

USDA rural development program aids small communities

HARRISBURG — The small town of Conneautville has been troubled by a flooding problem from a small stream for many years. Businesses and industries closed or moved elsewhere because of continued losses from high water.

Thanks to a small program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the problem has been corrected. Under the Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D), a small flood prevention

dam and a new conduit through town have reduced the threat of damaging floodwaters.

The project caused one borough official to exclaim that this was the first year in a long time that they did not have to pump out a single basement.

A total of 21 RC&D projects were completed in 1985. Most of the projects helped rural communities solve critical erosion problems. A Monroe County township stabilized

a roadbank which was eroding at the rate of 95 tons per year and causing a hazard to traffic. Erosion and runoff problems at the Old Forge Borough Park were corrected.

"The RC&D program operates on \$23 million nationally," said John Mank, Assistant State Conservationist for USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS). SCS, which directs the RC&D program,

received about \$450,000 for Pennsylvania in 1985. "This was for both financial help to the rural communities and for the staff to carry it out," added Mank.

Five RC&D Areas include 35 of the 67 counties in the State. The RC&D areas are Penn Soil in the northwest, Penn's Corner in the southwest, Endless Mountains and Headwaters in the north-central, and Pocono-Northeast in the northeast.

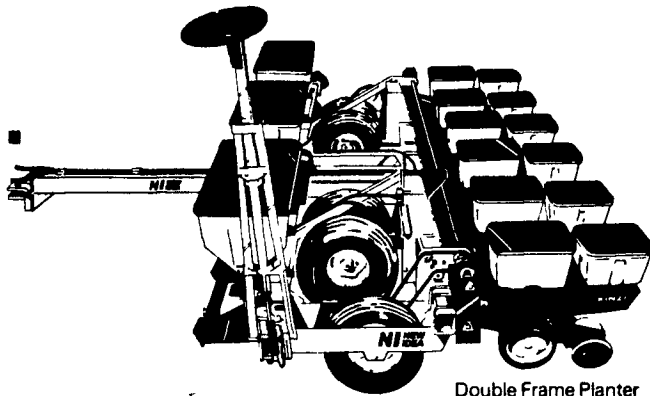
Interest in this program remains high. Five projects are partially completed and another 44 are planned and ready for funding. "These projects represent about \$1.5 million but only a few will be funded in 1986," stated Mank. "RC&D in Pennsylvania will operate with about 30 percent less dollars this year. It means that there will be more disappointed rural community officials this year. The dollars only go so far."

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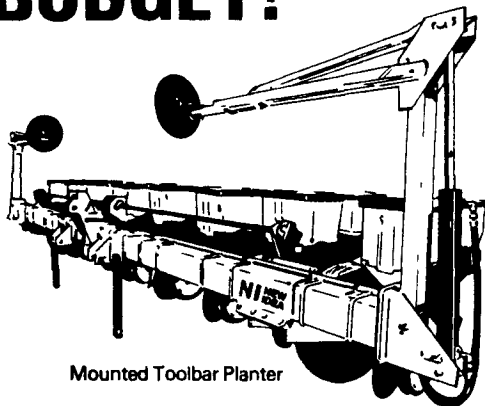
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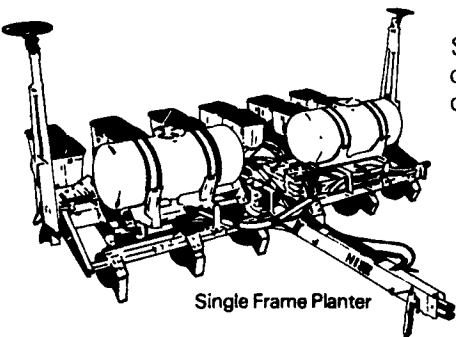
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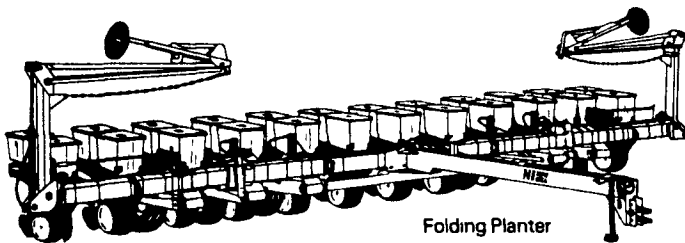


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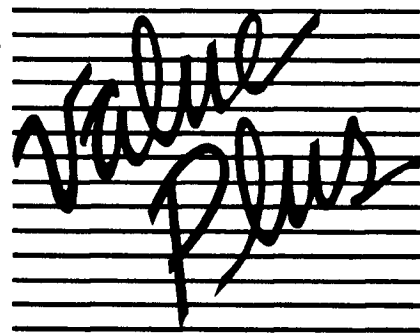
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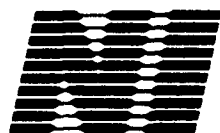
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