

MADISON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1991

FSA was once again the central theme of the Madison County field office. Staff members visited approximately eighty-five percent of the county's 100,000 acres of highly erodible cropland. The field visits allowed the staff to evaluate plans on a field to field basis. The evaluations revealed problems with many of the plans. Most of the problems pertained to 1.) land planned for contoured cropping not being cropped as such, 2.) land planned for set-aside being cropped, 3.) planned practices not being applied as scheduled. The results of our field evaluation prompted us to review many of the FSA plans with the plan's operators. The plan reviews resulted in many of the fields being replanned and/or rescheduled.

Many of the operators stated that the various slopes occurring within many of their fields made farming along the contour impractical. As a result of the impracticality of contour farming many operators changed from contour farming to a winter cover crop or to a no-till farming system.

A second problem was that planned set-aside was being cropped. Many operators presumed it to be alright to crop planned set-aside land when the ASCS office lowered its set-aside acreage requirements. To correct this misconception farmers replanned fields originally planned for set-aside to either be cropped with acceptable conservation practices when not being use as ASCS set-aside or to be maintained in grass.

A third problem was that many operators had failed to implement planned practices as scheduled. This problem resulted in operators rescheduling planned practices. The staff emphasized to the operators the consequences he could face, if in the future, he neglected to implement the planned practices as scheduled. The staff stressed to each operator the need for them to have a plan on every farm they work and to follow the plan's schedule or if need be reschedule the planned practice before the planned implement date.

During the year our staff also serviced approximately 100 ASCS ACP referrals, which resulted in the layout, checkout and certification of over 150,000 feet of terraces and 2 grade control structures.

There were two CRP sign-ups this year during which approximately 60 CRP applications were processed and over 1,000 acres were placed in CRP.

The District was lucky enough to obtain the services of Dwaine Johnston for most of the year, yet we weren't lucky enough to keep him since he transferred at the end of the year.

The District employed Dana Horton two months this summer. Dana helped to load data into the computer. She was a real big help.

We finished the year with our annual awards banquet. James Fletcher was the recipient of our Conservation Farmer of The Year Award. Our guest speaker was Dr. Norman Bitz, who spoke on malnutrition in the U.S. and the World.

In closing I believe the District had a very productive year which resulted in our cooperators obtaining a better understanding of their plans and the importance of having plans on all farms they work and following their plans' schedules.



Franklin James, Chairman SCD

NOTE: Benton James & Maxine Blankenship, District Technician & Secretary.