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proved — by research findings of agricultural engineers W. G. Lovely of ARS, D. H. Luttrell of the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station, and C. W. Bockhop of the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station.

These scientists conducted a series of tests to evaluate the operation of tillage tools in terms of changes in soil condition. They followed typical procedures used by farmers — plowing 6 to 8 inches deep, and operating implements at 4 miles per hour. The tests were made on Colo silt loam and two complex soils — Clarion-Webster and Glenco-Webster — which if well drained are representative of productive, desirable soils for farming.

Disking and harrowing after plowing usually failed to break up clods — one of the main objectives of these operations — clod size was not significantly reduced in six out of seven experiments.

Tillage after plowing often failed to reduce soil density (compactness). In fact, disking and harrowing immediately after fall plowing actually compacted the soil. Changes

in soil density generally were determined whether this very slight, however; in one smoother surface is needed experiment, there was no significant change until the test plot had been disked three times.

Spring disking of fall-plowed soil reduced compaction slightly. But additional operations such as spike-tooth harrowing or repeated disking tended to further compact the soil rather than loosen it.

The compactness of the soils before the tillage tests was not excessive, ranging from 115 to 129 grams per cubic centimeter. Plowing reduced this density by approximately 25 percent to a density range of .91 to .97 gm/cc.

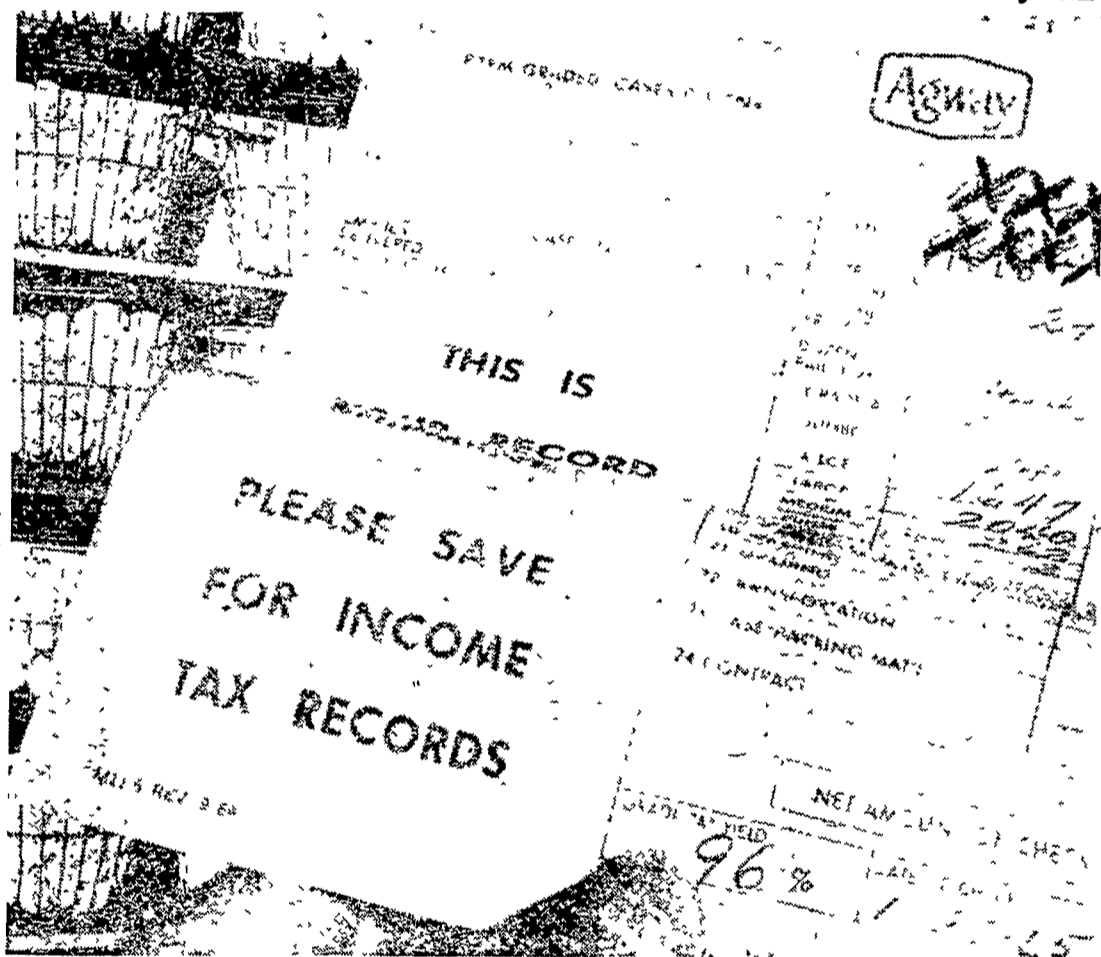
The greatest contribution of disking and harrowing in smoothing the surface of the ground after plowing was related to soil type. Plow-smoother surfaced field resulted, despite failure to reduce clod size, because the implements tended to compact the soil. It has not been

whether this smoother surface is needed for good seed emergence and plant growth, or whether some minimum degree of smoothness — with minimum tillage — is as satisfactory.

Two factors in seed and plant environment — soil temperature and moisture content — were also studied.

Plowing, disking, and harrowing had little or no effect on the changes in soil temperature or moisture that occurred during the first 10 days following the tillage operation. No attempt was made to determine the effect soil condition changes had on crop growth.

The scientists found that the effects of tillage on soil density, roughness, and clod size followed a pattern that was related to soil type. Plow-smoother surfaced field resulted, despite failure to reduce clod size, because the implements tended to compact the soil. It has not been on the other two soils.



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