Natural Resources Conservation Service, Florida October 2013

CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION JOB SHEET

Bahiagrass-Bahiagrass-Peanut-Cotton

What is it?

Conservation crop rotation is growing crops in a planned sequence on the same field. An example would be growing two years of bahiagrass for grazing or hay, followed by one year of peanuts, and the fourth year in cotton (http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/programs/sod_rotation.shtml).

Crop rotations can serve many conservation purposes such as reducing sheet and rill and wind erosion, improving soil quality (e.g., add organic matter, improve soil structure, etc.), help balance plant nutrients, minimize the impact of plant pests, and conserve water. Additionally, crop rotations done with conservation in mind can supply nitrogen by biological nitrogen fixation when legumes are used in the rotation, provide feed for livestock, produce bioenergy feedstocks, and provide food and cover for wildlife including pollinators. This practice can be used on all cropland when annually planted crops make up at least 1/3rd of the crop sequence on a time basis (e.g., one year out of three, etc.)

General Planning Information

A conservation crop rotation can be as unique as your production operation and conservation goals. For this practice, a crop rotation can be as simple warm season and cool season crop in a single year, but more complex three-crop, four-crop, and longer cropping sequences can be used. Additionally, cover crops and fallowing (a period of time when no crops are grown and vegetative growth controlled by herbicide or mowing) can be built into a conservation crop rotation. See the site specific portion of this job sheet on the following pages for what type of cropping sequence is necessary for your specific purpose.

Operation and Maintenance

Producers need to evaluate their rotation and cropping sequence to see that the crop rotation design is meeting their goals. If a crop failure occurs or changes in the weather or economic considerations occur during the time frame the original conservation crop rotation was designed for, alternative crops may be used in the rotation as long as the meet your original conservation goal. Discuss any changes with the local NRCS Conservationist prior to altering the current cropping plan.

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CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION - SITE SPECIFIC JOB SHEET

Land User:		County:	Date:
Farm #:	Tract #:	Field # :	

Purpose (check all that apply)	
☐ Reduce sheet-and-rill or wind erosion	☐ Manage saline seeps.
☐ Improve soil quality.	☐ Provide feed for domestic livestock.
☐ Manage the balance of plant nutrients.	☐ Provide annual crops for bioenergy feedstock.
☐ Supply nitrogen through biological nitrogen fixation to reduce energy use.	☐ Manage plant pests (weeds, insects, and diseases).
☐ Conserve water.	☐ Provide food and cover for wildlife, including pollinator forage, cover and nesting.

Critical water and wind erosion period(s):				
RUSLE2 tolerance value (T, if Reduce Soil Erosion checked)	**Planned:**		**Applied:**	
OM in Soil Condition Index (if Improve Soil Quality checked)	**Planned:**		**Applied:**	

Crops and Sequence in Rotation				
Planned			**Applied**	
Crop[1]	**(Substitute**[2]**)**	**Length of Time** (e.g., Nov-May, Jun-Sep)	**Crop**	**Length of Time** (e.g., Nov-May, Jun-Sep)
Total Length of Rotation (years):				

[1] Can include fallow period or cover crop. See practice standard and guidance for details.

[2] Acceptable substitutes are crops that have similar properties to those of the original crop selected (e.g., grain sorghum for corn, crimson clover for arrowleaf clover, grass cover crop for grass fallow, etc.)

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Operation and Maintenance

Additional Specifications and Notes:

This practice is planned according to NRCS Standards and Specifications.

Conservationist:	Date:

I agree to install this practice as explained in the above Job Sheet.

Client:	Date:

This practice has been completed and maintained in accordance with this Job Sheet.

Certified By:	Date:

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