Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

NOTE: This type of font (AaBbCcDdEe 123..) indicates NRCS National Standards. This type of font (AaBbCcDdEe 123..) indicates Montana Supplement.
soil test. Application rates, methods and dates are obtained from the plant materials program, land grant and research institutions, extension agencies, or agency field trials.

When planting legumes, use pre-inoculated seed or inoculate with the proper viable strain of Rhizobia immediately before planting.

Exclude livestock until the plants are well established.

Select forage species based on the intended use, level of management, realistic yield estimates, maturity stage, and compatibility with other species. Verify plant adaptation to the area prior to planting.

Additional Criteria for Improving or Maintaining Livestock Nutrition and/or Health

Use forage species that will meet the desired level of nutrition (quantity and quality) for the kind and class of the livestock to be fed.

Forage species planted as mixtures will exhibit similar palatability to avoid selective grazing.

Additional Criteria for Providing or Increasing Forage Supply During Periods of Low Forage Production

Select plants that will help meet livestock forage demand during times that normal farm/ranch forage production are not adequate.

Additional Criteria for Reducing Erosion and Improving Water Quality

Ground cover and root mass need to be sufficient to protect the soil from wind and water erosion.

Additional Criteria for Producing Feedstocks for Biofuel or Energy Production

Select plants that provide adequate kinds and amount of plant materials needed.

CONSIDERATIONS

In areas where animals congregate consider establishing persistent species that can tolerate close grazing and trampling.

Where wildlife and pollinator concerns exist, consider plant selection by using an approved habitat evaluation procedure.

Where air quality concerns exist consider using site preparation and planting techniques that will minimize airborne particulate matter generation and transport.

Where carbon sequestration is a goal, select deep-rooted perennial species that will increase underground carbon storage.

During and upon stand establishment planning and application of the following conservation practices should be considered as applicable; Forage Harvest Management (511), Herbaceous Weed Control (315), Nutrient Management (590), and Prescribed Grazing (528).

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Prepare plans and specifications for the establishment planting for each site or management unit according to the Criteria, Considerations, and Operations and Maintenance described in this standard. Record them on a site specific job sheet or in the narrative of a conservation plan.

The following elements will be addressed in the plan to meet the intended purpose:

- Location map - field numbers with measured acres of the area to be planted.
- Site preparation
- Fertilizer application (if applicable)
- Seedbed/planting bed preparation
- Methods and depths of seeding/planting
- Date seeding/planting scheduled and applied
- Planned and actual species mixture and seeding rate (PLS), of selected species/cultivars
- Erosion prediction before and after (WEPS or RUSLE2)
- Type of legume inoculant and/or seed treatment used (if applicable)
• Current seed analysis tag with seed/plant source, percent germination and purity

• Current soil test including Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, Organic Matter, Electrical Conductivity (EC), pH

• Supplemental water for plant establishment (if applicable)

• Protection of plantings (if applicable).

• New seedings will not be grazed or hayed until the stand has matured beyond the seedling stage.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Inspect and calibrate equipment prior to use. Continuously monitor during planting to insure proper rate, distribution and depth of planting material is maintained.

Monitor new plantings for water stress. Depending on the severity of drought, water stress may require reducing weeds, early harvest of any companion crops, irrigating when possible, or replanting failed stands.

REFERENCES


USDA, NRCS, Plant Materials Technical Note No. 46, Seeding Rates and Recommended Cultivars, August 2004.