**Transition from Irrigated to Dryland Farming and Ranching Plan Criteria**
**Practice/Activity Code (134) (No.)**

## 1. Definition

Dryland systems are those, which describe production techniques under limited precipitation and usually severe resource concern constraints. The resource constraints include soil erosion by both wind and water; periods of water stress of significant duration; and limited production inputs. A transition from irrigated to dryland farming and ranching conservation activity plan is a conservation system that focuses on crop yield sustainability and water conservation/water harvesting techniques. A Transition to Dryland conservation activity plan must:

- Meet NRCS quality criteria for soil erosion, water quantity, and other identified resource concerns;
- Comply with federal, state, tribal, and local laws, regulations and permit requirements; and
- Satisfy the operator's objectives.

Producers may choose to transition from irrigated to dryland farming and/or ranching for reasons that include, but are not limited to:

- Reducing water use;
- Protecting threatened or endangered species;
- Restoring flow to streams and improving fisheries;
- Improving irrigation water management on other land not in dryland system;
- Protecting or securing present water rights; and
- Continuing farming/ranching in drought conditions or if water rights are reduced or lost.

## 2. Transition from Irrigated to Dryland Plan Technical Criteria

This section establishes the minimum criteria to be addressed in the development of Transition from Irrigated to Dryland Plans developed by a certified Technical Service Provider (TSP).

A. Completed the "Transition from Irrigated to Dryland Plan (138)" template provided that includes the following required items:

B. Background and Site Information Element

- Name of owner/operator;
- Farm location and mailing address;
- Soils Map and soil map units descriptions using the Web Soil Survey http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm as a minimum printout the Soil Report > AOI Inventory> Map Unit Descriptions
- Digital Conservation plan map with;

1. Streams, surface waters, surface drainage, wetlands on or adjacent to site
2. Property lines
3. Field Boundaries, name/number, acres, and land use
4. Map scale
5. Structural Practices Located on Map
6. Legend
7. Grower Name, County, State

- Total acres of the plan;
- Resource evaluations for soil erosion, water quality, water quantity, and other local concerns identified.

C. Planned conservation practices to address soil erosion, water quantity, and other local resource or human concerns.

- Crop rotation plan – consider:
  1. A crop succession of sufficient intensity to assure maximum use of effective precipitation
  2. A rotation diversity to promote greater stability and diminished external input requirements
  3. Using tillage and planting methods that reduce soil disturbance and renew dependence on cultural practices that will reduce reliance on costly technology
- Other practices to address soil erosion, water quantity, and other resource concerns;
- List the planned timings, rates, sources, and methods of application of crop nutrients and the results of soil tests and/or tissue tests as appropriate for the operation;

D. Typical Practice Standards to Transition from Irrigated to Dryland Farming:

- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Contour Farming (330)
- Field Border (386)
- Filter Strip (393)
- Hedgerow Planting (422)
- Mulching (484)
- Pasture and Hayland Planting (512)
- Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345)
- Residue Management, No Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329)
- Residue Management, Ridge Till (346)
- Residue Management, Seasonal (344)

- Stripcropping (585)
- Windbreak/Shelter Belt Establishment (380)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pest Management (595)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)
- Terrace (600)
- Water Harvesting Catchment (636)
- Other of engineering type practices

E. References

- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service National Agronomy Manual, http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/ Title 190,
- NRCS (State Field Office Technical Guide – FOTG) http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov//efotg_locator.aspx, Select State, Go to Section IV.

**3. Deliverables for the Client – a hardcopy of the plan that includes:**

- Complete Hardcopy of the client's plan (MsWord copy) of the "Plan Template". Document the planned conservation practices showing the planned amount, the fields where the practice is to be applied, and the planned year of application.
- When the following practices are planned include the appropriate Jobsheet or Implementation Requirements (founding in Section IV of the State eFOTG):

| Code | Practice Name |
|---|---|
| 328 | Conservation Crop Rotation |
| 340 | Cover Crop |
| 345 | Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till |
| 329 | Residue and Tillage Management, No Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed |
| 346 | Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till |
| 344 | Residue Management, Seasonal |
| 484 | Mulching |
| 512 | Forage and Biomass Planting |
| 511 | Forage Harvest Management |

- Completed template for **Transition from Irrigated to Dryland Plan (138)**
- Soils Map and soil map units descriptions using the Web Soil Survey http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm as a minimum printout the Soil Report > AOI Inventory> Map Unit Descriptions
- Resource assessment results (wind and water erosion, water quantity, and others identified resource concerns that may be needed) – complete in the template or add printouts from assessment tool (RUSLE2 or WEPS)
- Digital Conservation plan map with;

a. Streams, surface waters, surface drainage, wetlands on or adjacent to site
b. Property lines
c. Field Boundaries, name/number, acres, and land use
d. Map scale
e. Structural Practices Located on Map
f. Legend
g. Grower Name, County, State

**4. Deliverables for NRCS Field Office:**

- Complete Hardcopy and Electronic copy of the client's plan (MsWord copy and/or other appropriate digital copies of documents) and deliverables.
- Digital Conservation Plan Map with fields, features, and structural practices located.
- Digital Soils Map