

RUSLE2

Terraces as a Support Practice

Terraces are a conservation practice installed mainly to control gully erosion but can also reduce sheet and rill erosion losses. Terraces trap sediment at the end of a slope segment and reduce the length of slope exposed to sheet and rill erosion. To properly account for the benefit of terraces as a conservation treatment in RUSLE2, follow the instructions below:

- 1) When terraces already exist on the field and the dominant critical slope occurs in the terraced portion:
 - A) Measure the slope steepness and slope length down to the first terrace.
 - B) Measure the slope grade of contouring across the dominant critical slope segment and select an appropriate contouring row grade from the drop-down choice list for **Contouring**.
 - C) Select a terrace option with the terrace located at the **bottom** of the slope from the drop-down choice list for **Diversion/terrace, sediment basin**.

- 2) When terraces are being planned but have not yet been installed:
 - A) Determine the dominant critical slope for the field and measure slope steepness and slope length for the entire RUSLE2 slope (from the point where runoff begins to the point where deposition occurs or concentrated flow begins).
 - B) Measure the slope grade for contouring across the dominant critical slope segment and select an appropriate contouring row grade from the drop-down choice list for **Contouring**.
 - C) Select a terrace system for the RUSLE2 slope. From the drop-down choice list for **Diversion/terrace, sediment basin** choose a system of one or more terraces or diversions that fit in the length L determined from the dominant critical slope and an appropriate channel grade that best matches the planned system.