President’s Message
Greetings to you all!

After the summer of 1988, conservation must be high on the priority list for many. With low moisture levels for cropping and limited trash covering our summerfallow, the options are limited.

Our convention topic, Another Look at Summerfallow, is more important than ever to the producers of the province. I wish to welcome you to our convention. Hopefully you will return home better armed to cope with the tough conditions which exist in much of our Saskatchewan cropland.

Your executive is spending a great deal of time in support of the effort for soil conservation in the province. We are concerned about the future of the Conservation Reserve Program, the Canadian Soils and Water Accord, the SOS Program, and indeed the very existence of the P.F.R.A. Conservation Groups. Major changes are occurring at the agriculture district board level which have implications for all conservation activities of the province. I feel that S.S.C.A. must have input to the federal and provincial authorities in this time of major change.

Once again welcome to our convention in Swift Current. Please remember to renew your membership for 1989.

And remember conservation is the key to our future.

L. Brett Meinert
President, S.S.C.A.

Members of SSCA are invited to submit articles for publication in our newsletter to Glen Hass, Rm. 110 Kirk Hall, Division of Extension and Community Relations, University of Saskatchewan S7N 0W0.

Another Look at Summerfallow

The Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association (SSCA) will be holding its annual conference in Swift Current on February 20 and 21. The theme for this year’s conference is Another Look at Summerfallow. Because of the severe
drought of the past year, most of the acres that
will be summerfallowed in 1989 will be very
susceptible to wind erosion. The conference will
focus on ways to reduce the risk of wind erosion
on summerfallow fields. Featured speakers will
include Don Rennie, Dean of the College of
Agriculture, University of Saskatchewan, Don
Flaten, Director of the School of Agriculture,
University of Manitoba, Dr. Harry Hill, Execu-
tive Deputy General, National Soil Conservation
Program, and John Kiss, Provincial Soils Spe-
cialist. Speakers from Agriculture Canada, the
University of Saskatchewan, industry and the
farm sector will present practical information
relating to the conference theme. The conference
will also feature the announcement of the conserv-
ation award winners and the presentation of the
SSCA logo. This is an event that will be impor-
tant to all producers as they plan their summerfal-
low program.

NEW ALBERTA SOIL
CONSERVATION ACT

Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga announced
the proclamation of Alberta’s new Soil Conserv-
vation Act on September 26, 1988. The intent of
the Act is to provide a framework for encourag-
ing sound soil conservation practices in the prov-
ince, to preserve Alberta’s agricultural land base,
and ensure that the farming sector can sustain its
current levels of productivity. The Act was
introduced to the legislature as Bill 37 by Chi-
nook MLA Shirley McClellan last May, and
received Royal Assent July 6, 1988. It replaces
a previous Soil Conservation Act that had been in
effect with little amendment since 1962.

The new Act differs from the old in many key
respects. Changes were made in response to
requests received from the public and from local
authorities over a period of years and are aimed
at reducing soil degradation and losses by
strengthening and clarifying the provincial legis-
lation. The changes clarify the soil conservation
responsibilities of local authorities, land owners
and occupants, giving well-defined powers to
local authorities to take action when needed to
combat soil loss and soil deterioration. With the
legislation, stiffer penalties for failure to comply
with the Soil Conservation Act have been intro-
duced. The penalty for contravening any provi-
sion of the Act has been increased to a maximum
of $5,000 from a previous maximum of $200.

SOIL CONSERVATION
AWARDS

Two soil conservation awards are presented
annually by the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation
Association.

The Association is concerned about the increas-
ing problem of soil erosion. The S.S.C.A. is
helping to develop educational programs with
other groups and to organize special activities of
its own. It also contributes to various advisory
committees. The Association believes that a
united effort can and will reduce soil erosion.

The S.S.C.A. realizes that individual farmers and
groups of farmers are providing innovative ap-
proaches to soil conservation. To recognize their
efforts and leadership and thereby motivate oth-
ers to become conservationists, two conservation
awards will be presented annually. The two awards, THE CONSERVATION FARMER AWARD and THE GROUP CONSERVATION AWARD, are sponsored by the Western Producer.

The Awards:

I. CONSERVATION FARMER AWARD:
Purpose: To recognize outstanding achievement in soil conservation by a Saskatchewan farmer.

II. GROUP CONSERVATION AWARD:
Purpose: To recognize outstanding support for soil conservation by a Saskatchewan group. Groups may include communities, agricultural districts, agricultural societies, and local organizations. Provincial groups or special interest groups are not eligible.

1989 MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE!

During the past year S.S.C.A. has been an active organization. Board members have attended many meetings throughout the province to represent the organization and promote soil conservation. They have also been represented on the provincial government’s Drought Committee, the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on Agriculture Extension, Saskatchewan Advisory Council on Crops, the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on Crop Protection, the Saskatchewan Forage Council, and the Advisory Board of the Swift Current Experimental Research Station. As well, the board has met with Saskatchewan Crop Insurance and the Saskatchewan Forestry Association. The board has also made representation to the provincial Departments of Agriculture and Education and to the Premier’s office. This has kept the board members very busy!
Important issues that will be discussed by the board members in the months ahead are the proposed federal-provincial water and soils accord, the National Soil Conservation Program, changes in the crop insurance program, and general drought assistance programs.

The S.S.C.A. needs more members. The goal of the organization is to have 1000 conservation-minded farmers as active and interested members. At present there are only 200 members. If each member can recruit just five more members the goal will be reached. Saskatchewan has 60,000 farmers — there must be at least 1000 who are concerned enough to be members! This representation is important so that the board members of S.S.C.A. can speak for producers who believe in soil conservation.

**IMPORTANT EVENTS**


Soils and Crops Workshop — “Soil Degradation: Reappraisal and Future Consideration,” February 16-17, the University of Saskatchewan.


Prairie Barley Symposium, March 21-22, Saskatoon.

Crop Market Prospects '89 — satellite delivery of up-to-date information and market outlook for all grains.

Conservation Conference, November 1-3, Saskatoon Inn.

**DID YOU KNOW THAT- -**

1. Soil makes up the outermost layer of our planet.

2. Natural processes can take 300 years to form one inch of top soil.

3. Fungi and bacteria help break down organic matter in the soil.

4. Roots loosen the soil and allow oxygen to penetrate. This is beneficial to the animals living in the soil.

5. Roots hold soil together and help prevent erosion.

6. An average soil sample is 45% minerals, 25% water, 25% air, and 5% organic matter.

7. Five to ten tons of animal life can live in an acre of soil.

8. Different-sized mineral particles such as sand, silt, and clay give soil texture.

9. Five tons of topsoil spread over an acre is as thick as a dime.