

# Conservation demo held in Cecil County, Md.

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — For nearly 50 years, young boys from Philadelphia would descend on a Cecil County, Md. farm operated as a summer camp for orphans by the Sisters of St. Basil.

One of their chief delights after tending the crops and animals was

going for a swim in the creek that emptied into the C&D canal a short distance away.

Today that camp is closed and the creek is just a sandbar covered with cattails and other marsh plants. For years it's been a graphic example of what happens

when farmland is neglected and the soil allowed to erode.

But last Saturday it became an example of another kind. The Cecil Soil Conservation District and Land Improvement Contractors Associations turned the farm into a model of good soil and water conservation. They demonstrated to other farmers as well as the public what can be done to keep farmland productive and keep sediment and other nonpoint pollutants out of the Chesapeake Bay.

"A lot of attention has been focused recently on the decline of the Bay and on the fact that sediment and nutrients from cropland are one of the major sources of pollution," says Dave Wilson, U.S. Soil Conservation Service. "We wanted to show some of the positive things that people can do to conserve soil and protect water quality."

According to Wilson, soil loss on the farm ranged as high as 21 tons per acre per year. That's five to six times higher than the tolerable rate, or the rate at which new soil is formed.

"One 4-acre field alone is losing about 218 tons a year," Wilson

said. "About two-thirds of that eventually washes into a roadside ditch and discharges through a pipe into the Canal. The other third is deposited in a sandbar at the base of the hill."

Installing a terrace and a diversion was designed to bring the erosion rate in that field down to about 7 tons, he added.

Visitors to the field day saw a wide range of conservation measures under construction.

Gullies cutting across fields were shaped into swales and seeded with grass. These grass waterways, along with diversions and terraces, will channel runoff water to a safe, nonerodible outlet.

Grass buffer strips were planted along field edges to filter out any sediment before it reaches the stream. And a rock drop structure will be installed to keep runoff from a waterway from gouging out a new gully.

## Picking your power

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entire tractor industry.

It featured three plowing speeds: 2½, 3½ and 5 mph, but could travel down the highway at 15 mph.

Professional race drivers soon brought more speed and performance out of the model. On June 18, 1933, a race driver, Frank Brisko, raced a Model U with specially-equipped high speed gears around the West Allis, Wisc., state fair track at a speed of 35.4 mph.

Later that same year, legendary race driver Barney Oldfield drove an air-tired Model U around a Dallas, Texas, course at a speed of 64.28 mph.

These and other improvements led to the WC, the first tractor to offer rubber tires as standard equipment. That model became as famous as the Model T automobile.

During the early 1940's, tractor innovation and production were curtailed because factories were converted to war production. But after World War II, tractor production boomed again.

In 1948, U.S. tractor production reached an all-time peak: nearly 530,000 wheel-type models rolled off assembly lines.

Innovations such as three-point hitch, automatic draft control and improved transmissions boosted popularity among farmers.

Between 1948 and 1957, more than 230,000 model WD-45 tractors were produced with two-clutch power control, Traction Booster hydraulics and power shift wheels.

Horsepower was increasing rapidly. About 90% of the models build in 1950 had less than 35 horsepower; by 1960 only 17% were under 35 horsepower. Today, the average horsepower has passed the 100 horsepower mark.

### Turbo Introduced

In an effort to boost engine horsepower, designers looked to the turbocharger, a device on the engine to increase air pressure

within the engine and allow more fuel to be burned in the combustion process.

In 1961, Allis-Chalmers unveiled the 65-horsepower D-19, the first diesel powered farm tractor equipped with a turbocharger.

The progress continued as farmers increased their crop production in the 1970's to the point that the crop of one acre out of three was exported.

Four-wheel-drive models became more popular as did the improved transmissions and hydraulic systems.

Operator comfort rose to the No. 1 consideration for manufacturers and farmers alike. Cabs, air conditioning, fancy seats and other features made the job of running a tractor just as comfortable as working in a modern office environment.

The 1970's brought many improvements including the 7080, the first Allis-Chalmers tractor with more than 180 hp. Then came the 6060 and 6080 that added front-wheel-drive assist.

Then came a series of new models with power shift transmissions that provide the capability to change speeds at full power. "These and other features from Allis-Chalmers and other tractor manufacturers are designed to help the American farmer in his important job of producing food and fiber for the USA and the world," Tweedy says.

Looking at his crystal ball, Tweedy predicts that the era of tractors bring more muscle to farming has peaked. "Now the farmer is getting alot of comfort and convenience in his new tractors," he says.

"By the 21st century, tractors will offer farmers even more. On-board electronics, mini-computers and other technologies will transform tractors into decision-making tools as well as sources of horsepower to get the job done," says Tweedy.

## Tillage demonstration set

BURNHAM — The Mifflin County Conservation District is sponsoring a conservation tillage demonstration of no-till grass seedings on Aug. 13 at 9:30 a.m. on the Ferguson Valley farms of Boyd Aurand, Nelson Aurand, Raymond Snyder and Fred Myers.

Lynn Hoffman, of the Penn State University Agronomy Department, will be on hand for the demonstrations.

Refreshments will be served on the Myers farm.

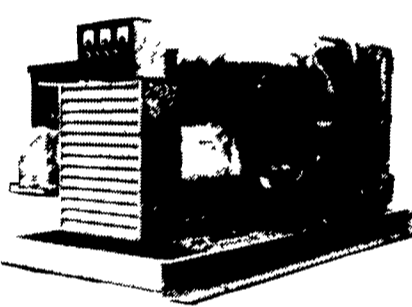
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