

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
INTERIM SPECIFICATION for CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM
FORAGE HARVEST MANAGEMENT

Issued September 2, 2011

CODE 511

This Interim Specification identifies additional planning requirements for application of Forage Harvest Management, 511, for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Managed Harvesting.

HAYING PLANS & SPECIFICATIONS

Producers **must** request approval for Managed Harvest from Farm Service Agency (FSA) based on a technical review by NRCS, **PRIOR** to harvesting and must follow the plan developed by NRCS.(attached) which is based on minimum cutting heights, acceptable harvest dates, total acres and key forage species.

NRCS field offices will also check with FSA on current notices and 2-CRP Part 19 for any updates or special situations such as drought and emergency grazing, etc.

Producers will be assessed a 25% payment reduction.

Producers shall not hay or graze the same acreage.

Completion of Colorado Job Sheet 511 on page 3 of this interim specification is **required**.

Managed haying shall be permitted on no more than 50% of the contracted acreage once in 5 years. You cannot hay the remaining 50% for 5 years. This is for CRP-1's approved after Sept. 26, 2006.

CRP-1's before this date can be hayed every 3 years, and the other 50% can be harvested the following year.

Timing of Haying Operations

- Haying may not begin until July 16, after the primary nesting season (PNS).
- All haying operations must be completed 120 days of the end of the PNS, or as defined in the 2-CRP.
- Producers may harvest the same acreage only 1 in 10 years, for CRP-1's approved after Sept. 26, 2006. For CRP-1's approved before this date, harvest may occur 1 in 3 years.
- No harvesting of acreage planted with practice CP-42 Pollinator Habitat

Minimum Cutting Height and Haying Plans

- Minimum cutting heights will be maintained for each key forage species. The cutting heights for each species will be based on the amount of live, above-ground plant material that is required to assure plant health and the desired level of erosion control.
- Minimum cutting heights must be available before approving a harvest plan. (See attached table)
- Cutting height and haying dates will be recorded on the haying plan, Colorado Job Sheet 511 or other form provided to the client. NRCS will maintain a copy of the plan.
- Maintain adequate cutting height or ground cover to protect soil from erosion and maintain plant health.

Water Quality

- No harvesting within **120** feet of a stream or permanent water body.

Wildlife

- Planners must consider the possible presence of fledgling and adult birds when developing Managed Harvest Plans, and provide for potential escape routes.

OPERATION and MAINTAINENCE

Maintain the minimum prescribed cutting heights through the date determined by the FSA State Committee.

CRP cover shall be re-established, at CRP participant's expense, if the cover fails as a result of managed haying.

Before harvesting, clear fields of debris that could damage machinery or if ingested by livestock, lead to sickness or death.

Operate harvesting equipment at the optimum setting and speeds to minimize loss of leaves.

Table 1: Minimum Cutting Height Allowed

Key Forage Species	Minimum starting height (inches)	Minimum Height (inches)
Alfalfa	6	4
Alkali sacaton	6	4
Blue grama	3	2
Little bluestem	6	4
Orchardgrass	5	3
Russian wildrye	5	3
Sand bluestem	8	6
Sideoats grama	6	4
Smooth brome grass	5	3
Switchgrass	10	8
Tall wheatgrass	8	6
Wheatgrasses -- Pubescent, Crested, Siberian, or Intermediate,	5	3
Wheatgrasses -- Western, Slender, Bluebunch, or Thickspike	6	4
Yellow indiagrass	8	6

Harvest Plan

CRP Owner:	_____	CRP Contract #:	_____
Farm Number:	_____	Tract Number:	_____
Total Acres:	_____	Field Number:	_____
Acres Planned for Haying:	_____	Predominant Grass Species	_____
Allowable Cutting Height:	_____	Date Haying Planned:	_____
FSA Approval:	_____		
Haying Producer:	_____		
Planner Signature:	_____		