6-1946

Pot-Hole Drainage

South Dakota State University Cooperative Extension

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Recommended Citation
https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_circ/851

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**Pot-Hole Drainage**

**INCREASES CROPLAND ACREAGES AND REDUCES FARMING EXPENSE**

**What to do**

Some pot holes can be kept dry by contour farming the area that slopes toward them. In case that is not sufficient, drain one or more pot holes into a larger one or into a natural water course, by building a wide open ditch with a slight grade.

Use tile or tile and open ditches to drain pot holes if a deep cut is needed and the grade is steep. No 2 shows a 12 inch tiled ditch that drains a 25 acre pot hole. 1945 was the first crop produced on this land in many years.

Pot holes may be drained onto grassland where the water is spread by the natural flat terrain as in 3, or by a spreader system. The open drainage ditches should be converted into grassed waterways by seeding adapted grasses or mixtures.

Pot-hole drainage should be supported by contour farming. Sometimes it may be necessary to build broad based terraces or even dikes, above the pot holes to divert the water from them.

For further information:

See your county agent, soil conservation district technician or an engineer.

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**Open ditch draining 10-acre pot-hole**

**Tiled ditch draining 25-acre pot-hole**

**Pot-hole drainage emptying onto grassland**

Photos by Soil Conservation Service