

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

**FORAGE HARVEST MANAGEMENT
(acre)
CODE 511**

Participant: _____

Location: _____ Contract/Plan: _____

Operation and Maintenance Items

- Before forage harvest, clear fields of debris that could damage machinery or if ingested by livestock, lead to sickness (for example, hardware disease) or death.
- Operate all forage harvesting equipment at the optimum settings and speeds to minimize loss of leaves.
- To control forage plant diseases, insects, and movement of weeds, clean harvesting equipment after harvest and before storing.
- Set shear-plate on rotary/sickle mower to the proper theoretical cut for the crop being harvested. Keep knives well sharpened.
- Follow all agricultural equipment manufacturer's safety measures when operating forage harvesting equipment.
- Regardless of silage/haylage storage method, ensure good compaction and an airtight seal to exclude oxygen and mold or bacterial formations.
- Dispose of the plastic wrap or bags used to store forage in an environmentally sound manner.
- Remove hay from the field in a timely manner to allow re-growth of new forages.
- Place hay in either a shed away from the weather elements or position hay outside to allow the greatest opportunity to stay dry.
- Feed hay away from environmentally sensitive areas such as creeks, streams, and ponds.

