Monsanto and the SSCA seems to have caused a little confusion among a few SSCA members. The program membership. The idea behind the program is to recruit new people to the Association and SSCA is pleased that Monsanto has provided this incentive. Members at this time are reminded that the Direct Seeding Enhancement Program is still being offered. Members who enroll with two members in one year will receive an additional 3 year membership as a bonus. So use the Monsanto coupon and start recruiting new members so that you may qualify for these three year membership bonus. For more information, on membership, contact the SSCA office in Regina at (306) 787-0555 or your regional soil conservationist.

To order your copy, call PAMI at 1-800-567-PAMI or the SSCA at (306) 787-0558.

SSCA/Monsanto Membership Enhancement Program

For New Members Only

Request For Submissions

Do you have ideas or comments on the conservation of our land resource? We would like to print them in future issues of the Prairie Steward. Pertinent photographs would be appreciated. Please forward to:

The Editor

Prairie Steward

c/o SSCA

132 - 3085 Albert St.,
Regina, Sask.

S4S 0B1

Mild weather allowed farmers to examine the newest direct seeding equipment at the outdoor display area. The full day conference and trade show rated it as excellent. (see pictures pg 79).

Six hundred conference delegates enjoyed a banquet of beef and bulwark supper with all the trimmings on the evening of the 8th. Band played in the costumed stage, all 600 people were ushered past the bountiful table in under 60 minutes. The band, banquet, and entertainment were enjoyed by all.

The SSCA’s sister organizations, The Alberta Conservation Tillage Society and the Manitoba North Dakota Zero-Till Farmers Association were represented by various executive members. Their support and encouragement is certainly appreciated by the SSCA.

Plans are already underway for the 1994 SSCA annual meeting and conference that will be held (P. Lylemood, February 14 & 15th, 1994)

Fast Facts On Soil Conservation

Source: Statistics Canada and various agricultural agencies

- Crop yields decrease by about 3.4 bushels/acre when 1 inch of topsoil is lost.
- Grazing can reduce the fire hazard on rangelands by utilizing plant matter that would ordinarily accumulate as dry fuel.

- At least 5 tonnes of topsoil/acre are lost when you can see soil blowing.
- On most soil types, tree rows should be planted 660 ft apart. Use tree rows to divide a quarter section into 40 acre fields.
- Organic matter gives soil structure, holds moisture and is the source of key plant nutrients.
- Grazing can reduce the fire hazard on rangelands by utilizing plant matter that would otherwise accumulate as dry fuel.
null
Editor's note: The SSCA Board of Directors has been meeting in time to avoid a lapse in soil conservation programs. If you are new to the SSCA, it would be a good time to keep stakeholders informed as the new fiscal year and we will keep you informed as the Canada Saskatchewan Accord on Soil and Water Conservation is nearing completion and we are looking for specific funding, it will set out the general objectives for future programs.

The Provincial and Federal Governments are in the process of developing a new program agreement to promote environmental sustainability in the agriculture sector. The agreement will address a wide range of environmental issues. While the SSCA has not made any explicit reference to the new agreement, it is hoped that a new agreement can be in place early in the new fiscal year and we will keep stakeholders informed as the process continues.

In the last issue, I discussed The Clean Air Act, a piece of legislation that is designed to protect the environment. The Saskatchewan Environmental and Public Safety (SEP) act affecting farmers was published in the Legislative Assembly. It will do much to reduce the pollution of the soil or surface or ground water. The farm is the enemy of the farm. The EPMA has established a permit program with the potential to cause air pollution, particularly at the larger farms. In future issues, the EMPI will affect farm operations which will be affected by the EPMA. A piece of legislation administered by the EMPA or the regulations under it, will be replaced by a new accord which reflects a broader range of agriculture sustainability issues. While the SSAC has not made any explicit reference to the new accord, it is hoped that a new accord can be in place early in the new fiscal year and we will keep stakeholders informed as the process continues.

Q: What sort of things are you doing on your farm in terms of soil conservation practices?
A: We've been tested to try as much as we can on land as possible. I try to stay away from the use of herbicides and wherever. In the earlier years, I tended to use weed seeds, tried to maintain as much trash on the surface as we could. But, I think with the manure, and timber land in the earlier years, I tried covering the fields with grass, and I think more and more, the more you can do, the better off you are. I would love to continue that in the future when I can.

Q: What would you say your objectives are in regard to soil conservation? Where do you hope to end up?
A: Well, for a few years, we've had a tremendous wind storm that came through here and I was before I had done too much conservation work. I ended up with a lot of bush land in some of my present yard. I decided then and there that wasn't going to happen again. I'm just looking for ways to prevent any soil movement, whether it be by wind or by way of my land. I don't mean to point it to my neighbour's. I'm not going to go as far as it has been before, but I'm going to try as far as I can on land as possible.

Q: Do you have other objectives in regard to soil conservation that you want to try in your operation?
A: We look at the whole issue of soil conservation from a land management perspective. We look at it on a farm level. We have management plans that are administered by the EMPA or the regulations under it, which are administered by the EMPA have been recently amended. Farm operations which have the potential to cause air pollution, which is not in the farmer's own operation, for example, it is used in a neighbour's yard. The farmer is required to provide a cooling water system for any underground storage tank in excess of 205 litres in capacity. A permit will also be required if the tank is used to store an agricultural chemical which is not in the farmer's own operation, for example, it is used in a neighbour's yard. The farmer is required to provide a permit for irrigation, or any underground storage tank covered by the Water Corporation Act. The Water Corporation Act is administered by the Water Corporation (WAC). The WAC is responsible for the provision of water for domestic use and for the mitigation of pollution. It provides that no person shall, directly or indirectly, cause or permit any waste, including domestic waste, to be discharged into any body of water or to any other place where it is spilled and where it is spilled and where it is spilled. The Water Corporation Act also prohibits the discharge of pollutants into any body of water or to any other place where it is spilled. The Water Corporation Act also prohibits the discharge of pollutants into any body of water or to any other place.

Q: How many years are you going to have your area at hand?
A: Well, we've had to farm here about 18 years, so I've been going on for the past year, I'm thinking of moving up to 20. As I become aware of the different conservation techniques, I just added them to my system here.

Q: What would you say your objectives are in regard to soil conservation? Where do you hope to end up?
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Q: What would you say your objectives are in regard to soil conservation? Where do you hope to end up?
By Blair McClintion
SICA C.E, Regional Soil Conservationist

In 1990, Lorne Ferguson, who farms in the Paynton area with his brother Don, switched to a direct seeding system. Lorne presented an economic comparison of their old conventional farming system to direct seeding at the Direct Seeding Conference in Ladysmith November last year.

The Ferguson Stock Farm is a mixed farming operation. They farm 1268 acres, irrigate 1800 acres and have 2600 acres of pasture. They maintain a 1020 cow dairy herd as well as feed many other types of livestock. They grow a variety of cereal, oilseeds, pulse and forage crops.

Both the grain and livestock operations had heavy requirements in the winter months. Under the old system, the Ferguson's had found they had little time for pastures and projects and family. This was the main reason that they started looking seriously at direct seeding.

Their seeding and tillage equipment needed to be replaced, so in the winter of 1989/90 they went through a very thorough analysis of the products and systems used for the farm's two systems (Table I). The costs for fuel, labour, tractor use and repair allowances are in $/hour. Herbicide costs are listed in $/acre and fertilizer in $/cent per acre.

Table II shows that there is a capital investment in both systems. Continuing to direct seed conventionally would also have required a major investment since the same capital investment and tillage equipment needed to be replaced.

For the total cost comparison between the two systems, Lorne assumed a 1000 acre farm with 50% cereals, 25% oilseeds and 25% pulses. He shows the additional costs due to requiring additional capital of $51,000 to direct seed. This was financed at 12% over 10 years. The life expectancy of the systems was 20 years. The cost to farm 1000 acres conventionally is $72,200, while the total cost for conventional seeding is $99,064. For the same machine seeded 2000 acres, the total costs are $114,618 for conventional and $83,056 for direct seeding.

He also compared the operating hours for the two systems. Table IV shows the number of operating hours on the same 1000 acre farm. It is interesting to note that they saved 243 hours (or 20 hour days) of field work under direct seeding. 130 hours (eleven days) of work would have been saved in their small seeding. Lorne says that this was a real time savings that could be spent doing other things.

The Ferguson believes that the savings in fuel, time and maintenance more than pay for the initial investment. These numbers are interesting because by comparing the value of their old equipment with their new equipment, they biased the figures in favor of conventional tillage. Even with this bias, direct seeding still compared favourably.

Since this was not possible in all cases, farmers should do the comparison for their own farm. The new "Economies of Zenim Tillage" worksheet is one way of doing this. It is available from the SICA, PFRA or your local Rural Service Centre.

Table I: CAPITAL COST IN CHANGING TECHNOLOGY

**Equipment Cost Comparison 1990 Acres of Crop**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRACTORS</th>
<th>EQUIPMENT NEEDED</th>
<th>CONVENTIONAL SEEDING</th>
<th>CONSERVA PAK</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120 HP</td>
<td>Drill seed</td>
<td>$32,000</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 HP</td>
<td>Deep band, cultivate</td>
<td>$22,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 HP</td>
<td>Deep band, cultivate</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 HRS</td>
<td>Direct seed</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SEEDING**

- Spring seeding: $3,000
- In-crop central: $3,000
- Winter aerial: $3,000
- Winter tillage: $3,000

**FERTILIZER COSTS**

- Nitrogen: $21.25/ha
- Phosphorus: $31.25/ha
- Potassium: $10.00/ha

**DETERMINING THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF SOIL**

The Ferguson's have been very careful to educate the unsuspecting young students with misinformation about agriculture. Many people are making the effort to change our kids' attitudes about farming. Some books appearing in school libraries around that time contained misinformation about the planet. The groups feed the unsuspecting young students with misinformation about agriculture.

The controversy over that is a problem that can be managed but not cured. The importance of organic matter in soil is a problem that can be managed but not cured. The importance of organic matter in soil is often not known, urban sprawl is a general new phrase.

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The idea of expressing one's thoughts through written words has always been a powerful tool for communication. Historically, people have used this medium to convey their ideas, emotions, and experiences to others. In recent times, with the advent of the internet and social media, the way we express ourselves has evolved. However, the essence of writing remains the same: to connect with others and express ourselves. This excerpt from a document illustrates the importance of written communication and how it can be used to convey complex ideas.

Sweet Clover grows in dense patches in the dark brown soil zones. By James Lokken, SSAC Soil Conservation Specialist & Garth Patterson, SSAC W.C. Regional Soil Conservation Specialist

Sweet Clover provides excellent snow catch. The clover down and then the clover springs up after the winds die down and receives a full shot of spray. High pressure is maintained so the spray pattern is as straight as possible to help prevent run-off and reduce erosion.

Sweet Clover avoids flooding, wind, and erosion. In the winter, the clover goes through a dormant period and the leaves are shed. In the spring, the clover sprouts and grows again. Sweet Clover is a good choice for areas where flooding is a problem. It can help control erosion and reduce the amount of run-off into streams and rivers.

Research has shown that Sweet Clover has a high soil-building capacity. The clover roots penetrate deep into the soil and help break up soil compaction. This makes it a good choice for areas where soil structure is a problem.

Sweet Clover is also a good choice for areas where it is difficult to maintain a grass stand. It can help control weeds and reduce the amount of herbicides needed. Sweet Clover is also a good choice for areas where it is difficult to maintain a hay stand. It can help control weeds and reduce the amount of herbicides needed.

The benefits of Sweet Clover are not just limited to the soil. It can also help reduce the amount of run-off into streams and rivers. This can help reduce the amount of pollution that enters our waterways.

In conclusion, Sweet Clover is a valuable addition to any farm's planting plan. It can help control erosion, reduce the amount of run-off into streams and rivers, and reduce the amount of herbicides needed. It is a good choice for areas where soil structure is a problem and where it is difficult to maintain a grass or hay stand. Sweet Clover is a valuable addition to any farm's planting plan.
In my work with the SCS I have had the pleasure of talking with many people. It is interesting to compare notes with others and see how I have been influenced by different perspectives.

During the course of several discussions, I naturally enough, brought up the subject of shelterbelts. This discussion seemed to go on for a bit longer than a few farmers might have been willing to listen to, such as: I didn’t intend shelterbelts. I continuous crop and the residue cover keeps my soil from blowing. I realize that every producer has his or her own unique operating conditions but I do have some problems with such a quick dismissal of a valuable conservation tool.

To begin with, shelterbelts have other well documented benefits besides protecting the soil from erosion. By utilizing these valuable microclimate, they can significantly increase the yield of field crops, even when one takes into account the land taken out of production by the trees. This yield increase, although well documented, seems to be unknown to many people.

Shelterbelts also have other effects which may be less tangible but are no less valuable. One of the best things about shelterbelts is that they are valuable to many different situations, from conservation being the key word. Most farmers I know love country life. They take justifiable pride in knowing that they are living close to the land and all the life that comes from it. I share these feelings. This is why I believe that ‘Because I’ll be working alone, I’ve been searching for ways to reduce labor costs and improve the efficiency of operations. Detectorspayy seemed to be the sort of technology for what I was looking.”

Detectorspay has combined his search for efficiency with a concern about soil erosion. In the spring of 1990, he moved toward more chemfallow, fewer fallow acres and low disturbance direct seeding. Last year, he sold his main cultivator and purchased a new bucket truck and the Detectorspayy system. One benefit has been a large reduction in tractor hours.

Since herbicide is an integral part of his evolving system, Detectorspay wants to refine the spraying operation as it is more selective, efficient and safe. He says: “Spraying a lot of acres over a long time of cultivation. Detectorspayy has the added advantage of reducing herbicide use and cost per acre by spraying only what you want to spray. More acres can be protected from erosion without big increases in chemical use.”

Tysdal mounted the Detectorspayy components and a new boom to a tractor pulling his own custom hooded sprayer. With the original sprayer boom, he can spray continuously while “Detectorspayy makes the decision which fields to spray.”

The two boom system proved useful last year. The Detectorspayy arrived late in June when the crop was well past optimum spraying time. Poor timing and the technical limitations of the system meant that there were some “misses” first time over the fallow with only the Detectorspayy boom. The second time, however, the sprayer boom was used correctly and the entire field was spraying.

Tysdal’s savings are somewhat offset because he describes it as a “constant battle. We are constantly watching the technology changing.” His savings were significant. In 1992, he only sprayed 600 acres of fallow twice or 1200 acres. 120 acres more than 50 cents/square acre (120 L, 685 acres saved at $0.75/square acre). Tysdal may, in future, use a preseeding boom from anywhere from 600 to 1600 acres. Using Detectorspayy, a decision could be made at $500 per acre. The opportunity could be from $500 to $5000 (25 L Roundup saved at $0.50/acre). Tysdal was used for fall or spring control of annuals in 1992. He used it for fall or spring control of annuals in 1992. He used it for fall or spring control of annuals with savings of $75 to $100/acre.

Colleen Munro, Farm Manager of the Western Producer handouts. The following is a copy of the handout made available to the farmers for the Conservation Tillage Systems for Monsanto Mono Come.
A prescribed burn in a pasture area.

The young plants that revegetate the area following a fire contribute to a buildup of litter and/or mature plants. An excess of litter can reduce the productivity of a stand by shading the soil and keeping soil temperatures below the optimum temperature for burning. However, burning in the fall removes all standing material, which is required to trap snow and protect the soil from wind and moisture loss. Therefore, burning in the fall is recommended as a fire control measure.

Climate conditions are the most important factors influencing the success of a prescribed burn. Temperature, wind, and humidity are the key weather considerations when conducting a prescribed burn. As the density of woody plant species is a value, higher temperatures, wind, and lower humidity are required to ignite a fire to an area completely. The conditions become better for burning the danger of fire escaping from the burn area also increases. Safety and quality burning conditions must both be considered when planning a burn.

There are a few drawbacks to prescribed burning. The greatest concern is the danger of the fire escaping the burn area. If proper safety precautions are not taken, the results of a fire can be devastating.

The year of the burn will likely result in a reduction in productivity. Therefore, prescribed burning is not recommended in years when conditions leading up to the burn have been low. Moisture conditions will dictate the effect on forage productivity. Therefore, prescribed burning is generally not recommended on the mixed prairie of southern Saskatchewan.

It is important to recognize that successfully burning the woody plants off an area of range land will not permanently destroy these plants. The activity of the trees and shrubs in the aspen parkland have not been eliminated by burning. In the parkland, these plants require a management plan that includes a prescribed fire plan. Until the land is returned to a relatively higher stocking density to keep the grasses from becoming overgrown. However, if the land is allowed to become completely wooded, it will reduce the productivity of the forage stand and reduce woody plant species cover. There is a use for fire in certain areas of land management on the Canadian prairies.

Soil Conservation Category

Prescribed burning should be done when the species you are attempting to control in the stand, mainly grasses and forbs, are dormant. Burning should be done either in the spring, when grasses are in growth, and before a critical number of flowering, or in the fall when the plants have gone dormant. Spring burning allows for an early start to the burning process for two reasons. First, spring has shorter growing season. Burning in the fall removes all standing material, which is required to trap snow and protect the soil from wind and moisture loss. This increases the risk of fire approaching critical conditions. The second reason is to avoid the spring re-sprouting that occurs on forbs that have been burned. The grass and forbs can present a high fire intensity fire escape route for a fire. The use of prescribed burning for the forbs, which is required to trap snow and protect the soil from wind and moisture loss. To be successful, the fire must be burned in a way that will allow it to burn.

The person in charge of the burning operation must be experienced in conducting prescribed burns. Experience is essential to achieve a quality burn while not losing control of the fire. Prescribed burning is not simply a matter of randomly igniting an area and allowing it to burn.

Prescribed burning, when conducted properly, will serve to enhance the productivity of the forage stand and reduce woody plant species cover. This type of fire for use in certain areas of land management on the Canadian prairies.

The question of wildlife habitat and cattle is a serious concern in many areas. Various individuals and groups have used examples of overgrazing and the resulting wildlife habitat destruction for arguments against livestock farming from public lands. It is true that overgrazing is a serious problem which has degraded much rangeland. It can be reduced, however, through proper planning and management. It is important to incorporate a multi-use viewpoint that takes into account the entire range resource and all of its connected factors.

Animal naïve is another area that has been receiving more and more attention. Individuals and groups are taking a more active interest in the way animal agriculture is practiced. First of all, it is necessary to look at all the different types of organizations. Animal welfare groups believe that humans have a responsibility to avoid subjecting animals to unnecessary pain or suffering and that human consumption of animal products is not necessary. They believe that animals are conscious of suffering and that they should be treated with respect.

Many animal rights groups, on the other hand, are opposed to any confinement and slaughter of animals. Consumption of animals, medical research and the production of meat for human consumption is a common target of these groups. Any arguments in support of these theories often fall on deaf ears, regardless of how well they are presented. The result is often the same: more animals are killed and more wild animals did much the same thing before man damanged animals.

Different groups have also appealed to us to reduce beef consumption in an attempt to save the rain forests. While saving the rain forests (and, indeed, any reproductive system) is a goal which I completely support, cutting back on the amount of beef which I will not completely support. Canada imports less than 2 percent of the beef consumed by North Americans which comes in a canned form.

Some people have attacked the livestock industry as a production level. They have stated that cattle production is inefficient because it competes for land that could be used for crop production. Crop production requires a much greater investment of time, labor and money. Thus, cattle production is inefficient because it does not contribute to improving the human condition.

As a producer, don’t be afraid to deal with these issues. Be willing to support your industry with a calm presentation of the facts. Most importantly, make sure you have a sound knowledge of the subject. People are not going to subscribe to your arguments unless they are knowledgeable about the subject. It is important to recognize that successfully burning the woody plants off an area of range land will not permanently destroy these plants. The activity of the trees and shrubs in the aspen parkland have not been eliminated by burning. In the parkland, these plants require a management plan that includes a prescribed fire plan. Until the land is returned to a relatively higher stocking density to keep the grasses from becoming overgrown. However, if the land is allowed to become completely wooded, it will reduce the productivity of the forage stand and reduce woody plant species cover. There is a use for fire in certain areas of land management on the Canadian prairies.

The Canadian Cattlemen’s Association has prepared a Just Facts package to provide some information about the beef cattle industry and environmental conservation. It is important to recognize that successfully burning the woody plants off an area of range land will not permanently destroy these plants. The activity of the trees and shrubs in the aspen parkland have not been eliminated by burning. In the parkland, these plants require a management plan that includes a prescribed fire plan. Until the land is returned to a relatively higher stocking density to keep the grasses from becoming overgrown. However, if the land is allowed to become completely wooded, it will reduce the productivity of the forage stand and reduce woody plant species cover. There is a use for fire in certain areas of land management on the Canadian prairies.

The year of the burn will likely result in a reduction in productivity. Therefore, prescribed burning is not recommended in years when conditions leading up to the burn have been low. Moisture conditions will dictate the effect on forage productivity. Therefore, prescribed burning is generally not recommended on the mixed prairie of southern Saskatchewan.

It is important to recognize that successfully burning the woody plants off an area of range land will not permanently destroy these plants. The activity of the trees and shrubs in the aspen parkland have not been eliminated by burning. In the parkland, these plants require a management plan that includes a prescribed fire plan. Until the land is returned to a relatively higher stocking density to keep the grasses from becoming overgrown. However, if the land is allowed to become completely wooded, it will reduce the productivity of the forage stand and reduce woody plant species cover. There is a use for fire in certain areas of land management on the Canadian prairies.
Thanks to all who entered our second colouring contest in the last issue. It was a tricky one!

The winners read the instructions very carefully. All the letters for the different farming practices had to be in the right place ... and ... the fields had to be the right colours too!

One is bare summerfallow, one has residue on it, and the other has a crop on it.

All these artists submitted beautiful colourings:


First Place goes to: 6 and under: Luke Booker of Empress, Alberta, 6 years old; 7 - 8 years: Byron Travland of Coronach Saskatchewan, 8 years old; 9 - 11 years: Holly Steinley of Empress Alberta, 10 years old; and 12 and over: Tara Jones of McCall, Saskatchewan, 12 years old.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL FOR A JOB WELL DONE!

Colouring Contest

Here's something a little different! A picture to colour all the way from Australia!!!

Write in at the bottom of the picture what you think the farmers are saying to each other.

Ken Maynard for supplying the picture!

Special thanks to Warwick Felton, Department of Agriculture, Tamworth, New South Wales, Australia and to artist Ken Maynard for supplying the picture.

Send your entries to:

Soil Smart
SSCA
Room 132
3085 Albert Street
Regina, Sask.
S4S 0B1

Please check: (x)

____ I would like my colouring back.

____ You may keep my colouring.

(You are reminded not to reproduce this page or any other, 
without permission from the publishers.)

4. This page may be photocopied.

5. Send your entries to:

Soil Smart
SSCA
Room 132
3085 Albert Street
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First Place goes to: 6 and under: Luke Booker of Empress, Alberta, 6 years old; 7 - 8 years: Byron Travland of Coronach Saskatchewan, 8 years old; 9 - 11 years: Holly Steinley of Empress Alberta, 10 years old; and 12 and over: Tara Jones of McCall, Saskatchewan, 12 years old.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL FOR A JOB WELL DONE!

Colouring Contest Rules:

1. Deadline: May 21, 1993

Winners will be notified and an announcement will appear in the next edition of the Prairie Survey.

2. Send in your name, age and address with your entry.

3. Contest is open to all ages. A prize will be awarded in each of the following age categories:

   - 6 and under
   - 7 - 8 years
   - 9 - 11 years
   - 12 - 14 years

4. This page may be photocopied.

5. Send your entries to:

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(Special thanks to Warwick Felton, Department of Agriculture, Tamworth, New South Wales, Australia and to artist Ken Maynard for supplying the picture.)