



High Tunnel System

Alabama Job Sheet No. AL325



Prepared for: _____

Prepared by: _____

Farm: _____ Tract Number: _____ Date: _____

DEFINITION

An enclosed polyethylene, polycarbonate, plastic, or fabric covered structure that is used to cover and protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rainfall, or cold, to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner.

PURPOSE:

- Improve plant health and vigor.

Seasonal high tunnels can be an important tool used by producers to extend the growing season of field grown crops. These plastic-covered high tunnels result in a warmer production environment during late fall, winter and early spring seasons. This offers the advantage of starting crops earlier in the spring/winter and harvesting other crops later into the fall and winter. Growing these high value vegetable or cut flower crops in the high tunnel the producer may sell the crop at a higher price because of market timing. The high tunnel can often protect the growing crop from environmental extremes such as wind, rainfall, insects and diseases which allows for significantly earlier and higher marketable yield.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies to crop land or other open land that is or has the potential to be cropped and has a source of water to supply the crops with 100% of the needed water. Permanently raised beds may be installed to improve soil condition, fertility, and access. However, this practice does not apply to crops not grown in the natural soil profile or systems that include barriers between the plant and the soil profile (i.e. tables/benches, pots, etc.).

SPECIFICATIONS:

The information provided in this job sheet and attachments (conservation plan, maps, and other documents) will meet the requirements of this practice. The following provides the basic requirements of this standard:

- The tunnel frame must be at least 6 feet in height with a minimum 6-mil UV resistant polyethylene cover.
- Must construct a "kit" type structure and must be installed according to manufacturer's recommendation.
- Runoff shall be directed away from the tunnel structure to avoid ponding and seepage into the structure. Vegetation shall be established

- o on all disturbed soil outside the structure as soon as practical to prevent soil erosion.
- o Structure should be placed at least 25' away from the canopy drip line of wooded areas; a greater set back distance may be needed to prevent shading of the structure and moisture competition.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for construction and operation of this practice shall be prepared according to practice implementation requirements described in this Job Sheet, a narrative statement in the conservation plan, attached maps, manufacturer's recommendation, and other applicable documents.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Operation and maintenance of the structure shall be in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Special care shall be placed on the following:

- o Grow crops under the high tunnel in the natural soil profile not on benches, tables, or in pots.
- o Manipulate and remove side covers and end caps to manage temperature and moisture according to the tolerances of crops grown.
- o Periodically inspect structure and cover for damage. Reinstall or repair promptly.
- o Remove plastic covers in the event of extreme weather which may compromise structure as recommended by the manufacture.

Practice Design Certification (To be completed after job sheet is complete and before practice installation)

The site specific requirements for the installation, operation, and maintenance of the practice on the client's treatment unit, as recorded in this job sheet, attached programmatic requirement (attached if applicable) and other attached documents, have been prepared in accordance with the 325 High Tunnel System Standard:

Planner: _____
Signature

Date: _____

Landowner/Cooperator: _____
Signature

Date: _____

EQIP Practice Guidelines

325: High Tunnel Systems

Participant Name: _____

Date: _____

Contract Number: _____

High tunnel system has been an “interim” conservation practice standard for several years. During this time this practice standard has been revised and updated to better serve the producer and meet the conservation goals. Below are additional specifications if EQIP payments are associated with the practice. All limitations are in addition to the general specifications listed in the standard and/or job sheet.

EQIP eligibility High Tunnel System (Applicable to all EQIP contracts):

- This practice applies to crop land or other open land that is or has the potential to be cropped.
- A water source to supply the entire crops needs must be present.

EQIP Specifications for High Tunnels System: -

Total size of all seasonal high tunnels

(present and past contracts) may not exceed 5% of an acre (2,178 sq. ft.). The total size limitation may be reached in one structure or a combination of multiple smaller structures.

- Must construct a “kit” type structure and must be installed according to manufacturer’s recommendation.
- All crops must be grown in the soil profile.
- There should be no barriers between where the plant is growing and the soil profile (i.e. **No** tables/benches, pots, etc.).
- If your conservation plan identifies practices that are needed to control water and/or erosion outside the structure, then these practices must be installed.
- The structure must be maintained for four years.

Alabama Practice Certification:

325: High Tunnel System

Landowner/Cooperator _____

Field Office _____

Farm/Tract No. _____



A visual assessment of the area and structure is consistent with the implementation of this practice and other required practices to control water and erosion outside the structure. The producer certifies that the structure was installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and all requirements as described in AL Job Sheet 325, the conservation plan and/or limitations associated with program payments. Additionally, a copy of the manufacture's installation instructions and recommendations are included in the case file.

Yes___ No___

Notes:

This practice has been installed according to the site specific installation requirements and meets standards and specifications:

NRCS Certification: _____
Signature

Date _____

