

## MORROW



# Soil and Water Conservation District

Heppner, Oregon 97836

P.O. Box 127

Phone (503) 676-5452

## 1989 ANNUAL REPORT

Supplement to the Heppner Gazette-Times, Jan. 17, 1990

### Rauch family Conservation farm of 1989

A family farm that has roots in the early 1920's has been named the 1989 Morrow County Conservation Farm of the year.

Starvation Farms, located at North Lexington, is owned and operated by the Irv Rauch family - including wife, Mildred, son Chris and his wife Kathy, and daughter Tana and her husband Steve Hill. The family received the top award for their outstanding conservation practices.

The farm has over 3,000 acres of cropland along with 1,000 acres of cropland in Conservation Reserve Program. It is primarily a wheat/fallow operation with a variety of wheat and barley planted both spring and fall. This rotation of varieties helps reduce the impact of disease and insects and has proven to be successful for the farm.

Conservation practices are a way of life for the Rauch operation. The biggest problem plaguing the farm is wind erosion and, through the years, the soil has blown when it is worked too much or not enough residue is left. Through participation in the Lexington Blow Control District since its inception in 1948, the family has learned how to combat erosion.

Some of the successful methods have been to minimize tillage operation. First is the chisel plow with sweeps, followed by rodweed as necessary and spraying for weeds. Next is fertilizing and finally rodweed to set the moisture line. This practice has allowed the farm to seed the last week of August or the first week of September. The practices have yielded good results with double summer fallow at 70 bushels and single summer fallow bringing bushels in the mid-40s last year.

The farm still encounters fragile areas that tend to blow in spite of the tillage operation. These areas are managed differently, by staying off them as much as possible and by using straw during erosive times. Another practice has been to straighten ditches and grass them. This practice allows for less turning when cultivating the field and helps hold the fragile soils. In addition the farm has installed 13,600

feet of grass waterways.

On one field where water erosion is a problem, they have installed 25,400 feet of terraces.

The family is active in farming-related organizations and committees to aid them in becoming better farmers. They hold positions and memberships in the Oregon Wheat League, Morrow County Wheat League, Marketing Club, Agriculture Stabilization Conservation Service, and others.

Starvation Farms is being farmed by third and fourth generation families and will be available for the future generations because of the conservation methods used today and in years to come.

#### District Meetings

Regular meetings are held on the first Tuesday at 8pm except for winter months when they are held at 1 p.m. Special meetings will be held as need arises. Agendas will be planned and sent one week in advance of meeting. Meetings will rotate between north and south Morrow County.



Left to right: Steve and Tana Hill, Millie Rauch, Kathy and Chris Rauch



Irvin Rauch explains conservation farming methods used on Starvation Farms. He is flanked on his left by son Chris and son-in-law Steve.

#### Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District 17th Annual Meeting Friday, January 19, 1990 Heppner Elks Lodge

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. | WELCOME & INTRODUCTION - Rudy Bergstrom<br>Financial Report - Don Key<br>Outstanding Cooperator - Scott Madison<br>SWCD Manager Report - Jerry Anderson                           |
| 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. | GEOLOGY OF MORROW COUNTY<br>Dr. Baxter, Professor of Geology, EOSC<br>An overview of how Morrow County was formed and what geologic and climatic changes have occurred over time. |
| 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. | GROUNDWATER & MORROW COUNTY<br>Paul Pedone, Geologist, SCS<br>An overview of groundwater, how it moves and factors affecting recharge.  |
| 11:30 a.m. - 11:50 a.m. | QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD  |
| 11:50 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | CLOSING REMARKS - Rudy Bergstrom  |