

Windbreaks can save money

Windbreak and shelterbelt planting around homes, farms and fields can save people money. Tom Bennett with the Soil Conservation Service in Morrow County said that windbreak benefits such as reduced energy costs, better feed efficiency for livestock and better crop yields and quality can add up to returns far greater than the installation costs. Some financial assistance and technical assistance is available for windbreak installation.

In areas such as eastern

Oregon, cold winds affect home heating costs. Reducing the wind speed translates into reducing energy used for heating. Some studies have shown a properly designed windbreak can reduce heating costs by up to 20 percent. Added benefits of reduced wind damage to structures, summer savings in cooling and watering cost and help in controlling blowing dust make home and farmstead windbreaks even more attractive.

Bennett says that livestock also benefit from windbreaks.

Animals use some of the energy from their feed to stay warm. The combination of temperature and wind speed is the wind chill or effective temperature. Animals protected from the wind use less feed to stay warm.

For example: a beef cow exposed to 15 degree temperature and 15 mph wind uses feed as if it were 0 degrees and calm. A windbreak that reduces the wind speed to 4.5 mph would save about 10 percent of the energy used to stay warm. Higher winds and lower temperatures make greater savings. Stress related diseases, calf mortality and cold related injuries can also be reduced.

Crop yields and quality can be hurt by excessive wind. They can often be increased by protection from harmful winds. Damage from blowing soil and physical injury to plants and fruit cost money in reduced prices and quantities at the market. At times

crops are completely destroyed by wind.

Windbreaks should be planted in the spring. Now is the time to start planning for next springs

projects. A tree can't help you if it is never planted. The USDA Soil Conservation Service can help. Call 676-5021 for information.

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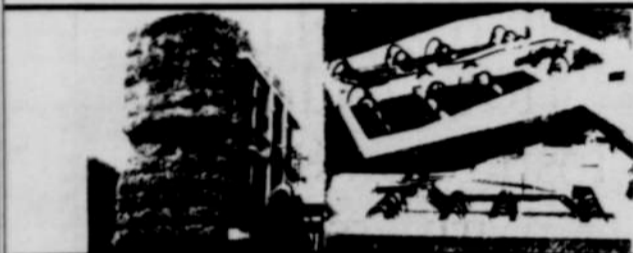
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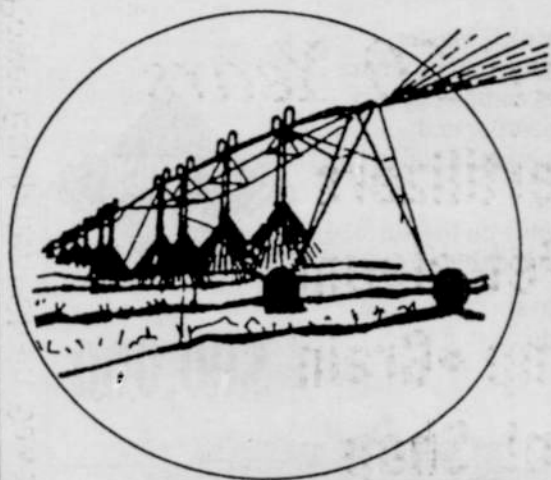
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If you have questions or do not understand something in your conservation plan contact the Soil Conservation Service office at PO Box 127, 430 Heppner/Lexington Hwy, Heppner, OR 97836.

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