



Photo by Rochester Post-Bulletin
Jack Nibbe, Tenth Anniversary soil and water conservation award winner.

Nibbe gets first 10-year conservation award

by Bob Rupp

A CONSERVATION effort that started 28 years ago has paid off in a 10-year conservation award for John (Jack) Nibbe, Goodhue County, MN. More important, it has helped keep soil and water in place on farmland that has been in the Nibbe family for three generations. And most important, the conservation effort will continue.

"Conservation should be mandatory, with the farmer controlling his own farm," feels Nibbe. "Soil and water must be preserved to pass on to other generations." Jack's sons already have 23 different fields planned for next year. They lie between the 26,000' of terraces he, his wife, Janice, and five children have on their 240-acre dairy farm.

Nibbe started conservation farming in 1950 when, as a 19-year-old U of M School of Agriculture student, he asked his father for permission to contour 80 acres. The Goodhue County soil conservation office provided the technical assistance and Nibbe began contouring corn and oats, with hay in every other strip. In 1962, as need for pas-

ture diminished, he had terraces laid out.

In 1969, during the first year of a new Minnesota soil and water conservation recognition program, Nibbe was picked by the Goodhue County SWCD as its initial Conservation Farmer.

A month ago, Nibbe was selected as the Minnesota farmer who had continued the most conservation improvement over the past ten years.

Nibbe was named first state winner of a new Tenth Anniversary Conservation Award during the 42nd annual convention of the Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Rochester, MN. He had been the winner in Area VII, a 12-county region in southeastern Minnesota, then was picked over regional winners in six other SWCD areas.

Both the annual Conservation Farmer and the Tenth Anniversary contest are sponsored by THE FARMER.

Nibbe chisel plows, as do three of the other area winners. Several also list residue management as important to good conservation. "Cornstalks serve as a blotter during the entire year, protecting the soil," says Nibbe. He feels

molboard plows should be eliminated, and also that there be a law to forbid spreading manure on frozen ground where runoff isn't controlled by adequate conservation.

Five of the seven area winners listed tree planting and shelterbelts as important to their overall conservation plans. Five also mentioned wildlife protection.

The six other area winners included:

Phillip Hamre, Nielsville, West Polk SWCD, for Area I.

He farms 546 acres, using cropping rotations, minimum tillage and crop residue management on all 526 tillable acres. He has planted 15,800' of field windbreaks, and built 17,600' of field drainage ditches and 3,200' of drainage mains. He has a 10-acre wildlife upland habitat development area.

Ray Beilke, Carlos, Douglas SWCD for Area II.

He has four years of tree plantings for erosion control and wildlife protection. He has chisel plowed and till planted across slopes for 16 years, puts out wildlife food plots and has two wildlife ponds. An irrigator, he was one of the organizers of the Irrigators' Association of Minnesota.

Carl and Norman Nelson, Cloverdale, Pine County SWCD for Area III.

The Nelsons have increased their farm from 900 to about 1,600 acres since being selected as Pine County conservation farmers ten years ago. They farm about 300 acres and have a 300-cow Hereford herd. Conservation efforts include pasture improvement, farmstead windbreaks, stock-watering facilities and conservation-cropping systems.

Glen Dubbels, Farmington, Dakota County SWCD for Area IV.

Dubbels, who owns 320 acres, has had a conservation plan since 1964. His practices include conservation cropping on all 312 acres of tillable land, 12,600' of terraces, 97 acres of contour strips, 58 acres of pasture and hayland management, and 25 acres of wildlife habitat. He also has a livestock watering pit, grade stabilization structures, waterways and 860' of diversion.

Dave and Stanley Lindholm, Ortonville, Big Stone SWCD for Area V.

The Lindholm farm was the first in Minnesota to have a feedlot pollution-control system installed to prevent runoff into Big Stone lake. Stanley is carrying on the conservation efforts started by his late father. His practices include grassed waterways, grade stabilization structures, field windbreaks and chisel plowing. He also has a farmstead shelterbelt and a 20-acre wildlife protection area.

Ronald Remus, Sleepy Eye.

Brown SWCD for Area VI.

Since winning THE FARMER conservation farmer award for Brown SWCD in 1969, he has added over 13,000' of tile and 8,000' of terraces, including 2,800' this past fall. He uses contour strips, chisel plowing and minimum tillage, has 25 acres in upland wildlife cover and maintains 2,800' of grassed field border for habitat. He has put critical areas into protection plantings, uses waterways and has a grade stabilization structure.

Thirty districts and 61 farmers were awarded special recognition during the 42nd annual convention. The districts were presented plaques (or year-plates for plaques won earlier) for their conservation efforts.

Superior ratings went to: East Agassiz, Benton, Carlton, Kanabec, East Polk and Wilkin districts.

Excellent ratings went to: Aitkin County, Becker, Big Stone, Brown, Chippewa, Douglas, Freeborn, Grant, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Meeker, Morrison, Mower County, West Otter Tail, Pine County, West Polk, Redwood, Sibley County, Stevens, Wadena, Washington County, Watonwan and Yellow Medicine districts.

The 61 farmers were presented certificates for outstanding conservation efforts on their farms. Each was selected by supervisors in the respective districts. Those honored, their addresses and conservation districts included:

Stanley Habedank, Twin Valley, East Agassiz; Winfield Demenge, McGregor, Aitkin County; Carroll Broadbent, Wyoming, Anoka County; James Rethwisch, Frazee, Becker; Mr. and Mrs. Ted Falk, Tenstrike, Beltrami; Kenneth Neeser, Sauk Rapids, Benton; Mr. and Mrs. John Schultz, Ortonville, Big Stone; Leroy Lux, Sleepy Eye, Brown; Clarence and Roger Gustafson, Mehtowa, Carlton County; James Neaton, Watertown, Carver;

Luther Onjordan, Milan, Chippewa; Norman W. Krabbenhoft, Pelican Rapids, Clay; Roy Steinbrecher, Grand Marais, Cook County; Glen McNamara, Hastings, Dakota County; Sid Satterlie, Jr., Evansville, Douglas; John Welch, Stewartville, Fillmore; Charles Reindal, Alden, Freeborn; Mr. and Mrs. Vernyl Swenson, Elbow Lake, Grant County; George Vilebro, Hill City, Itasca County; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Gunderson, Mora, Kanabec;

Richard Black, Sunburg, Kandiyohi County; Myles Sedenquist, Hallock, Kittson; Archie Johnson, Madison, Lac qui Parle; Don Barnett, Kilkenny, Le Sueur County; Langford Larson, Hendricks, Lincoln; Mr. and Mrs. Gene Peterson, Gatzke, Marshall-Beltrami; Donald J. Johnson, Litchfield, Meeker; John Ruis, Milaca, Mille Lacs; Archie Block, Hillman, Morrison; Henry Knutson, Dexter, Mower County;

Oscar Reinhart, Courtland, Nicollet; David Miller, Rochester, Olmsted; Delmar Wehking, Parkers Prairie, East Otter Tail; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Johnson, Fergus Falls, West Otter Tail; Douglas Peterson, Plummer, Pennington; Robert Sahlen, Askov, Pine County; Orville Lee, Fertile, East Polk; Albert Brekken, Crookston, West Polk; George Falkner, Glenwood, Pope; Ted Schindler, Red Lake Falls, Red Lake County;

Arlen and Duane Knott, Walnut Grove, Redwood; Miles Klein, Rushford, Root River; Curtis and Roger Amundson, Roseau, Roseau County; Marvin Pearson, Cook, North St. Louis; Mr. and Mrs. Anthony and Marion Maly, Mead-