



# 511 – Forage Harvest Management

## Conservation Practice Job Sheet

511 OR-JS

Natural Resources Conservation Service, Oregon

September 2008

Client: \_\_\_\_\_



NRCS Photo

### Definition

The timely cutting and removal of forages from the field as hay, green-chop, or ensilage.

### Purpose

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following:

- Optimize yield and quality of forage at the desired levels
- Promote vigorous plant regrowth
- Maintain stand life for the desired time period
- Manage for the desired species composition
- Use forage plant biomass as a soil nutrient uptake tool
- Control insects, diseases, and weeds
- Maintain and/or improve wildlife habitat

### Where Used

This practice applies to all land uses where machine harvested forage crops are grown.

### Conservation Management System

Forage Harvest Management is the key component of a conservation management system for hayland. A well-planned forage harvest system is the key to maintaining or improving productivity, health, vigor, and condition. Other facilitating and accelerating practices may be utilized in the system to address natural resource concerns identified

during the conservation planning process and to insure the success of the management system.

### Plans and Specifications

The forage harvest management plan shall conform to all applicable federal, state, and local laws. Seek measures to avoid adverse affects to endangered, threatened, and candidate species and their habitats. Prepare a plan for all management units where forage harvest will occur according to state standards and specifications.

### Operation and Maintenance

**Operation:** Before forage harvest, clear fields of debris that could damage machinery, or if ingested by livestock, lead to sickness (for example, hardware disease) or death.

Monitor weather conditions and take action accordingly before and after cutting to optimize forage wilting or curing time to preserve feed quality and prevent forage swaths or windrows from smothering underlying plants.

All shields shall be in place during machine operation to prevent injury or death. Shut off machinery before working on or unplugging moving parts.

Select equipment sizes and capacities that will in a timely and economically feasible manner handle the acreage normally harvested.

Operate all forage harvesting equipment at the optimum settings and speeds to minimize loss of leaves.

Set shear-plate on forage chopper to the proper theoretical cut for the crop being harvested. Keep knives well sharpened. Do not use recutters or screens unless forage moisture levels fall below recommended levels for optimum chopping action.

Regardless of silage/haylage storage method, ensure good compaction and an air-tight seal to exclude oxygen and mold formation.

**Maintenance:** Inspect and repair harvesting equipment following manufacturer's preventative maintenance procedures.

**511 OR-Specification**

Natural Resources Conservation Service, Oregon

September 2008

**FORAGE HARVEST MANAGEMENT SPECIFICATION SHEET**

<b>Client</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Farm/Tract</b>		<b>Field(s)</b>	
<b>Location</b>		<b>Acres</b>	
<b>Planner</b>		<b>County/SWCD</b>	

**Design Approval:**

Practice Code NO.	PRACTICE	LEAD DISCIPLINE	CONTROLLING FACTOR	UNITS	JOB CLASS				
					I	II	III	IV	V
511	Forage Harvest Management	ESD Graz Land Spec	Area-Irrigated	Acres	All	All	All	All	All
			Lower Precip. Limit- Non-Irrigated	Inches/Year	20	16	12	9	All
<b>This practice is classified as Job Class (check one):</b>									

Design Approved by: /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Client's Acknowledgement Statement:**

The Client acknowledges that:

- a. They have received a copy of the specification and understand the contents and requirements.
- b. Documentation showing rate, form, and application method of herbicides, carriers, surfactants, etc. applied must be provided to NRCS by the client before this practice can be certified as applied.
- c. It shall be the responsibility of the client to obtain all necessary permits and/or rights, and to comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of this practice.

Accepted by: /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Certification:**

I have completed a review of the information provided by the client and certify this practice has been applied.

Certification by: /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Refer to the Following Conservation Practice Specifications [X]			
Prescribed Grazing 528		Conservation Crop Rotation 328	
Pasture & Hay Planting 512		Irrigation Water Management 449	
Nutrient Management 590		Pest Management 595	
Irrigation System, Sprinkler 442		Irrigation Water Conveyance, Ditch/Canal 428	
		Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline 430	
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management 645		Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management 644	
Other:		Other:	

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**FORAGE HARVEST MANAGEMENT SPECIFICATION SHEET**

**1. Management Objectives:**

Forage will be harvested at a frequency and height that will maintain a desired healthy plant community through its life expectancy.

**Additional Narrative:**

**2. Type of Harvest:**

Hay     
  Green-chop     
  Ensilage     
  Other (describe)

**Additional Narrative:**

**3. Harvest Operations:**

**Additional Narrative:**

Species to be Harvested	Harvest Interval (1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> cutting)	Approximate Harvest Date	Moisture Content (%)	Stage of Maturity	Expected Yield	Stubble Height Remaining

**4. Fertilizer (Kind/Rates):**

**Additional Narrative:**

See Nutrient Management 590 specifications for more information.

# FORAGE HARVEST MANAGEMENT SPECIFICATION SHEET

## 5. Weed and Pest Control:

Control weeds as necessary. Monitor for weed and pest problems regularly.

**Additional Narrative:**

**Chemicals Used, Carriers, Surfactants, Mixing:**

**CONSULT WITH COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT OR OTHER CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL FOR APPLICATION RATES. CHEMICALS USED IN PERFORMING THIS PRACTICE MUST BE FEDERALLY, STATE, AND LOCALLY REGISTERED. THEY WILL BE APPLIED STRICTLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH AUTHORIZED REGISTERED USES, DIRECTIONS ON THE LABEL, AND OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL REGULATIONS.**

**Timing or Season:**

**Application techniques:**

**Mitigation of Potential Hazards from Chemical Applications:**

See attached WIN-PST hazard ratings for selected alternative – Loss Potential, Hazard Rating-Humans, and Hazard Rating-Fish.

## 6. Irrigation System / Water Management:

**Narrative:**

See Irrigation Water Management 449 specifications for more information.

## 7. Aftermath Grazing:

**Narrative:**

See Prescribed Grazing 528 specifications for more information.

## 8. Additional Specifications:

**Narrative:**