

Local Leaders Review Conservation Program

(Continued from Page 1)
 aster County by existing programs if adequate funds were made available perhaps twice the current levels

—New construction is a very serious erosion and sedimentation problem in this area Pennay commented. "In agriculture, we seem to be beating our brains out and the building industry is one of the biggest violators and no one's bothering them."

—ACP is being hurt more from a fund priority standpoint than from the fact it's not a good program. As the agricultural population becomes relatively smaller, it's necessary to look increasingly to city votes to get programs such as ACP funded. Perhaps ACP should become more involved with urban problems.

—Animal wastes are becoming a bigger problem. Complaints are being made increasingly both from an air and water pollution standpoint.

—Well pollution is a serious problem.

—It was agreed that most existing ACP programs are needed under some conditions and in some areas. But each area must take the overall ACP package and set priorities that fit its own particular area and farming conditions.

—Concern was expressed about a growing tendency of some farmers to cut corners on established conservation practices. This includes making grass strips narrower to the point where the strips are practically worthless as a strip-cropping device.

Corn production is expanding in the county, perhaps by as much as five to 10 per cent this year alone, it was noted, along with the concern that this expansion is accompanied in some areas by a disregard for sound conservation practices. Atrazine has ruled out winter cover crops in some areas and where corn is grown continuously for several years, some farmers may be faced with wholesale erosion of their soil, it was reported.

—Terraces and sod and tile waterways remain as the backbone of the local conservation effort, Bass said.

—Robert K. Mowrer, Soil Conservation District chairman, said local municipalities are going to have to plan for their sewage needs in advance, instead of waiting five to 10 years after their facilities are inadequate.

—While chemical fertilizers in streams is now a problem, this problem will be controlled if the sediment problem is controlled.

—Insecticides and pesticides are not a problem overall, but are problems in individual instances only when a particular farmer misuses a chemical. The state has found that many of the fish kills from this source are caused when a particular farmer backs up to a stream and dumps left over chemicals into it in large volumes.

—Posting of land against

hunting and fishing is a growing problem, not so much by farmers as by city people who buy land and post it. This trend goes against efforts by the state to promote open land, Mowrer said.

The only thing worse, he said is another small group of urban people who abuse property, tearing down fences, shooting near buildings and even cutting fences instead of crawling under.

—In a discussion on whether non-farmers who own land should get ACP money, it was generally agreed that each case must be considered on its own merits, based on such factors as the value of the conservation practices to the public and on the applicant's financial need.

—Concern was expressed about the ACP program only being funded on a yearly basis, making it difficult to reach agreements to help finance conservation practices on large land tracts. Such large programs generally have to be undertaken over several years and the owners are often reluctant to start without assurances of



Richard A. Pennay



Among about a dozen local agricultural leaders discussing the future of agricultural conservation this week at the Farm and Home Center were, left to right: Frank W. Aument, ASC County

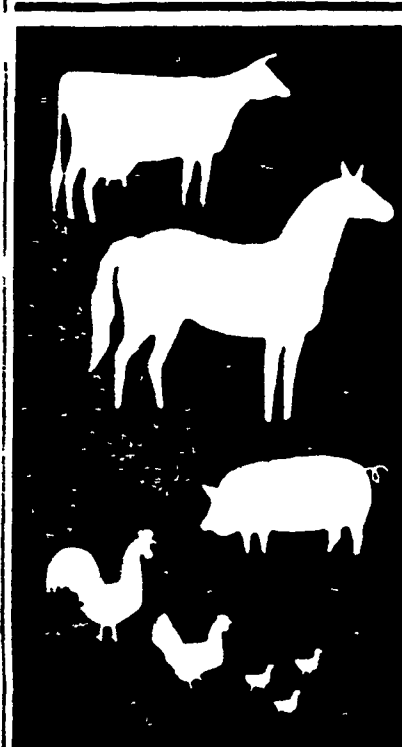
committee; John J. Herr, ASC County Committee; Fred G. Seldomridge, chairman, ASC County Committee, and Miss Dorothy Neel, ASCS County executive director.

continuing ACP support. It was agreed a program similar to the Great Plains program which provides for long-range contracts and funding is needed.

—The project or community approach to conservation involving large numbers of persons planting trees, laying tile or doing other work, including park development, should be encouraged. Most of those present favored this type of thing because it involves a lot of people who tend to feel responsible for the work they do.

Besides Pennay, Bass and Mowrer, participants in the discussion included Fred G. Seldomridge, ASC County Committee Chairman, Frank W. Aument, ASC County Committee, John J. Herr, ASC County Committee, Miss Dorothy Y. Neel, ASCS County executive director; Aaron Stauffer, Soil Conservation District chairman; Robert K. Mowrer, Soil Conservation District director.

Jay Irwin, associate county agent; Arnold Lueck, associate county agent; Roy Giesmann, Farmers Home Administration, county supervisor; Edison Osborne, National Farmers Union; Clifford Holloway, Pomona Grange.



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