

Contoured Corn



Standing in new corn, Arthur E. Brown, R2 Nottingham, just south of Little Britain in Lancaster County, here has as a background contours that helped him win the title of Lancaster County's Outstanding Soil Conservationist for 1956. (Lancaster Farming Staff Photo).

Strip Farming by An Expert



Although the hills of his farm are not as rugged as many in Lancaster County, strip farming and better soil conservation practices have been put on a paying basis by Arthur E. Brown of R2 Nottingham. Here is a view of his farm, with the farm home across the pond, Guernseys grazing in the meadows, and, in the far background, strip cropping. (Lancaster Farming Staff Photo).

Outstanding County Conservationist 40-Year Graduate of Penn State

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Located across the road from the new Little Britain Elementary School, are his colorful strip-cropped fields. Just south of the village itself is his three-quarter acre pond, protected by an electric fence, a pond built on a swamp, but whose depth ranges up to ten feet. A spring feeds an adequate supply of water for livestock use.

Describing the Lancaster County Soil Conservation District, of which he was the first president, Mr. Brown told, "The district was formed in 1938, made up of 15 townships south of the Lincoln Highway. Before that time we had government demonstrations and the Civilian Conservation Corps camps which did much of the early soil conservation work at no cost to the farmer.

He Was Skeptical Once

"Before the district was formed," he continued, "several in the neighborhood were anxious to organize, but I was a bit skeptical. However they asked me to serve as supervisor. Two were appointed by the Governor, three were elected.

"As a supervisor, I was less dubious," Mr. Brown related, "for the idea of 'one hundred per cent on the contour' didn't look too practical. There were too many points, too many corners, but farmers on the board looked for leeway."

And they found leeway as time went on. The straight-edge measuring gave way to practicality. This depression-born idea grew into something that today causes Mr. Brown to conclude, "There are very few farms that couldn't use some conservation."

Those in the rolling hills of Southern Lancaster County can well apply these principles. The Brown farm is rolling, not hilly, hence he saw no need for diversion ditches, although they were recommended originally. Today he's holding his soil by contour striping.

From Steers to Dairying

For the first ten years of his farming career, Mr. Brown fed steers, then found the need for more crops, and finally he shifted to dairying.

Sixty acres are cropped on

contour, each in 100-foot strips. "Original cost was minute, and it was spread over four years to work the strips in," Mr. Brown told. Once established, there has been no need to work them up again, and the program of one plowed-up strip, one strip in crops has worked well.

"There's no question there are some drawbacks to soil conservation, but it works out better on some farms than on others," he advises.

Most crops not fed green go into the 14-by-45 foot tile silo that holds 150 to 160 tons. The balance of the crops are picked for grain.

Timothy, alfalfa and clover are planted in wheat, to round out the rotation program.

The Brown family, in addition to Mr. and Mrs. Brown, two daughters and a son, are also farm-minded. Wilfried T., 34, lives on an adjacent farm, and has been in the trucking business since 1950. Mrs. Charles (Elizabeth) Jackson, Jr., lives on a farm joining the homeplace to the northwest, while Mrs. Kenneth (Vera) McCauley lives on a farm the other side of Chestnut Level.

Carry 600 White Leghorns

One of the biggest helps to the Brown operation is that given by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Wagner who have full charge of the cows and chickens — 600 White Leghorns, from which the pullet crop provides replacements each year. "They're doing a nice job, and we're well pleased," Mr. Brown replied.

In addition to being the outstanding conservationist, Mr. Brown has been a trustee of Little Britain Presbyterian Church 24 years, treasurer for 20 years. He's served 33 years as a director of Farmers National Bank at Quarryville, now chairman of the Southern Lancaster County Joint High School, a member of the Quarryville Lion's Club, a past director of both the Lancaster County Farm Bureau and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Artificial Breeding Cooperative, and from 1944 to 1947 was Clerk of Quarter Sessions Court in Lancaster County.

We are still waiting on that flying platform—family size.

Fruit Outlook Declines; Cold Weather Cause

HARRISBURG — In the first Pennsylvania fruit production forecast of the 1956 season the State Department of Agriculture today said the peach crop is estimated at 2,450,000 bushels, 450,000 under last year, but 139,000 bushels above the 10-year 1945-54 average.

As predicted, the May 17 freeze failed to affect peaches as much as other fruits, observers said. Pennsylvania last year ranked third among all states in peach production. Apple and red cherry estimates are not yet available.

Sweet cherries and pears were hard hit by the freeze and were wiped out in many spots. The Federal-State June 1 forecast for sweet cherries is production of only 700 tons compared with 1,300 tons last year and the average of 1,100 tons.

Pennsylvania's commercial pear crop this year is estimated at 80,000 bushels compared with 140,000 in 1955 and the average of 188,000 bushels.

Killing frosts occurred generally over Pennsylvania on May 17 and 25, the latest of record in a number of localities, the Department said.

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