



## Soil Quality Enhancement Activity – SQL04 – Use of cover crop mixes

### State Criteria

*Cover crops must be planted whenever the crop they are scheduled to follow in the rotation is grown and rotated across all planned acres by the end of the contract period.*

*Example:* The existing rotation is corn – beans – wheat; for this enhancement a cover crop mix will be planted following wheat – to meet the criteria of the enhancement the cover crop mix must be planted following wheat whenever it is grown and rotated across all planned acres by the end of the contract period.

### Cover Crop Requirements

- Cover crops can not be harvested or grazed
- Cover crops must follow planting dates, seeding rates, method of planting and other requirements in 340 Cover Crop Standard. Specifications will be provided on the [Cover Crop Worksheet \(NE-CPA-7\)](#).
- Cover crops which winter kill must be planted at least 8 weeks prior to the average date of the first killing frost.
- Cover crops which over winter must have at least 4 weeks of spring growth before termination.
- Winter annual cover crops planted following a low residue crop must have a minimum of 6-8" of growth before they are terminated.
- Cover crop must be a different crop type (i.e. warm season grass, cool season grass, warm season broadleaf, cool season broadleaf) or, if a cover crop mix is used, include a different crop type than the previous crop.
- Cover crops which follow fall harvested crops must be winter annual small grains such as rye, wheat or triticale, or a winter annual small grain with a legume.

For a list of potential cover crop species refer to Table 1 associated with the [Cover Crop Worksheet \(NE-CPA-7\)](#) or in the Cover Crop Standard (340) in the Field Office Technical Guide.

Species selection should reflect the producer's objectives as identified on the [Cover Crop Worksheet \(NE-CPA-7\)](#).

For mixes of more than 2 species, consider adding 0.5 to 1.0 lb/ac of a brassica: canola, mustard, radish or turnip.

Consider including a leguminous cover crop species if the crop to follow is non-leguminous.



**DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

Complete the Table below:

To be completed by NRCS and Producer during planning				To be completed by Producer during certification		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tract(s)	Field(s)	Acres Planned	Existing Rotation	Acres Applied	Planned Rotation	Cover Crop Mix
<i>EX.1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>C-B</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>C-B- cc</i>	<i>Rye &amp; Field Peas</i>

EX= EXAMPLE, COLUMNS 1-4 NRCS COMPLETES, COLUMNS 5-8 PRODUCER COMPLETES  
**C=**Corn; **B=**soybeans/edible beans; **W=**Wheat; **M=**Milo; **A=**Alfalfa; **O=**Oats; **cc=**cover crop;  
**Others=**\_\_\_\_\_

**I certify that the following information meets specifications and has been provided to NRCS:**

1. Planned rotation, cover crop mix, and the number of acres where the enhancement was planned and applied (complete the above table).
2. A completed [Cover Crop Worksheet \(NE-CPA-7\)](#) showing the cover crop mix grown, seeding date and seeding rate, fertilizer applied, and the method and date of termination.
3. A map with delineation of the area where the enhancement was applied.
4. Photographs of a representative number of fields showing the cover crop.

I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain all necessary permits and to comply with all laws, regulations and ordinances pertaining to the application of these activities.

**Certified by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_