

Strips can help

CHAMBERSBURG — Strip-cropping is a practice for early spring farming. The beginning of a new cropping season should include strips on farmland that is moderately steep to steep in slope, according to David T. Hoffman, conservation technician for the Chambersburg USDA Soil Conservation Service.

Stripcropping is a conservation practice used on cropland to save runoff water by slowing it down so more will be absorbed by the soil; conserve soil and fertilizer by controlling runoff water; reduce costs of operating farm machinery because farming is done on the level; increase yields by making more water available to the plants.

To be effective, crops must be arranged in such a manner that strips of cultivated crops are alternated with strips of sod or close growing crops such as small grain, says Hoffman.

On soils which are well drained, upper and lower boundaries of the strips should be as nearly on the

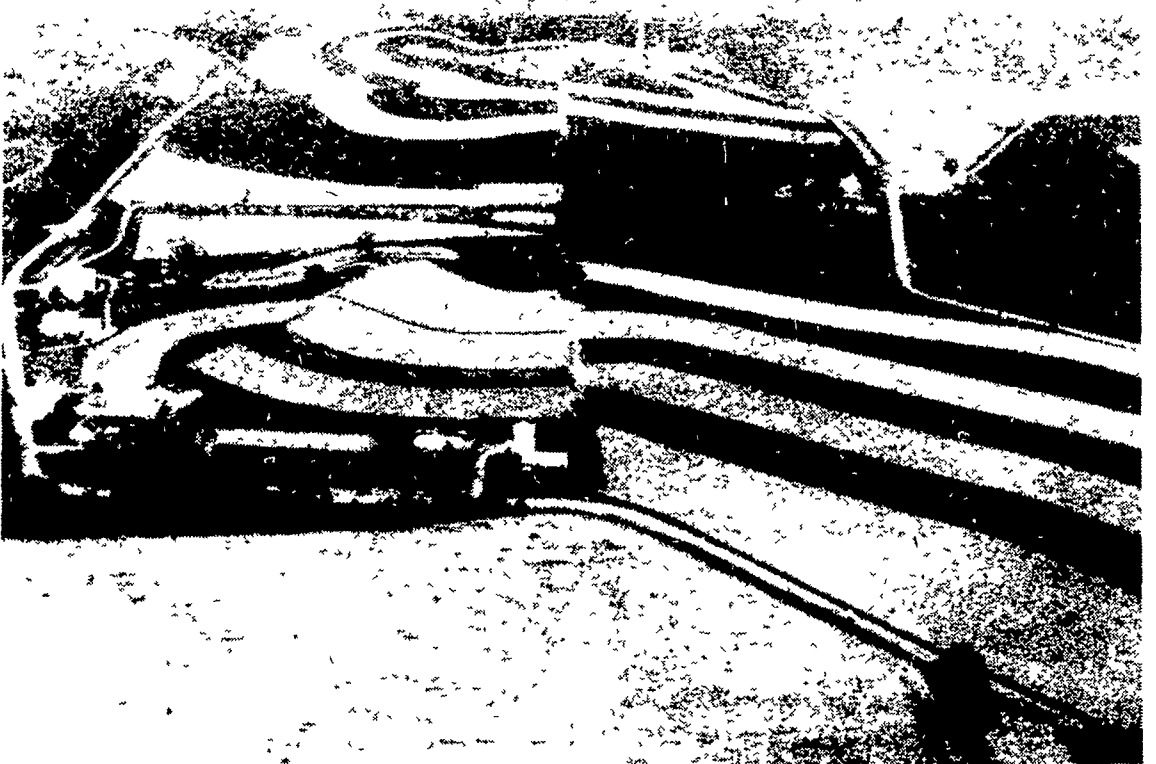
level as practical to operate machinery. On soils which are poorly drained, the boundaries should slope enough that water will move slowly off the strip.

Strips approximately 90 to 100 feet in width are generally considered most convenient for farming, according to Hoffman. They may be laid out in greater width depending on type of soil, amount of slope, and the kind of farm machinery to be used. Normally, however, strip widths seldom exceed 120 feet.

Other conservation practices such as diversions and waterways are sometimes needed in combination with stripcropping to provide adequate protection to the land.

Landowners interested in strips may be eligible to receive cost-share assistance from local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices.

For assistance, contact the local SCS office.



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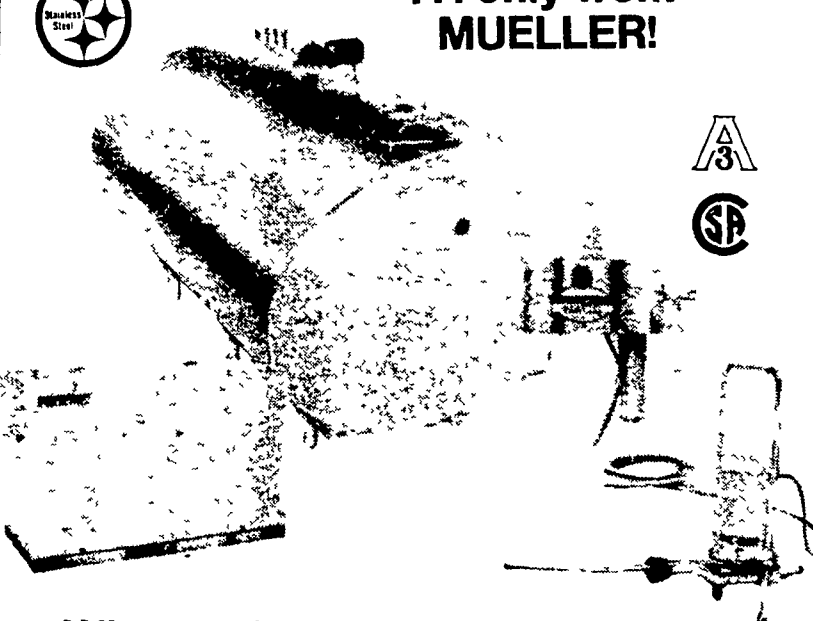
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