

Conservation Notes From The President

I am very proud of the material included in this document. Proud, because the new conservation provisions are the result of the hard work of the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA). Wetlands regulatory relief, filter strips in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and full fund-

ing for conservation programs were all promoted by your association.

The NCGA has a reputation for being a stewardship-oriented organization. I believe this reputation is the result of the actions each of us take on our farms to be good stewards. The actions we take are not

taken because of regulation or incentive payments, but because they are the right thing to do.

Many of you have heard me talk in the past year about our strategic plan for the corn industry. This strategic plan is our best attempt to manage, shape and grow our industry

into the future. Stewardship is goal No. 8 of that plan. This goal reflects the understanding that society expects a certain level of environmental responsibility from you and me as farmers. I believe we must embrace that expectation through stewardship, or risk having it imposed upon us as regulation.

Last year, I was part of a team of farmers who worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and state departments of agriculture to develop a model for voluntary whole-farm planning. I would like to think of myself as a pretty good steward of my land. However, I have to admit

I learned from the planning process that there are changes I could make to my farm that would not only benefit the environment, but that would make economic sense. The lesson was simple. Conservation pays.

At the Commodity Classic held earlier this year, Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman recognized the NCGA for our efforts to promote the National Conservation Buffer Initiative and buffer strips. These grass strips between fields, lakes and streams are proving to be an effective, voluntary means to improve water quality.

Wallie Hardie
NCGA President

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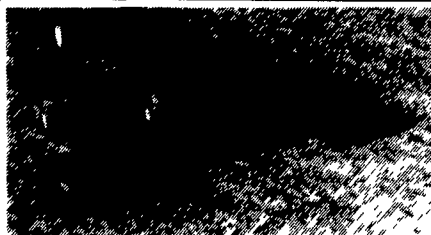
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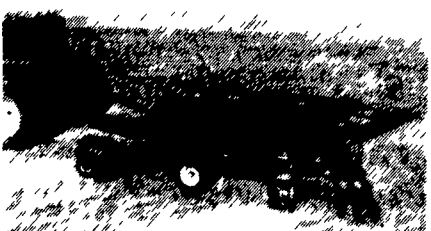
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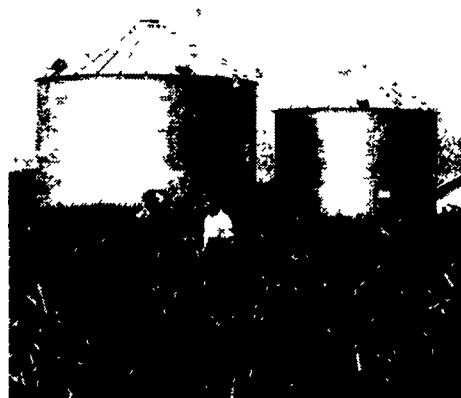
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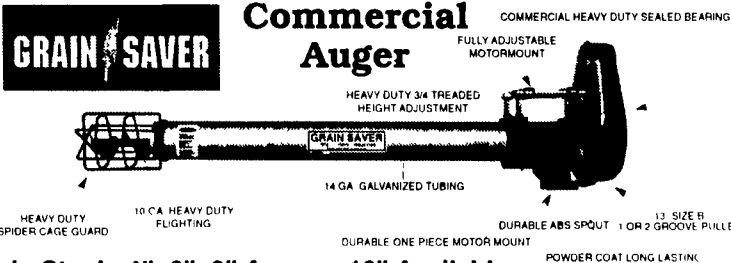


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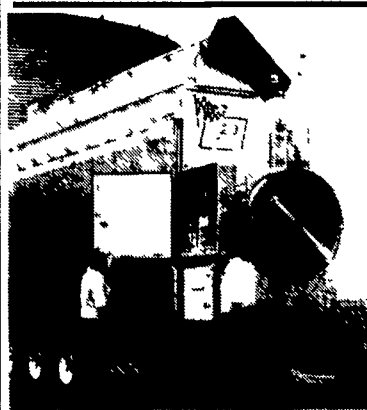


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