

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ANNUAL REPORT

1950

SEMINOLE SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SANFORD, FLORIDA

The simplest and easiest way to make an annual report is to fill the report with facts and figures to show the progress we have made during the past year. These facts and figures are important and should be given, but, in so doing, we are very likely to overlook some very vital signs of progress that simply can not be put down as cold facts or figures. This report will try to deal with some of these signs of progress in the Seminole Soil Conservation District because we sincerely believe they mean as much, or perhaps even more, than any other kind of report we could make.

For the record, however, we must call attention to the figures listed below because they represent a great deal of careful planning and a tremendous amount of hard work in getting the plans executed, on the part of Les Jacobsen, our planning technician, and each and every other S.C.S. worker who came in to help us. We wish at this time to express our thanks to all these men as well as to the many experts from various Federal and State agencies who have so willingly pitched in to give us a helping hand on the many problems we have.

A quick look at the figures shows first of all that here in the Seminole District the plans that have been drawn up and signed have been put into operation. To emphasize this fact, we wish to point out that all the figures given represent ACTIVE conservation and does not include PLANNED conservation measures. The board feels that the best possible planning is wasted unless and until that plan is put to work. For that reason, we will continue to stress ACTIVE conservation.

Now for the figures--At the end of 1950 we had 65 active applications out of a total of 191 received. Plans prepared and signed--104; plans cancelled--none. We have a total of 104 active conservation plans covering a total of 5,611 acres. Plans being applied--91.

To get a better look at Conservation at work in the Seminole District, we will break down the figures just given into fourteen separate practices that are now at work--simply giving the figures without comment.

1. Crop Rotation-----218 Acres
2. Cover Crops planted ----- 1,659 Acres
3. Farm Drainage ----- 890 Acres

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4.	Improved Water Applications -----	310 Acres
5.	Irrigation Land Preparation-----	89 Acres
6.	Pasture Improvement -----	1,217 Acres
7.	Pastures Seeded -----	1,105 Acres
8.	Ditches Established -----	9.5 Miles
9.	Closed Drains -----	57,340 Lin.Ft.
10.	Open Drains -----	8.5 Miles
11.	Farm and Ranch Ponds -----	11
12.	Improved Fish Ponds -----	6
13.	Tree Planting -----	186 Acres
14.	Wildlife Area Improved -----	286 Acres

Now let's look at some of the signs of progress we feel we are making. In order to get a better idea of what I mean, we must consider what we had in our district at the time it was formed about two years ago.

For at least twenty years, and perhaps much longer, we have had a "problem" in Seminole County which shows up almost every season as "spots" in our cultivated fields where the crop is stunted, poor quality, diseased, unfit for shipping to the critical buyers of winter vegetables and certainly a serious loss of revenue to the farmer. The cause of these spots has been blamed on a long list of villains including salty water, too much fertilizer, nematodes, the lack of minor elements, failure to grow cover crops, failure to diversify crops, mining the soil by growing crops one after the other throughout the year. Other contributing causes were found to be sticking to celery on the same land year after year and the poor physical condition of the soil caused by using excessive amounts of water plus heavy tractors thus causing a packed or puddled condition.

The fact is that most of the possible causes listed above all contribute in some way to our problem. However, the most dangerous single thing we must overcome is the widely accepted attitude that since we have had the problem for so many years--and so many people have failed to solve it--that there is simply no one who can lick these many-sided spot problems in Seminole County.

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This is not only a most dangerous attitude, it is also a completely false attitude because a great deal has already been done toward solving our many problems. For many years Dr. R. W. Ruprecht and his staff at the Central Florida Experiment Station, have been working on many related aspects of the general problem with great success. For instance, Dr. Ruprecht has carried on exhaustive studies over a period of years on fertilizer problems in the Seminole District. From this work he is able to tell a grower not only how much fertilizer he should use, but also the kind of fertilizer that will give best results.

In more recent years Dr. J. W. Christie, U.S.D.A. Nematologist, has been looking into our Nematode problems. We feel sure that we can expect a lot of valuable and helpful information along this line as a result of the work being done by Dr. Christie and his assistant Mr. Vernon Perry. Their job will take time but we are confident much good will come out of it.

On June 7, 1950, at the Chamber of Commerce Building in Sanford, Florida, the following specialists from the various interested fields were called in at the request of Mr. C. A. Wales, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of the Seminole Soil Conservation District, to get to work in an all-out effort to lick this long standing problem.

Dr. R. W. Ruprecht,	Director of Central Florida Experiment Station
Dr. Philip Westgate,	Member of the Staff, Central Florida Experiment Station
Mr. H. H. Cooper, Jr.	U. S. Geological Survey Engineer, Tallahassee, Florida
Mr. James Weir,	Hydrological Engineer, S.C.S., Spartanburg, S. C.
Mr. Otis E. Smith,	Drainage Engineer, S.C.S., Lakeland, Florida
Mr. David Powell,	Survey Supervisor, S.C.S., Gainesville, Florida
Mr. Millard S. Morgan,	Soil Scientist, S.C.S., Orlando, Florida
Mr. Donald J. Bales,	Drainage Engineer, S.C.S., Orlando, Florida
Mr. Leslie A. Jacobsen,	Planning Technician, S.C.S., Sanford, Florida
Mr. R. E. Witherell	District Conservationist, S.C.S., Orlando, Florida
Mr. C. A. Wales,	Fern Park, Florida
Mr. H. James Gut	Sanford, Florida
Mr. Randall Chase	Sanford, Florida

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The complete list of all those actively participating in this meeting is given in this report. A plan was devised whereby the problems facing us were divided into fourteen points and each man named above was assigned to one or more points so that detailed studies and reports could be made to the Board. Committees were formed at this first meeting on June 7 and were asked to make a report on their preliminary findings on September 6.

The September meeting was also held at the Chamber of Commerce Building, and those present and reporting on their committee work were the following:

- Mr. Homer L. Osborne, Chairman, Board of Supervisors
- Mr. H. James Gut, Engineer, Sanford, Florida
- Mr. James M. Weir, Soil Conservation Service
- Mr. Robert E. Witherell, Soil Conservation Service
- Mr. David P. Powell, Soil Conservation Service
- Mr. Leslie A. Jacobsen, Soil Conservation Service
- Mr. Millard S. Morgan, Soil Conservation Service
- Mr. Donald J. Sales, Soil Conservation Service
- Mr. Robert G. Jessup, Soil Conservation Service

It was decided at this meeting to delete items nine and ten from the original fourteen points--otherwise it was agreed that work should continue along the same lines as agreed upon at the first meeting on June 7, 1950.

May I point out that these same committees are still intact, and it is the privilege and duty of the new Board of Supervisors to assist and encourage that this very vital work be carried on as rapidly as possible.

As part of the ground work for all of this study, point Thirteen, "Request cooperation of the U. S. Geological Survey and the Florida Geological Survey to instigate an immediate ground water investigation. This request should be made for a one year's study and will necessitate the raising of approximately \$1,500.00 to be used as matchable funds with the Federal and State agencies," was assigned to Mr. Randall Chase. It is my pleasure to report that the Seminole County Commissioners made the needed funds available. The Board feels that this work should, by all means, be started in 1951.

Point Eight, having as its object the trial of an overhead sprinkler-type system of irrigation instead of the present underground tile system, was put into operation in the fall on four acres of celery on the farm of Mr. Leo Butner. This project would have been impossible without the splendid generosity and hearty cooperation shown by two commercial concerns. The board wants to sincerely thank the W. R. Ames Company of Tampa, Florida, for donating to the Seminole Soil Conservation District enough of the new AMES ABC Sprinkler System with the Quick-Coupling Connections for this test. Another vote of thanks is

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due the E. E. Fishback & Sons of Orlando, Florida for their splendid generosity in donating an excellent pump and motor to make the sprinkler system complete.

We hope this field test of overhead sprinkling can be continued and expanded next year to cover all the crops grown in this district. We believe it is one of the best ways to conserve not only our water, but also our fertilizer. We have a limited fertilizer test this year in connection with the sprinkler test and this should also be expanded next year. From preliminary figures, it seems that we will be able to grow this celery crop on one-half the usual amount of fertilizer and on less water than is usually used in ONE WEEK with the underground tile system. Full reports on this test will be made available at the end of the year.

Another important sign of progress in the Seminole District is the establishment of an excellent Grass Nursery on the Orlando Highway where the Oviedo road turns off--a spot known locally as "five points". The land is the property of Chase & Company and has been put in good condition for the beginning of a good nursery. We plan to get a five year lease on this land so that when the nursery is in proper condition, we can erect a suitable sign showing that this is a project of the District. The board wishes at this time to thank Chase & Company for making this property available to us and also for the very generous help they have given in the matter of free fertilizer for the nursery.

Dairying and Cattle Raising rank high on the list of important projects the board considers vital to the welfare of the community. The figures show that this part of our conservation job is growing rapidly. We predict that in a few years we can point with pride to ranches, pastures and herds second to none.

Finally, and perhaps the most important sign of the progress we are making, is the growing interest in conservation itself. This interest is shared by the merchants in Sanford, the commercial concerns who serve the district with fertilizer, farm tools, etc., the Bankers and other financing organizations and by the dirt farmers themselves. This farmer interest means that the old idea that no one could help them solve their many problems is slowly but surely giving ground to the new idea that CONSERVATION and all the research that goes with it, CAN help them turn the barren "Spots" on their farms into black figures at the bank.

Respectfully,

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS,
SEMINOLE SOIL CONSERVATION DIST.

By Homer L. Osborne

Homer L. Osborne, Chairman

2/27/51 Orig + 2 cys St. of.
" 1 cty Works Group
" 1 cty " Unit
" 1 cty Bd of Supervisors
(6 cys in All)

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

District SEMINOLE SANFORD FLORIDA
(Name) (Supervisor's Headquarters) (State)

Period: January 1, 1950 to December 31, 1950

RECEIPTS (BY SOURCE)

1. Balance Brought Forward	\$ 86.06	
2. Sale of Seed	72.27	
3. Chase and Company--Cultipacker	420.82	
4. Sale of Weed Burner	<u>241.16</u>	
Total		\$820.31

EXPENDITURES (CLASSIFIED)

1. Salaries		
2. Telephone	75.45	
3. Dues	25.00	
4. Weed Burner Expenses	7.30	
5. Cultipacker	420.82	
6. Supervisor's Trip to Ocala	8.96	
7. Kilgore Seed Company	<u>4.10</u>	
Total		\$541.63

Balance Carried Forward \$278.68

*Same distribution as listed
on preceding page.*