.

## 5 - HEAD OF HORSES - 5

2 Work Horses; One 5-year old Mare, broke; One 5-year old Gelding, not broke; One 2-year old Colt.

12 Stacks Alfalfa Hay

13 Stacks Wild Hay

## FARM MACHINERY, ETC.

1 New Century Cultivator; 1 McCormick Mower, 6-foot; 1 Hay Stack, new; 1 John Deere Hay Rake; 1 Farm Wagon with Grain Box; 1 8-foot Disc; 1 2-row Go-Dig; 1 Hand Corn Sheller; 1 Brooder Stove, complete; 4 Chicken Crates; 2 Feed Bunks; 3 Mother Nature Brooders; 1 Cream Separator; 1 Truck; 1 Wagon Rack; 1 3-Section Harrow; Chicken Waterers; Chicken Feeders.

## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

1 Bed and Innerspring Mattress; 2 Beds and Springs; 1 Perfection 5-Burner Oil Stove with built-in Oven, new; 1 Heating Stove; 1 Ice Box; Milk Can; Dishes; Tools; Barrels; and other articles too numerous to mention.

**TERMS: CASH.** No property to be removed until settled for.

## Estate of John Krohn

Ed T. Campbell, Special Administrator

COL. WALLACE O'CONNELL, Auctioneer

FIRST NATIONAL BANK, O'Neill, Clerk