



September 30, 2011

MASSACHUSETTS TECHNICAL GUIDE NOTICE NO. MA-255

TO: All holders of Field Office Technical Guide, Section IV

Purpose. This notice transmits eleven revised conservation practice standards and associated guidance documents.

- **Brush Management (314).** Several specification guides for the control of exotic invasive plants have been produced.
- **Conservation Cover (327).** This revised standard adds pollinator habitat to the purpose of wildlife habitat.
- **Conservation Crop Rotation (328).** Two new Purposes of “Reduce Energy Use” and accompanying Criteria were added to (1) Supply plant produced nitrogen to reduce energy use and (2) Manage crop consumptive use of water to conserve water and reduce energy. Where the practice applies was clarified for time basis for annual produced crops. Additional Criteria were added to Improve Soil Quality. The crops grown shall produce a positive OM (Organic Matter) subfactor value over the life of the rotation, as determined by the Soil Conditioning Index procedure, with appropriate adjustments for additions to or subtractions from biomass on the field. This addresses the problem in low rainfall areas where producers could not plan a rotation with multiple other purposes and benefits because they are unable to achieve a positive OM subfactor.
- **Cover Crop (340).** The purpose to produce supplemental forage was removed. A Purpose and accompanying Criteria were added to promote biological nitrogen fixation and “Reduce Energy Use” by using legume cover crops. Additional Operation and Maintenance criteria were added to evaluate the onsite application of the practice to ensure the planned purposes are achieved.
- **Fence (382).** Minimal revisions were made to this conservation practice standard.
- **Forage and Biomass Planting (512).** The name was changed from Pasture and Hay Planting to Forage and Biomass Planting in recognition of similarities among plant species used for this purpose. Production of feedstock for biofuel production was added as a purpose. The practice remains applicable to all lands where appropriate, but does not include establishment of annually planted food, fiber, or oilseed crops. Additional Considerations have been incorporated. Plans and Specifications now identify specific elements that are to be addressed in the plan.
- **Forage Harvest Management (511).** Minimal revisions were made to this conservation practice standard; references were updated.
- **Mulching (484).** A new Purpose of “Reduce Energy Use” and accompanying additional Criteria was added. Criteria were added to the Operation and Maintenance section of the standard to evaluate the effectiveness of the practice to achieve the planned purpose(s).
- **Residue and Tillage Management—Mulch Till (345).** A new Purpose of “Reduce Energy Use” and accompanying additional Criteria were added. The revision combined Additional Criteria for wind and water erosion into one set of criteria. Criteria were added to the Operation and

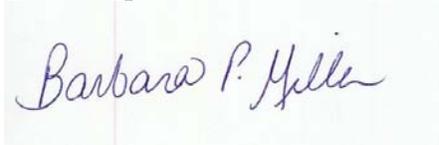
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Maintenance section of the practice to evaluate on-site performance of the practice. This will help to determine if the purpose(s) are being achieved.

- **Residue and Tillage Management—No Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329).** A new Purpose of “Reduce Energy Use” and accompanying additional Criteria were added. Additional Criteria to Reduce Sheet/Rill Erosion; Reduce Wind Erosion; and Reduce Soil Particulate Emissions were combined into one set of criteria. The Operation and Maintenance had additions to evaluate the function of the practice onsite to ensure the purpose(s) is/are achieved.
- **Residue and Tillage Management—Ridge Till (346).** A new Purpose of “Reduce Energy Use” and accompanying additional Criteria were added. Criteria were added to the Operation and Maintenance section of the standard to evaluate the effectiveness of the practice to achieve the planned Purpose(s).

Filing Instructions. Insert this notice in front of Section I of the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). Replace the existing index located in front of Section IV with the revised index (09/30/11) provided with this notice. File the conservation practice standard in Section IV of the FOTG. All of the documents have been posted to the Electronic FOTG (eFOTG).

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara P. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light blue rectangular background.

BARBARA MILLER
State Resource Conservationist

Attachments

DIST: District Conservationists
Field Engineers
State Conservation Engineer
S.O. Official MA FOTG
Scott Soares, Commissioner, DAR