

# Contour Strip Farming Solves Problem of Erosion

## Waldo Hills Farmers See Good Results

### Grass Strips Halt Loss Of Soil

By CLAUDE STEUSLOFF

Contour strip farming has whipped soil erosion problems for two Waldo Hills farmers in this year which has seen heavy rains do severe damage on many Marion county hill farms.

Vernon Jette and Irvin Bartels have more than 400 acres in contour strips on adjoining farms just north of Shaw, Jette, who was Marion County Grassman of the Year in 1951 has stripped farmed his land for 11 years. Bartels' farm was stripped when it was selected by the U.S. Soil Conservation service as demonstration farm for the 1949 Willamette Valley Conservation Day.

**Credit Grass Strips**  
Both men credit the grass strips with stopping raindrops which form core, then trickle into hills joining countless rills to become torrents tearing at previous top soil. Their farms have slopes ranging up to 18 per cent in steepness but benefits of the grass strips are evident on grades of only 1 to 2 per cent.

Erosion, which is a constant problem wherever land is tilled, is particularly damaging in the Willamette valley this year because fall sown crops, which usually form a protective soil cover, were hampered by the early freezing weather and then partially killed by the soil heaving thaw which followed. Heavy rains of the past month easily ate deep gouges into the naked soil farmed by conventional methods.

Strips on the two farms are laid out around the hills rather than up and down. Those on the Bartels place are uniformly 150 feet wide because the place has a rather even slope throughout. The Jette strips vary considerably in width to conform to areas somewhat level which may butt against sharply steeper slopes. Jette says the farming practice within the strips is more important than the width of the strip as far as erosion efficiency is concerned.

**Grain, Grass Growth**  
Grain crops and grass are grown on alternate strips. This year Bartels grew 1 strip of rye, 2 strips of wheat, 3 of oats and vetch and 6 of chewing fescue. Jette uses the same crops.

Water streaming down the hill-sides is constantly diverted by the cross ridges of soil left by tillage tools in the strips. The grain strips are somewhat open and Bartels says there is a little erosion this year on the downhill side of some of these strips. But the dense grass sod on the next lower fescue strip catches the water and spreads the soil over its surface.

Lifelong observers of the effect of heavy rainfall on farmland, both men are greatly impressed with the role grass sod plays in holding surface water. "The water doesn't accumulate, it percolates," said Jette. "The sod soaks up the water, we just don't get any surface water in the barnyard at the lower end of the place like we used to," Bartels observed.

**Grass Waterways**  
Two of the three grassed waterways on the Bartels place designed by Soil Conservation service engineers to cut across the contour strips and carry surplus water to main drainage ditches at boundaries of the place have been eliminated because the strips are doing so well the waterways are not needed. Jette does not use them even on his steepest slopes.

Jette has increased his grain yields 300 percent since institut-

ing the strip method. Constant grain farming had reduced yields on the land he now owns to 12-15 bushels of wheat and 15-25 bushels of oats. He now harvests 50-60 bushels of wheat and oat yields of 70 bushels are common. He has used the system long enough to be able to rotate the strips from rather long-term fescue cropping back to the grains which has helped greatly in his improved yields.

Bartels plans to start rotating next year. He expects his 60 bushel wheat yields of last harvest to jump when he plants grain on the grass sod plots.

**Modern Equipment**  
Modern farming equipment with power lifts, etc., works in nicely with strip farming which requires more turning during tillage than is done on conventional fields. However the pulling is being done around hills rather than up and down and experts calculate there is an actual fuel saving of about 17 per cent in the process.

Bartels mentioned one big advantage of the system in handling the fescue straw which must be burned as a disease control measure each fall. In continuous plantings the straw must be hauled to the edge of each field to avoid spread of the fire in burning. With strips the material can be handled with a buck rake parking it on the adjacent strip of grain stubble.

**Livestock pasturing** is somewhat of a problem with strip farming. Bartels does not use any stock but Jette has a sizeable herd of dairy cattle and a flock of sheep. He controls them with temporary fences of woven wire.

**Two Ponds Dug**  
Two ponds for irrigation and wildlife have been dug on the Bartels farm. One located over a layer of soapstone was porous and did not hold water later than May each year. It has been more or less abandoned after attempts to waterproof it with a bonding mixture have been unsuccessful.

The other pond has furnished water for sprinkling an adjacent field of fescue seedlings. It also supplies bass and bluegills up to 3 pound weights. The farms run from 800 to 700 feet in elevation. Normal rainfall is around 47 1/2 inches per year. Soil types are mostly Alken clay loam, Olympic clay loam and Polk clay loam. Soils are residual from basic igneous rocks.

Looking back over the farming methods used in the area since the family moved there in 1905, Bartels said it is a wonder there is any soil left. "But since we have started contour strip farming we certainly have not lost much top soil and the rocks are not coming up any more," he mused.

## Soil District Sets Meeting

The annual meeting of the Mt. Angel Soil Conservation District will be held at St. Luke's Hall in Woodburn the evening of Friday, January 20, 1956, according to Warren Sybrandt, Route 2, Woodburn, district chairman. Reverend Alcuin Heibel, O.S.B., pastor of the St. Joseph Church, Portland, will be the evening speaker, Sybrandt pointed out.

Other phases of the evening program, which starts at 8:00 p.m., includes a conservation movie, musical numbers, the annual business meeting and a coffee and doughnut social period.

Business to be considered includes presentation of the annual report, and the election of one supervisor. St. Luke's Hall is located three blocks west of Woodburn's Front Street and one block north of the St. Paul-Woodburn Highway. The address is 529 Harrison Street.

## Erosion Coils Tentacles Around Hillside



An example of water erosion caused by recent rains can be seen in this picture taken on a hillside south of Salem. The cuts in the soil have been caused by water rushing down the bare hill. Silt deposits are at the bottom of the picture.

## Pamphlet Tells Quality Egg Steps Needed

Three major steps for maintaining high quality in Oregon-produced eggs are discussed in a new bulletin, "Better Eggs," published by Oregon State college extension service. Copies are available on request from county extension agents or the OSC bulletin clerk.

**Better Quality**  
Better egg quality through breeding, feeding, and care of eggs is outlined by author Noel Bennion, OSC extension poultry specialist. Egg quality is inherited and any marked or permanent improvement will have to be brought about by selective breeding, says the specialist. Some progress may be made through selection of hatching eggs, but much faster progress can be made through breeding for quality, he explains.

In general, the type of ration that will give good production will produce eggs of good quality. Yolk color is influenced by the amount of green feeds and yellow corn in the ration. But the amount of thick and thin albumen an egg contains at the time it is laid is an inherited characteristic and is not influenced by feed, Bennion says. Thin-shelled eggs may be caused by lack of minerals, lack of vitamin D, improper balance of these ingredients, and high temperatures.

**Management Practices**  
Confinement of the laying flock, clean nests, and egg-gathering three to four times daily are among management practices recommended in the bulletin. Eggs should be held in a farm storage room at a temperature range of 40 to 60 degrees with humidity above 80 per cent, according to the specialist. He recommends eggs be marketed at least twice a week during warm weather.

In addition to detailed discussions on breeding, feeding, and management, the 16-page bulletin tells how to construct a farm egg storage room. Also included in the bulletin are colored pictures showing the United States standards for quality of different egg grades and a description of each grade.

## OSC Food Technologist Tells Of Tests on Irradiated Food

OREGON STATE COLLEGE — Wide variations in flavor, appearance and texture of different foods treated with radioactive materials have been reported by an Oregon State college food technologist, who urges large-scale tests to determine how well irradiated foods will be liked and accepted by consumers.

Dr. H. W. Schultz, head of food technology at Oregon State, points out that ionizing treatments hold tremendous possibilities for preserving foods without refrigeration and for ridding foods of parasites. More research necessary. It is still impossible to say, however, whether the flavor and "looks" changes that come with treatment of many foods will make them "unacceptable" to consumers, Schultz continued. Research is needed to clarify these points.

"Some foods, such as milk and cheese, bananas, orange juice, and certain cured meat products such as frankfurters have become notorious examples of producers of undesirable flavors when irradiated," the OSC food processing expert said.

On the other side of the picture, asparagus, bacon, green beans, beef liver, broccoli, brussel sprouts, carrots, chicken, codfish cakes, pork and pork sausage rate "good" on the appraisal chart. Many meats—which are among the key foods under study—show promise, Schultz said. It appears that irradiation of meat may cause no greater flavor changes than those produced in some foods in canning or freezing, he reported.

Raw meat generally is "very slightly browned" on the outer surfaces when given ionizing treatments, Schultz found, but when cooked "there is no discernible effect." Texture sometimes is changed. Ground beef takes on a "crumbly" texture when irradiated at high dosages and softsteak texture is described as "hefted." A panel of trained taste testers rated the irradiated meats "different" but it is not known to what extent this difference will influence consumer acceptance of the meats. No changes in flavor or texture

## Peach Spray Need Before Buds Swell

Rain, wind, and other unfavorable weather will delay the dormant spray for peach leaf curl in local orchards, observes County Extension Agent D. L. Raamussen. However, as long as the spray is applied before the buds swell, it will protect against damage by peach leaf curl, one of the most serious fungus diseases of peaches in the Willamette valley.

Recommended sprays include Bordeaux 12-12-100; Ferbam, 3 pounds in 100 gallons of water; or Puratized Agricultural Spray, 1 quart in 100 gallons of water. A spreader sticker, such as Triton B 1956 or DuPont Spreader Sticker should be used according to manufacturer's instructions. Another suitable sticker is 1 quart of spray oil emulsion in 100 gallons of the Bordeaux or Ferbam spray.

For the back yard gardener, Puratized Agricultural Spray is effective at 2 teaspoonful per gallon of water. Ferbam at 2 level tablespoonful per gallon of water is equally effective. Manufacturer's recommendations outline complete directions for use of these materials.

Experienced peach growers know that it is difficult to apply an effective peach leaf curl spray. They must be able to time their sprays to dry before rains wash them off or lower their effectiveness. Growers must be able to move equipment in the orchard without getting stuck. They must be prepared to stop spraying if winds make thorough coverage impossible. Finally, they must plan to discard any Bordeaux spray that cannot be used the same day it is mixed. Bordeaux is an unstable spray that will not remain effective for more than a few hours after mixing.

served at 6:30 p.m. This will be followed by the annual business meeting and the evening program. Farmers in the more recent additions of the district are especially urged to attend. Rue emphasizes. These additions include the Scotts Mills, Central Howell, Chemawa, Keizer, Mission Bottom areas.

## Annual Meet Due By Silver Creek Soil District

Harry A. Scoth, senior agronomist, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Oregon State College, will be the featured speaker at the Silver Creek Soil Conservation District annual meeting scheduled for Thursday evening, January 19, 1956, at the Union Hills Grange Hall, Scoth, who recently returned from Europe, will discuss seed crop production and utilization in various European countries. LeRoy Rue, Victor Point, district chairman, points out that the meeting starts with a dinner

## Benson Schedules Portland Speech

Erza Taft Benson, secretary of agriculture, has a date with America's wheat farmers in Portland, Oregon on February 2. He is one of several high-level speakers scheduled to appear before producers during the National Association of Wheat Growers sixth annual meeting, February 1, 2, and 3.

**Other Dignitaries**  
Other noteworthy and wheat-wise dignitaries slated to share the rostrum with Benson include Congressman Clifford Hope of Kansas, Governor Paul Patterson of Oregon, Claude Gifford of Farm Journal publications, and Gwynn Garnett, administrator, foreign agricultural service, USDA.

With wheat in the national and international limelight, but good, this wheat meeting has all the earmarks of being an interesting one. February 1, 2, and 3 will record the first time this organi-

zation has held its conflag outside of the great plains wheat area. Items sure to get the full treatment under the "convention microscope" include politically potent agricultural terms under the general headings of soil-bank proposals, cost-price squeeze, effects of so-called modernized parity, revision of U.S. grain standards, 90 per cent supports versus flexibles, chances for a two-price system for wheat, and "what should wheat farmers do about it." During 1955, the National Association of Wheat Growers as an organization supported a program calling for full parity to wheat producers for that portion of their crop used for domestic food consumption.

Representative Clifford Hope, a member of Congress for thirty years and often called a wheat farmer's best friend there, will predict the future in a speech entitled, "What's Ahead for Wheat Growers." His address is scheduled for the morning of February 1. Hope just recently announced that he will retire after this present session of Congress.

## Smut Losses To Northwest Growers High

PULLMAN, Wash. (AP) — Northwest wheat growers lost 5 million dollars to smut in 1955, the worst year on record for the plant disease, it was reported Wednesday. The dollar deficit included production losses, dockage by the trade and washing charges on the 29 million bushels of smutty wheat, 3 million more than in 1954.

Thirty-four per cent of the wheat in Washington, Oregon and Idaho graded smutty, an increase of 11.7 per cent over 1954.

The report was made by Dr. C. S. Holton, Department of agriculture plant pathologist at Washington State College. His figures are based on questionnaires distributed through the Pacific Northwest Grain Dealers' Assn.

In Holton's survey, the Palouse area of eastern Washington and northern Idaho was hardest hit by the black fungus with smut incidence of 61 per cent. The Walla Walla area had 47.5 per cent, the Lewiston, Idaho area 29.6; Spokane 20.7; Pendleton, Ore. 18.1; Lind, Wash. 2.3 and The Dalles, Ore. 3.3.

By states, Washington with a 55-million bushel production had the highest percentage of smut, 30.8. Idaho, with 37 million bushels, had 28 per cent and Oregon, with 22 million bushels, 12.3 per cent.

## Santiam Soil Group to Meet

The eighth annual meeting of the Santiam Soil Conservation District will be held Saturday, January 28, 1956, in the Stayton High School reports Ralph Wilson, Macleay, district chairman.

Conservation films, discussions, a travelogue, and the annual business meeting are scheduled for the all-day meeting, which starts at 10:00 a.m.

Roger Detering, Harrisburg, Oregon State College student, Oregon's delegate to Turkey on the International Farm Youth Exchange program, will be one of the featured speakers.

The American hemlock, unlike the trees whose juices killed Socrates, is not poisonous.

## Swine Growers Schedule Sale

The annual Bred Gilt Sale of the Oregon Swine Growers Association was announced this week by Sale Chairman Brentford Miller by Saturday, February 4th at the State Fairgrounds in Salem. Miller, a Berkshire breeder at Woodburn, said forty animals had been consigned. For sale catalogues and details write Ted Hobart, secretary, Oregon Swine Growers, P. O. Box 111, Salem.

Col. Earl Gillaspie, will cry the sale of spring farrowing gilts, Spotted Poland Chinas, Yorkshire, Duroc, Chesterwhite, Berkshire and Hampshire breeds are to be sold.

## LAND SALE

The State Highway Commission will sell at public auction on the property described below at 11:00 a.m., February 6, 1956

A parcel of land lying in the J. J. Lemmons D.L.C. No. 63 and in the Linus Brooks D.L.C. No. 64, also lying in Sections 17 and 18, Township 6 South, Range 2 West, W.M., Marion County, Oregon, and being a portion of that property conveyed by those deeds to State of Oregon, by and through its State Highway Commission, recorded in Book 457, Page 805, and in Book 461, Page 441 of Marion County Records of Deeds. The said parcel being that portion of said property lying West of a line which is parallel to and 174 feet westerly of the center line of the Portland-Salem Expressway, which center line is described as follows:

Beginning at Engineer's center line Station 1585+00, said Station being 1296.46 feet North and 13.61 feet East of the Southeast corner of said J. J. Lemmons D.L.C. No. 63; thence S. 22° 40' W. 3000 feet to Station 1615+00, except that part of said property which is included in a strip of land 65 feet in width lying North of and adjacent to the North line of County Road No. 609. Said center line crosses the North line of said property (which line is also the North line of Krebs Acres) approx at Center Line Station 1590+25, and said center line crosses the center line of said County Road No. 609 which runs along the South side of said property approx. at Center Line Station 1613+40.

The parcel of land to which this description applies contains 50.74 acres.

The property consists of portions of the former Petzel and Aspinwall properties and is located north of and adjacent to County Road No. 609 (Brooks-Hopmore Road) and westerly of the Portland-Salem Expressway. The property is No. 20897.

The minimum price which will be accepted is \$12,500. Conveyance will be by Bargain and Sale Deed with complete restriction of access to the Portland-Salem Expressway, but with access to County Road No. 609 on the South.

The State will Not Furnish abstract or title insurance.

TERMS OF SALE ARE: Cash. The right is reserved to accept or reject any or all bids.

INFORMATION: W. Parker.

OREGON STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

STATE HIGHWAY BUILDING

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## AUCTION

Saturday January 14th 1:00 P.M. 4-Corner's Community Hall

The personal property of guardianship estate of Juana Holmes

The following will be sold to the highest bidder:

- Firestone Refrigerator
- Westinghouse Elec. Roaster & Stand
- Hamilton-Beach Vacuum
- 2-table Radios
- Movie Projector Screen
- Singer Sewing Mach.
- With Attachments
- Numerous Small Appliances
- Especially China Dishes
- Set of Antique Dishes
- Set of Glass Goblets
- 2 Sets Punch Glasses
- 3 Jardiniere
- Misc. Dishes, Silverware, Kit, Utensils
- 2 Lg. Crocheted Tablecloths
- 2 Purple Chenille Bedspreads
- Plus many other items too numerous to mention

Jewelry to be sold at private treaty: 1 pr. earrings w. 3/5 carat diamond; 1 sircon finger ring; 1 diamond and ruby finger ring; wrist watch; 1 pr. sapphire earrings; 1 pr. pierced earrings; 1 ruby finger ring; wrist watch band with diamonds; 1 diamond and garnet finger ring.

Your inspection is invited Friday, Jan. 13, 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

W. W. McKinney Guardian Claude Kilgore Auctioneer

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