Soil Conservation and Dairying

Dairying was developed in Wisconsin principally for the preservation of the soil and because of the topography and ideal climatic condition. This was the result of the foresightedness of Governor Hoard and a few other outstanding farmers three quarters of a century ago. These men organized the Wisconsin Dairymen's Association just seventy-five years ago, to save Wisconsin's soil which was being depleted of its humus and plant food elements.

Wisconsin at that time was a wheat growing state. Practically everything grown was sold from the farm with nothing returned to the soil to replace the depleted plant food. With the establishments of dairy herds, Wisconsin turned to grass crops for pasture and hay for the dairy herd. Much of these soil conserving crops went back to the soil in the form of manure restoring humus as well as the elements which had been taken up by the grasses and legumes.

In addition to the humus and fertilizing value of this grassland farming, it is a definite help in controlling soil erosion. Many states and some areas of Wisconsin that have neglected grassland farming are paying the price through erosion by water and wind.

Efficiency in farming depends largely on the soil. Therefore, it is essential that our top soil be conserved through more grassland farming and the use of more erosion control practices. It means that we must maintain the proper balance of dairy cattle on our farms and not overstock them as has been the case on many farms during the war years.

Signed

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