United States Department of Agriculture

Conservation Practice Standard Overview

Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crops (331)

The Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crops Conservation Practice Standard calls for planting orchards, vineyards, or other perennial crops on or near the contour.

Practice Information

This practice is used when orchards, vineyards, or other perennial crops are established on sloping land. Planting on the contour conserves and protects soil, water, and related natural resources.

Conservation benefits may include but are not limited to:

- Reduce sheet and rill soil erosion
- Reduce transport of excessive sediment and other associated contaminants
- Improve water use efficiency with improved infiltration

The practice also benefits equipment operation and improves aesthetics.

Planting orchards and fruit areas on the contour generally requires the construction of

a bench or terrace to provide access to the growing trees or shrubs.

Common Associated Practices

Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crops (331) is commonly applied with practices such as Access Road (560), Diversion (362), Grassed Waterway (412), Underground Outlet (620), and Conservation Cover (327).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.