

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATIONS**

**FIELD BORDER
(Feet)
CODE 386**

DEFINITION

A strip of permanent vegetation established at the edge or around the perimeter of a field.

Scope

The work shall consist of furnishing all materials and placing them on all designated areas to the limits as shown on the drawings, or as staked in the field, and performing cultural operations to establish a field border.

Procedures, technical details, and other information listed provide additional guidance for carrying out selected components of this practice. This material supplements the requirements and considerations therein.

Specifications

Field borders shall be a minimum of 20 feet in width. The design width shall be determined to the extent needed to meet the primary purpose of the practice and the producer's objectives.

The field borders shall be established to adapted species of permanent grass, legumes and/or shrubs. Natural vegetative establishment will be acceptable when 70 to 80 percent of the area is established by the first year the border is implemented. Establish plant species that will produce the greatest above and below ground biomass for the site. Consider increasing the width of the field border will increase the potential for carbon sequestration.

Field borders shall be established around the field edges to the extent needed to meet the resource needs and producer objectives. To increase trapping efficiency, consider

establishing a narrow strip of stiff-stemmed upright grass at the crop/field border interface.

Plant materials, seedbed preparation, seeding rates, dates, depths, and planting methods will be consistent practice code 512, Pasture and Hayland Planting.

Ephemeral gullies and rills present in the planned border area will be smoothed and shaped as part of seedbed preparation.

Locate borders around entire perimeter of the field, or as a minimum, install borders to eliminate sloping end rows, headlands, and other areas where concentrated water flows will enter or exit the field. Waterbars or berms may be needed to breakup or redirect concentrated water flows within the borders. If bank stabilization is a concern, select fibrous deep-rooted plants.

Border widths will be designed to conform to minimum field application setback widths established by state or local environmental protection regulations for soil amendments and land applied materials. Field borders can be used to comply with required field setback distances applicable to manure and chemical applications.

Border widths will be designed to accommodate equipment parking, loading/unloading equipment, grain harvest operations, etc.

To provide a harbor for beneficial insects, include herbaceous plants that attract beneficial insects. See planning considerations for including shrubs. Mowing, harvesting and pesticide applications will be scheduled to

accommodate life cycle requirements of the beneficial insects.

To provide habitat to cause pest Insects to congregate, select plants for the field border that attract pest insects. Use mechanical, cultural and/or chemical techniques to reduce pest populations when and where they congregate in the field border.

Establish plant species that provide wildlife food and cover for the target wildlife species. Schedule mowing, harvest, and weed control activities within the field border to accommodate reproduction and other life cycle requirements of target wildlife species.

Establish plant species with foliar and structural characteristics that optimize interception, adsorption and absorption of airborne particulates. Orient shrub rows will be oriented as closely as possible to perpendicular to the prevailing wind direction during the period of concern.

Rows of shrubs (Windbreak/Shelterbelt, 380)

adjacent to field borders will often enhance field borders ability to harbor beneficial insects, and may also provide additional wildlife benefits.

If installation or maintenance of the practice has potential of affecting cultural resources (Archaeological, historic, historic landscape, or traditional cultural properties), follow NRCS state policy for considering cultural resources.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

- Plans and specifications are to be prepared for the practice site. The following items should be specified:
- Border widths and lengths based on local design criteria.
- Location within the field or farm boundary using an aerial map.
- Vegetation to be used.
- Site preparation.
- Planting method.
- Liming or fertilizer requirements.
- Operation and maintenance requirements.