



Natural Resources Conservation Service

355 East Hancock
Athens, Georgia 30501

January 6, 2016

GEORGIA TECHNICAL GUIDE – SECTION IV – NOTICE GA156

This notice transmits revisions to the FOTG.

CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARDS / GUIDE SHEETS:

Conservation Cover, Code 327 –**REVISED**– Managing pests was not appropriate as the purpose of this standard and was deleted. Added “beneficial organism habitat” to the pollinator purpose of the practice. Added one new reference: National Agronomy Technical Note 9, Preventing or Mitigating Potential Negative Impacts of Pesticides on Pollinators Using IPM and Other Conservation Practices.

Statement of Work –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

Appendices –**REVISED**– To convey information on specific cover for orchards and row crops.

Conservation Crop Rotation, Code 328 –**REVISED**– Changed definition from “Growing crops in a planned sequence on the same field” to “A planned sequence of crops grown on the same ground over a period of time (i.e., the rotation).”

Contour Buffer Strips, Code 332 –**REVISED**– Added an additional practice purpose to reduce transport of nutrients downslope and combined the additional criteria for this purpose with the additional criteria to reduce transport of sediment and other waterborne contaminants downslope. Made minor wording modifications to improve understanding and reduce redundancy in the standard.

Contour Farming, Code 330 –**REVISED**– Revised the definition of emphasize proper alignments and the general criteria for maximum row grade to 4 percent based on RUSLE2 technology. Added the implementation requirement document to the specifications and plans.

Statement of Work –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

Cover Crop, Code 340 –**REVISED**– Deleted two purposes, (1) promote biological nitrogen fixation and reduce energy use, and (2) increase biodiversity, as the two purposes are captured in the criteria in the general criteria and the criteria for the other purposes. Edited the criteria to improve clarity and understanding of the standard. Added additional criteria to address the need to terminate cover crops within the NRCS cover Crop Termination Guidelines. Provided additional criteria for haying and grazing cover crops.

Appendix I –**REVISED**– To convey planting rates and seeding dates.

[Appendix II](#) –**NEW**– To illustrate a general time line for planting dates for annuals and perennials

[Appendix III](#) –**NEW**– To provide information on how species in mixes of cover crops are likely to interact depending upon environmental factors.

[Appendix IV](#) –**NEW**– For informational purposes.

[Appendix V](#) –**NEW**– To clarify requirements for each purpose.

[Appendix VI](#) –**NEW**– For informational purposes.

[Appendix VII](#) –**NEW**–To estimate biomass.

[Appendix VIII](#) –**NEW**– To assist in cover crop selection for managing pests.

[Critical Area Planting, Code 342](#) –**REVISED**– Deleted the purpose to rehabilitate and revegetate degraded sites that cannot be stabilized using normal establishment techniques as this is implied in other purposes. Added the implementation requirement document to the specifications and plans.

[Statement of Work](#) –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

[Deep Tillage, Code 324](#) –**REVISED**– Deleted the purpose to reduce concentration of soil contaminants that inhibit plant growth because there is no technology to describe the level of contamination nor a dilution factor. Added the implementation requirement document to the specifications and plans.

[Statement of Work](#) –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

[Field Border, Code 386](#) –**REVISED**– Revised the condition where the practice applies to cover only existing cropland and pastureland. Deleted the purpose to manage pest populations. Added the implementation requirement document to the specifications and plans.

[Statement of Work](#) –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

[Filter Strip, Code 393](#) –**REVISED**– Added a few additional considerations for species selection for native plant communities and organic operations. Added the implementation requirement document to the specifications and plans.

[High Tunnel System, Code 325 \(formerly Seasonal High Tunnel System, Interim Code 798\)](#) –**NEW**– This is the new national conservation practice standard with a 5 year lifespan that replaces the Seasonal High Tunnel for Crops (Code 798) interim standard. “High Tunnel System” refers to “kits” that can be purchased from a number of suppliers. Improving plant health and vigor has been identified as the purpose of this standard. The conservation practice describes “an enclosed polyethylene, plastic, or fabric covered structure used to cover and protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rainfall, or cold to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner.”

[Mulching, Code 484](#) –**REVISED**– Deleted the purposes to moderate soil temperature and suppress weeds as these do not address a resource concern and revised the “Condition Where Practice Applies” to remove this practice from being used for weed control for production agriculture. Added the implementation requirement document to the specifications and plans.

[Statement of Work](#) –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

Residue and Tillage Management- No Till, Code 329 –**REVISED**– Changed the practice name to “Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till.” No-till includes direct seed and strip till. Added additional criteria clarification to not allow any full width tillage for this practice, reduced the maximum soil tillage intensity rating value for no till from 30 to 20, added implementation requirements to the specifications and plans, and changed the purpose “Reduce wind erosion and particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter – PM 10” to “Reduce tillage-induced particulate emissions” to address all sizes of tillage particulate emissions.

Statement of Work –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

Residue and Tillage Management- Reduced Till, Code 345 –**REVISED**– Incorporated “346 Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till” into this standard. Changed the name from “Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till”. Added criteria to establish a maximum soil tillage intensity value of 80 and clarified the air quality purpose to reduce tillage-induced particulate emissions vs. only PM-10 emissions. Revised the criteria for energy savings to a 25 percent reduction from the current baseline and added implementation requirements to the specifications and plans.

Statement of Work –**NEW**– To conform to the new National Standard.

Stripcropping, Code 585 –**NEW**– Revised the definition to stress alternating strips of erosion susceptible crops and revised the wind erosion purpose to include associated transport of sediment and other wind contaminants. Added the implementation requirement document to the specifications and plans.

Structures For Wildlife, Code 649 -**NEW**- This is a new national conservation practice standard with a 5-year lifespan. It provides minimum requirements for applying fish and wildlife structures or retrofitting existing structures as needed to improve management and conservation of fish and wildlife habitats in order to achieve their intended purpose.

Statement of Work -**NEW**- To conform to the new National Standard.

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