United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS

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AGRONOMY TECHNICAL NOTE NO. CA – 69

SUBJECT: Methods to Decrease Wind Erosion on Cropland During Water Shortages in California

Purpose: To transmit the above named Technical Note

Effective Date: When contents are received.

This technical note provides guidance for alternative methods and practices for mitigating wind erosion and blowing soil during drought conditions in California.

The possible loss of irrigation water during extreme drought conditions can result in extensive cropland acreage that cannot be farmed, creating large areas of bare ground. These abandoned, bare fields may be subject to severe wind erosion, resulting in lost topsoil, air quality impacts and sediment deposition. Blowing soil can impair vision on major highways and has, in the past, resulted in serious multi-car accidents on California's major highways.

Common practices for preventing wind erosion, such as the use of cover crops and wind breaks, may not be feasible when irrigation water needed for establishment or long-term survival is limited or unavailable.

This technical note illustrates emergency methods to control wind erosion and soil loss under two different conditions: situations without available water and situations in which there is a limited amount of water available.

Filing Instructions: The attached Technical Note and new Index of Agronomy Technical Notes will be filed electronically in the California eFOTG under the folder hierarchy: Section I, Technical Notes, Agronomy. http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg

Field offices may also optionally file hard copies in the three-ring binder with other Agronomy Technical Notes, located in field offices. Replace the old Index sheets with the new Index, attached.

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