

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

MULCHING

(Acre)

CODE 484

DEFINITION

Applying plant residues or other suitable materials not produced on the site to the soil surface.

Straw (certified noxious weed free) 4,000 lbs/ac

Wood chips 8-12 tons/ac

Corn cobs 10 tons/acre

PURPOSE

To conserve moisture, prevent surface compacting or crusting, reduce runoff and erosion, control weeds, and help establish plant cover.

Native materials anchored with commercial tackifier:

Native or introduced grass hay (certified noxious weed free) 2,000 lbs/ac + 150 gal. commercial tackifier/acre

Straw or legume hay (certified noxious weed free) 2,000 lbs/ac + 150 gal. commercial tackifier/acre

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On soils subject to erosion, on which low residue crops are grown, on critical areas, and on soils needing moisture conservation and weed control to establish vegetation.

Wood chips 6 tons/acre + 150 gal. commercial tackifier/acre

Wood shavings 2 tons/acre + 150 gal. commercial tackifier/acre

CRITERIA

To conserve moisture, prevent surface compacting or crusting; reduce runoff and erosion; and help establish plant cover.

Corn cobs 5 tons/acre + 150 gal. commercial tackifier/acre

Material requirements

Natural materials not anchored with commercial tackifier (in order of preference):

Native grass hay (certified noxious weed free) with viable seed 4,000 lbs/ac

Native or introduced grass hay (certified noxious weed free) 4,000 lbs/ac

Legume hay (certified noxious weed free) 4,000 lbs/ac

Commercial mulches:

Jute netting 1 layer on soil surface

Soil retention mat

Erosinet 1 layer on soil surface

Enkamat 7010 1 layer on soil surface

Enkamat 7020 1 layer on soil surface

Spun glass fibers 1,000 lbs/acre

Wood cellulose 1,500 lbs/acre

Excelsior blanket 1 layer on soil surface

Curlex blanket 1 layer on soil surface

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

MULCHING (484)-2

Hydro-Paper Mulch fiber	1700
Hydro-Wood Mulch fiber	2,000 lbs/acre
Synthetic resin	105 gallons per acre

Installation requirements

All areas to be mulched shall be reasonably smooth, free of rills and gullies. If the area to be mulched is to be seeded, follow seedbed preparation and seeding dates in Field Office Technical Guide CRITICAL AREA PLANTING (342) standard. Seeding will be completed prior to the application of mulch.

Spread mulching material evenly over the area to be protected. The mulch material should not prevent the emergence of the grass and will ordinarily not be over one and a half inches in thickness.

Anchoring requirements

Mulch material must be anchored one of the following methods:

Use of a weighted straight disk or a notched coulter mulch tiller with coulter blades on an 8" spacing.

By hand, placing a shovelful of earth on top of the mulch material, one shovelful for each square yard of mulched area.

Corn cobs and wood chips may be pressed down by a land roller or by repeated trips with a rubber tired tractor.

An commercial tackifier may be used to anchor mulch on critical areas too steep for machinery operations. The commercial tackifier may be applied by sprinkling or pressure sprays.

All commercial netting or blankets must be anchored with soil, staples, or stakes. Secure material every 1 to 2 feet along side, top, and bottom ends. The remaining area should be held down with one (1) staple or stake per square yard.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Mulch can be used to control erosion and reduce evaporation during cover establishment on sites that are not protected by a cover crop.

SPECIFICATIONS GUIDE

All other plans will specify the kind, rate, placement, time of application, and anchoring procedures for materials. Specifications will be listed in plan narratives, CPA, or ENG jobsheets.