

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

**CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION** (ACRE)

**CODE 328**

**MONTANA CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATION / JOB SHEET**

**ANNUAL CROPPING**

COOPERATOR	FIELD(S)
TRACT(S)	DATE

**DEFINITION:** A sequence of adapted crops designed to maintain, protect, or improve the health and productivity of the soil and related natural resources.

**Annual Crop Rotation:** This rotation applies when planting crops annually where irrigation water is available or when the growing season precipitation plus stored available soil moisture is 9 inches or more for 7 out of 10 years.

**PURPOSE:** As part of a conservation management system, a crop rotation is an essential practice for all land where agricultural crops are grown to reduce erosion, maintain or improve soil organic matter, manage the balance of plant nutrients, improve water use efficiency, manage saline seeps, manage plant pests (weeds, insect, and diseases), provide food for domestic livestock, and provide food and cover for wildlife.

**CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:** A conservation crop rotation is established as part of a conservation management system to address the soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human needs as related to the owner's goals and objectives. It is important to consider nutrient and pest management, crop residue management, agricultural waste utilization, and other supportive conservation practices when designing a crop rotation. A properly designed crop rotation can also provide substantial forage for livestock and improve soil health and the over all sustainability of the agricultural production system. A crop rotation is most effective in providing conservation benefits when used in combination with other agronomic or structural practices.

If crop residues are to be removed, or low residue crops are grown, protection against erosion may be provided by fall seeded small grain crops, cover crops, legumes, grasses, or the addition of residue or manure.

**WILDLIFE:** Crop rotations can enhance wildlife objectives depending on the vegetative species used and management practiced. Consider using species that can provide food and cover for important wildlife.

**CROP DIVERSITY INDEX:**

Benchmark Index: \_\_\_\_\_ Planned Index: \_\_\_\_\_

**CROP ROTATION INTENSITY RATING:**

Benchmark Index: \_\_\_\_\_ Planned Index: \_\_\_\_\_

**FERTILIZER PLAN:** (See FOTG, Section IV, Practice Specification 590–Nutrient Management)

CROP ROTATION	PROJECTED YIELD	N	P	K	OTHER	APPLICATION DATE	APPLICATION METHOD
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Additional fertilizer information: \_\_\_\_\_

**WEED CONTROL PLAN:** (See FOTG, Section IV, Practice Specification 595–Pest Management)

Chemical or mechanical. Producer's plan for use of herbicides, rates, and application: \_\_\_\_\_

**DISEASES AND INSECT CONTROL:** (See FOTG, Section IV, Practice Specification 595–Pest Management)

Producers plans for disease or insect control if problems should occur: \_\_\_\_\_

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.

The crop rotation, in combination with other supporting practices, must include enough high residue producing crops to protect soil from erosion (planned to “T” or below). High residue crops include corn or sorghum for grain, small grains harvested for grain, alfalfa and grass cut for hay, winter cover crops, or the addition of manure (10 tons per acre is approximately equal to 20-30% residue).

**ATTACHED SPECIFICATIONS**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 324–Chiseling and Subsoiling     | <input type="checkbox"/> 571–Soil Salinity Management  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 329–Conservation Tillage System  | <input type="checkbox"/> 585–Contour Stripcropping     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 340–Cover Crop                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 586–Stripcropping, Field      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 344–Residue Management, Seasonal | <input type="checkbox"/> 589B–Cross Wind Stripcropping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 392–Field Windbreaks             | <input type="checkbox"/> 609–Surface Roughening        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 422A–Herbaceous Wind Barriers    | <input type="checkbox"/> 610–Toxic Salt Reduction      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 449–Irrigation Water Management  | <input type="checkbox"/> 633–Waste Utilization         |

**APPROVALS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 NRCS Conservationist

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Job Approval Authority

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Producer

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**INSTALLATION CHECK:**

I hereby certify that this practice has been installed in accordance with NRCS standards and specifications.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 NRCS or NRCS Certified Crop Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date