

Contour Farming

Description

Crop row ridges built by tilling and planting on the contour slow water flow and increase infiltration, reducing erosion. Contour farming may be used with stripcropping, whereby crops such as corn are alternated with strips of crops that grow close together (hay, alfalfa, clover, and small grains). Alternating strips slows runoff, increases infiltration, traps sediment, and provides overall cover. Crop rotation with legumes as part of the stripcropping measure will add nitrogen to the soil.

Benefits

- Contouring may reduce soil erosion by as much as 50 percent.
- Contouring promotes better water quality.