

PASTURE IMPROVEMENT WORK

Pastures provide the cheapest home grown feed for cattle -- especially dairy cattle. Dane County farmers, with nearly 90,000 head of dairy cows producing annually about 500,000,000 pounds of milk, depend upon their pastures to produce milk and dairy products economically. About 40% of the annual milk production can be credited to pasture feeding.

Unfortunately 40 to 50% of our 60,000 acres of permanent pastures here in Dane County have been drained of much of their fertility through erosion, white grub injury and continuous over-grazing. Most of these pastures need LIME - PHOSPHATE - POTASH and NITROGEN. They need to be RE-JUVINATED - or RENOVATED and reseeded to a good mixture of legumes and drouth resisting grasses.

- Steps in Renovation -

1. Select a portion of the pasture with the poorest sod.
2. Test the soil. Apply lime and fertilizers as needed.
3. Work up the sod thoroughly with disk or field cultivator.
4. Sow early in the spring, using either of the following mixtures:
 - (a) 10 lbs. alfalfa; 5 lbs. red clover; 3 to 4 lbs. timothy.
 - (b) 12 lbs. sweet clover; 5 lbs. red clover; 4 lbs. timothy.
5. Harrow after seeding. Do not over-graze the first year.

- Results from Pasture Renovation -

Nearly 4,000 acres of worn out pastures have been renovated here in Dane County in the past four years with the following results:

1. Assures succulent forage during July and August.
2. Increases carrying capacity and reduces over-grazing.
3. Provides high protein feed at a low cost.
4. Protects against white grubs and controls weeds.
5. Corrects soil acidity - rebuilds worn out soils.

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Dane County farmers are fortunate in that the entire county is now a Soil Conservation District with the County Agricultural Committee as supervisors of this district. Due to this set-up, the Federal Government provides the free services of B. D. Blakely, Soil Conservationist, A. J. Wojta, Engineer, and C. W. Skaife, C. V. Pond and A. A. Lattimer, Planning Technicians.

The county agents have charge of the educational part of this soil conservation program. The map on the following page shows 72 farms where pasture renovation has been carried on in 1942.