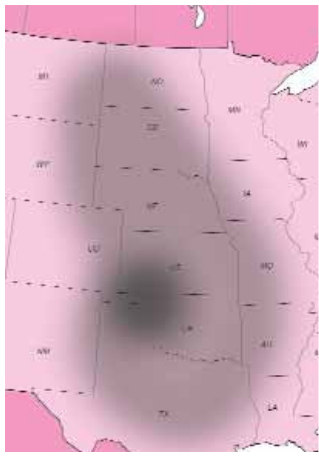


Blowing in the Wind

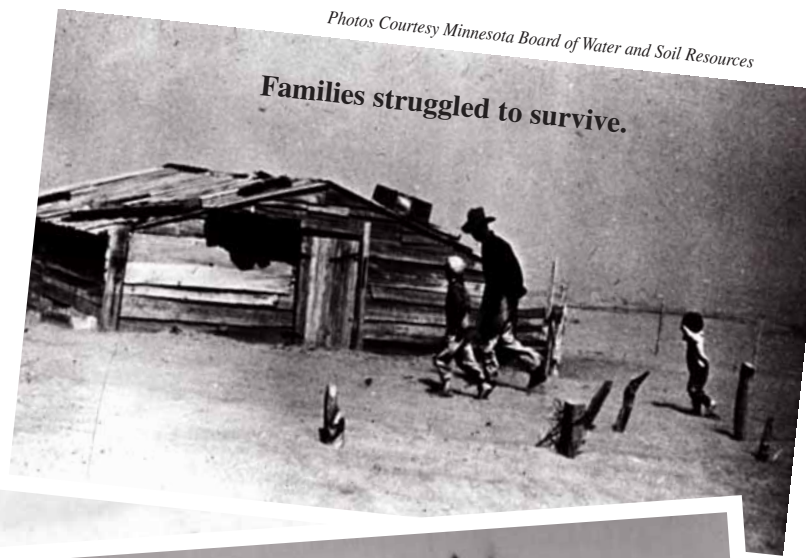
Photos Courtesy Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

The air was so thick with dust that lights had to be left on even during the day to see. Dust piled inside houses and schools. Businesses closed. Traffic stopped. Children and older people got lung infections. Grieving families were not able to bury their dead. The dust choked thousands of farm animals; even the

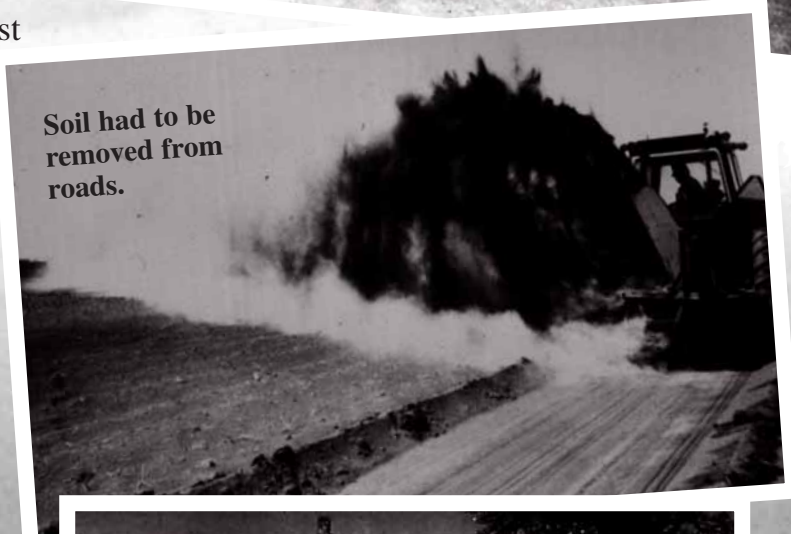


birds were afraid to fly. The dust killed the crops and forced people to flee their homes. Clouds of dust could be seen for hundreds of miles. It was a tragic time for parts of the Great Plains states.

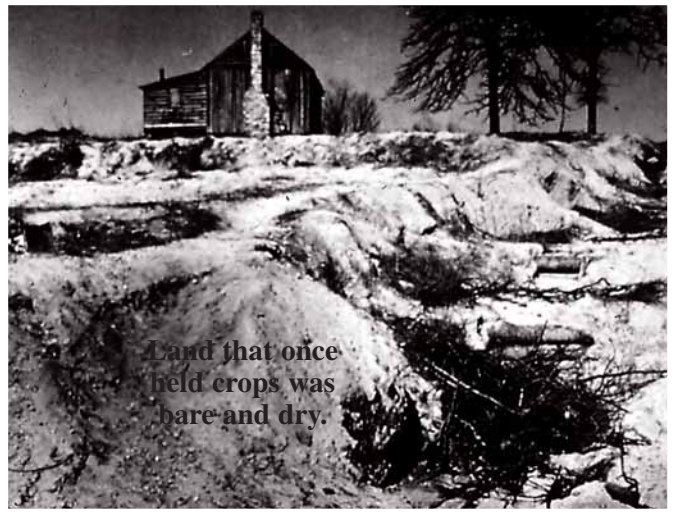
Maybe you've heard your grandparents or older people talk about the Dust Bowl Days of the 1930s. How did such a thing happen? Not knowing there would be a problem, farmers had spent many years grazing large herds of cattle and plowing the plains for croplands. The grasses holding soil in place were slowly destroyed. When drought and winds came, disaster followed. As the soil eroded the Great Plains became the Dust Bowl.



Families struggled to survive.



Soil had to be removed from roads.



Land that once held crops was bare and dry.

In this AgMag you've read things farmers have learned to prevent such a disaster from happening again. Drought and high winds can still come. Today's technology, however, helps us protect against soil erosion. What are two things farmers do today to help protect soil?

1. _____
2. _____

Do your part!

Reduce Soil Erosion

- Stay on the paths when hiking. Going off trail may destroy vegetation that keeps the soils in place.
- Be responsible when riding bikes or off-road vehicles. Don't harm plants.
- Speak out when you see soil erosion. Write to government leaders and say you want it stopped.

Do your part and think of yourself as a steward, or caretaker, of the land. Be a good Earth Keeper. Good stewards work to make the land better today. . . for a better tomorrow.

