

Field Border

Virginia Conservation Practice Job Sheet

386



Definition

Field borders are strips of permanent vegetation established at the edge or around the perimeter of a field. Vegetation consists of adapted grasses, legumes, and/or shrubs.

Criteria

Field borders shall be established around the field edges to the extent needed to meet the resource needs and producer objectives. Minimum field border widths shall be based on local design criteria specific to the purpose or purposes for installing the practice.

The field borders shall be established to adapted species of permanent grass, legumes and/or shrubs that accomplish the design objective and do not function as host for diseases of the field crop.

Plants selected for field borders will have the physical characteristics necessary to control wind and water erosion to tolerable levels on the field border area.

The *Plant Establishment Guide for Virginia* will be used as the standard for selecting approved species.

Seedbed preparation, seeding rates, dates, depths, fertility requirements, and planting methods will be consistent with approved local criteria and site conditions.

Field border establishment, in conjunction with other practices, will be timed so that the soil will be adequately protected during the critical erosion period(s).

Locate borders to eliminate sloping end rows, headlands, and other areas where concentrated water flows will enter or exit the field.

Include appropriate plants that attract beneficial organisms that prey on target pests.

Mowing, harvesting, pesticide applications and other disturbance activities will be scheduled to accommodate life cycle requirements of the beneficial organisms.

Establish plant species that provide wildlife food and cover for the target wildlife species.

Schedule mowing, harvest, weed control, and other management activities within the field border outside of the nesting season (April 15 to August 15).

Vegetative successional state shall be maintained to accommodate target wildlife species requirements.

When wildlife is a concern, a lower percent groundcover than would be needed if protecting soil and water quality was the only goal is acceptable as long as the soil resource concern is also adequately addressed (i.e. no excessive soil loss). This may be achieved by simply increasing the field border width.

Producer _____ Farm # _____ Tract # _____

Field Office _____ Contract # _____

Producer’s Purpose

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce erosion from wind and water | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide wildlife food and cover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protect soil and water quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase carbon storage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manage pest populations | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve air quality |

Practice Specifications

Layout	Field border 1	Field border 2	Field border 3	Field border 4
Border width (feet)				
Border length along edge of field (feet)				
Area (acres)				
Slope (%)				
Species #1				
Species #2				
Species # 3				
Species #4				
Seeding rate (pure live seed – lbs/acre)				
Seeding Date				
Lime (tons/acre)				
N (lbs/acre)				
P ₂ O ₅ (lbs/acre)				
K ₂ O (lbs/acre)				

Site Preparation

Planting Methods

Drill grass and legume seed _____ inches deep uniformly over area or broadcast the seed at the following rate _____. Establish vegetation according to the specified seeding rate. If necessary, mulch newly seeded area with _____ tons per acre of mulch material. A small grain crop may be needed as a companion crop at the rate of _____ pounds per acre (clip or harvest before it heads out).
 Additional requirements:

Operation and Maintenance

- Remove sediment from above or within the field border when accumulated sediment either alters the function of the field border or threatens the degradation of the planted species' survival.
- Shut off sprayers and raise tillage equipment to avoid damage to field borders.
- Shape and reseed border areas damaged by animals, chemicals, tillage, or equipment traffic.
- Maintain desired vegetative communities and plant vigor by liming, fertilizing, mowing, disking, or burning and controlling noxious weeds to sustain effectiveness of the border.
- Repair and reseed ephemeral gullies and rills that develop in the border.
- Minimally invasive tillage (e.g. paraplowing) may be performed in rare cases where compaction and vehicle traffic have degraded the field border function. The purpose of the tillage is strictly to decrease bulk density and increase infiltration rates so as to provide a better media for reestablishment of vegetation and field border function.

Maintenance activities that result in disturbance of vegetation should not be conducted during the nesting season of grass nesting birds.

Planner Certification

This Field Border plan meets the requirements of NRCS Conservation Practice Standard 386.

Signature

Title

Date

Certification of Practice Completion

This Field Border has been completed and maintained according to NRCS plans and specifications. (Indicate in Practice Specifications if there were any changes to the planned practice and acreage.)

Signature

Title

Date

