Farm Talk

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appears we are losing our grip once again.

So in addition to some national awareness, it seems to me there is a need to help farmers financially in this great battle to save the soil. Because if this generation of farmers, or perhaps the next generation, doesn't care enough to make the necessary effort, then there may not be any soil for the generations that follow.

In many ways, farming is a business just like any other business. But in another special way, it is unique.

A factory can be built, remodeled, torn down and reassembled, burned down or blown up. But the land it occupies is always there. It's just a piece of space where that enterprise exits.

But farming requires the use of that land in a special way, How that soil is handled determines its very future and it is, after all, essentially a non-renewable resource.

It can't be remodeled or rebuilt, or even relocated. It can be preserved and slowly improved, and it can be lost. It never really disappears, it just moves away muddying our streams, choking our rivers and durtying our air.

Soil erosion is truly a national concern that goes way beyond the farm gate, beyond partisan politics, and beyond economic considerations. Saving this nation's soil is in the public interest and it is of the highest priority, and some future generation may point out that we waited too long to do something really substantial about

Soil erosion reduces spray benefits

LEESPORT - Some farmers are finding their insect and weed spray programs are not providing satisfactory results because of excessive soil erosion, reports Duane Pysher, District Conservationist of the Soil Conservation Service.

"When chemicals are applied to cropland, they become attached to soil particles, plants, or plant residues. If these soil particles or plant residues are carried off by water runoff, the chemicals are also carried away. These chemicals end up as pollution in streams and lakes," explains Pysher.

The amount of soil loss and chemical spray materials depends upon a number of factors such as

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the intensity of rainfall, length of time between application of the spray material and rainfall, and whether the chemicals are sprayed on bare soil, plants, or mixed with the soil. Other variables are the contour of the land including steepness and length of slope, soil erodibility and conservation tillage measures used.

"Since we have no control over when and how our rainfall comes, it is important that conservation measures be used to minimize the effects of rainfall," adds Pysher.

Some conservation practices that can be used include contour striperopping, diversions. waterways, terraces and mulch tillage practices.

"Keeping soil and spray

materials in place is cheaper than applying additional spray material," says Pysher.

Isaiah 5/8-9:

8 Woe to you who join house to house, who connect field with field.

Till no room remains, and you are left to dwell alone in the midst of the land!

9 In my hearing the LORD of hosts has sworn: Many houses shall be in ruins, large ones and fine. with no one to live in them.

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