



Contour buffer strips are strips of perennial vegetation alternated down the slope with wider cultivated strips that are farmed on the contour. Contour buffers strips are usually narrower than the cultivated strips. Vegetation in strips consists of adapted species of grasses or a mixture of grasses and legumes.

Contour buffer strips are used on cropland subject to sheet and rill erosion. They are most suitable on uniform slopes ranging from 2 to 10 percent. These narrow strips of permanent vegetation are not part of the normal crop rotation. Contour buffer strips are also an excellent filter for runoff and will help improve surface water quality. This practice is more difficult to establish on undulating to rolling topography because of the difficulty of maintaining parallel strip boundaries across the hill slope or staying within row grade limits.

When planning for wildlife, adjust contour buffer strip widths and plant species to meet the needs of the target wildlife species. Increase widths to 30 feet or wider depending on the requirements for nesting and escape cover of the target wildlife species. Avoid mowing during nesting periods, typically March 15 – July 15.

Site-specific requirements are listed on the specifications sheet. Specifications are prepared in accordance with the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide See Florida NRCS Conservation Practice Standard, Contour Buffer Strips, (Code 332).

Mow buffer strips to maintain appropriate vegetative density and height for trapping sediment. Fertilize buffer strips according to soil test results. Spot seed or renovate buffer strip areas damaged by herbicides, equipment, or unusual rainfall events. Redistribute sediment accumulations as needed to maintain uniform sheet flow along the crop-strip boundary.

This practice can be certified by completing the certification section in the site specific sheet.

**FL- 332 - Site Specific Sheet - 2**

Natural Resources Conservation Service, Florida

September 2011

**CONTOUR BUFFER STRIPS SITE SPECIFIC SHEET**

Client:		County:		Date:
Farm #:	Tract #:	Field # (s):	Contract #:	
<b>Purpose/Needs (check all that apply)</b>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce sheet and rill erosion				
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce transport of sediment and other water-borne contaminants downslope				
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase water infiltration				
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other:</b>				

**Percent Land Slope:**

Layout	Strip 1	Strip 2	Strip 3	Strip 4
Buffer strip width (feet)				
Area in buffer strip (acres)				
Minimum row grade				
Maximum row grade				
Plant Materials (species/cultivars)	Seeding Rate (lbs/acre of pure live seed)		Seeding Date	
Strip 1:				
Strip 2:				
Strip 3:				
Strip 4:				

**Operation and Maintenance**

*Maintain original width and length of contour buffer strips. Harvest, mow, reseed, and fertilize as necessary to maintain plant density and vigorous plant growth. Inspect after major storms, remove trapped sediment, and repair eroding areas. Shut off pesticide sprayers when using a buffer strip as a turning area.*

*Additional requirements:*

