SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS

PASTURE AND HAYLAND PLANTING

Definition

Establishing and reestablishing long-term stands of adapted species of perennial, biennial, or reseeding forage plants. (Includes Pasture and Hayland Renovation. Does not include Grassed Waterway or Outlet on cropland.)

Purpose

To reduce erosion, to produce high quality forage, and to adjust land use.

Where Applicable

On existing pasture and hayland or on land that is converted from other uses.

SPECIFICATIONS

1. Remove all trees, brush and, stones or other obstructions, that would interfere with the practical management of the field.

2. When planting in the conventional manner, prepare a fine, firm seedbed. The use of large tillage equipment may result in a very loose seedbed. If this is the case, firm the soil with a cultipacker or roller before planting.

3. No-till direct seedings may be used on all fields, however on sloping fields, use no-till methods of seedings to minimize soil loss. Prepare a field for no-till sod seedings a year in advance. Follow the attached guidelines "No-tillage Seedings in Old Sod", March 1981, and "No-tillage Alfalfa Seedings into Corn Stubble Fields", March 1981, developed by R.A. Peters Plant Science Department, University of Connecticut, or use other current information.

4. Apply lime and fertilizer in accordance with a soil test or by application of 2½ tons lime per acre, and 400 pounds of 10-10-10 or equivalent fertilizer. Soil pH must be 6.5 or higher for successful alfalfa and trefoil seedings.

5. Seed grasses and lequmes adapted to the soil conditions and adequate for the planned use. Refer to the attached New England Perennial Forage mixtures. The newest and best producing varieties of a particular grass or legume should be used.

6. Innoculate all legume seed with the correct innoculant.

7. Seed will be uniformly applied and covered with ¼-½ inch of soil. Seed may be placed deeper in lighter textured soils but in no case deeper than 3/4-1 inch. Seed may be broadcast or drilled. The seedbed should be firmed by rolling after seeding.

8. Seeding dates are April 15th to June 15th, and August 15th through September 15th. In coastal areas where the growing season is longer, the fall seeding dates may be extended to October 1st. Spring seedings may be established as early as April 1st if conditions permit.

NOTE: Replanting alfalfa into a runout stand in the same field where the sod is killed should be avoided. The dying alfalfa roots give off a toxin which retards seedling growth. The field should be planted to a small grain or corn for a year before reseeding to alfalfa.

Attachments

Planning considerations for water quantity and quality

Quantity

1. Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, evaporation, transpiration, deep percolation, and ground water recharge.

Quality

1. Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment, pathogens, and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.
2. Effects on the use and management of nutrients and pesticides and resulting effects on surface and ground Quality.
3. Effects on the visual quality of downstream water resources.