NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

Forage Harvest Management

Conservation Practice Jobsheet *MA-511*

Practice Specifications

Practice Specifications are prepared in accordance with the Massachusetts NRCS Field Office Technical Guide. Information contained in this document is considered part of the conservation plan.

Client Name:		Farm #:	
Field(s):		Tract #:	
Planned By:		Date:	
Approved By:		Total Acres:	

Forage Harvest Management Plan						
Tract & Field	Acres	Forage Species	Cuttings/ Year	Planned Stubble Height	Harvest Method	Yield Goal *(tons/acre)*

Additional Specifications and Notes:

Operation and Maintenance

- 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.
- Monitor weather conditions and take action accordingly before and after cutting to optimize forage wilting or curing time to preserve feed quality and prevent forage swaths or windrows from smothering underlying plants.
- Inspect and repair harvesting equipment following manufacturer's preventative maintenance procedures.
- All shields shall be in place during machine operation to prevent injury or death. Shut off machinery before working on or unplugging moving parts.
- Select equipment sizes and capacities that will in a timely and economically feasible manner handle the acreage normally harvested.
- Operate all forage harvesting equipment at the optimum settings and speeds to minimize loss of leaves.
- Set shear-plate on forage chopper to the proper theoretical cut for the crop being harvested. Keep knives well sharpened. Do not use recutters or screens unless forage moisture levels fall below recommended levels for optimum chopping action.
- If ensiling, ensure good compaction and/or an air-tight seal to exclude oxygen and mold formation.

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Name: **Date:**

FORAGE HARVEST MANAGEMENT RECORDS						
Date	Tract/Field Number	Acres Harvested	Number of Harvests/ Cuttings per Season	Harvest Method	Tonnage/Acre or Bales Removed	Field Notes / Comments