

PERMANENT INTRODUCED GRASSES AND LEGUMES PERMANENT NATIVE GRASSES AND LEGUMES CRP Grassland Practice Job Sheet CP87 and CP88

Ohio - Natural Resources Conservation Service

May 2016

Description

CRP grasslands is a voluntary program where participants limit future development and cropping uses of grassland while retaining the right to use common grazing practices and operations related to the production of forage and seed. Restrictions are placed on management and use of the grasslands during the primary nesting season of birds that are economically significant, in significant decline or conserved according to Federal or state law. Enrolled grasslands may be areas with a history of grazing, haying, or conservation use or may have been recently established to appropriate grass-legume cover. This job sheet describes the allowable and recommended management practices for haying, grazing or seed harvesting.

General Practice Requirements

Enrolled areas shall have been established to an acceptable introduced grass-legume or native grass-legume cover; the cover shall meet the practice purpose and meet the requirements of the vegetation cover score assigned when ranking the application.

The area will be managed in accordance with either Forage Harvest (511) or Prescribed Grazing (528) standard in the local Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG).

The required CRP practice cover shall be maintained and managed for the life of the contract. All provisions of the CRP-1 contract Appendix will be followed for the life of the contract. In addition, the cover maintained and managed will meet the requirements of the CRP practice as well the NRCS technical practice.

Disturbance or alteration of the cover is allowed only if it is included in the conservation plan and authorized by the FSA County Committee.

If Pollinator Habitat is also planned for the contract, a separate job sheet will be provided for establishment of that cover.



If additional supporting practices such as water sources, pipelines, fencing, prescribed burning or brush management were approved for this contract, separate job sheets, specifications or drawings will be provided for those practices.

If you agreed to implement a wildlife-focused plan as part of your contract, NRCS will provide additional information on methods to be used to provide habitat for the targeted wildlife species.

CRP Grassland Permitted Activities

CRP grassland participants retain the right to use common grazing practices and operations related to the production of forage and seed, subject to certain restrictions during the primary nesting season for birds. In Ohio the primary nesting season is March 1 through July 15.

Haying

- Contract acreage may be hayed during the primary nesting season but at least 25% of total contract acreage must be left un-hayed throughout the primary nesting season. If multiple cuttings are taken during the primary nesting season, the 25% set aside area shall remain the same and untouched.
- After the primary nesting season ends, up to 100% of the total contract acreage may be hayed.

- There are no limits to the number of cuttings that can be taken on areas where haying is allowed.
- Cutting heights and dates will be implemented so that there is a minimum of 4 inches for cool season grasses/legumes and 8 inches for warm season grasses as of September 1 to provide adequate winter cover for wildlife. No cuttings are authorized after August 31.

Grazing

- Grazing will be done according to an approved grazing management plan.
- If you intend to graze the acreage, you may choose either:
 - Leave at least 25% of the total contract acreage un-grazed during the primary nesting season or
 - Under a rotational grazing system, leave at least 10% of the total contract acreage un-grazed and maintain at least a 4 inch grass height on all acreage during the primary nesting season.
- This choice will be carried out through the life of the CRP contract and grazing plan.

Seed Harvesting

Seed may be harvested from the contract acreage using one of the following methods:

- If using mechanical seed harvesting methods, seed may be harvested only outside the primary nesting season or
- If using manual seed harvesting methods, seed may be harvested at any time.

Mowing

- If CRP grassland acreage is to be mowed for purposes other than haying, the mowing must be conducted outside the primary nesting season.
- When mowing, the minimum cutting height is for cool season grasses and legumes is 4 inches and 8 inches for warm season grasses.
- Mowing should not be done after August 20 to allow adequate time for regrowth before winter.

Wildlife Focus Plan

If the contract was approved based on the selection of implementing a Wildlife Focus Plan, additional requirements may be necessary to

meet the habitat needs of the selected wildlife species. These requirements may be listed on the specifications page of this job sheet and/or on additional job sheets provided to you. These requirements may be in addition to the generic requirements given in this job sheet and must be followed for the life of the contract

Maintenance

Maintain the cover to provide adequate erosion control, comply with noxious weed laws and control undesirable plants species, insects or rodents that negatively affect the CRP cover or adjacent lands.

Maintenance activities (including mowing) are only allowed between July 16 and February 28 (outside the primary nesting season) unless the FSA County Committee has approved maintenance activity during the nesting season prior to the activity taking place.

Spot treatment necessary to control noxious weeds or pests that will damage the CRP cover may be allowed during the primary nesting season (March 1 to July 15) only if: it is limited to the affected area of the field; the method used shall be the least damaging to nesting wildlife and habitat; and it is approved beforehand by the FSA County Committee.

Periodic mowing, mowing for cosmetic purposes and annual mowing for generic weed control are prohibited. In order to maintain a grass cover, mowing may be necessary to control unwanted woody plant invasion. Typically, mowing every 2 to 3 years will control woody vegetation. Mowing for this purpose may not be done annually.

If prescribed burning is to be used, it must be conducted in accordance with an approved burn plan and all applicable state or local regulations.

Mid-Contract Management

Mid-contract management activities are not authorized for these practices.

Specifications

Specifications for needed actions are on the following page.

**CRP GRASSLAND
PERMANENT INTRODUCED OR NATIVE GRASSES AND LEGUMES
SPECIFICATIONS SHEET**

For:	Farm #:
Field(s):	Tract #:
Planned By:	Date:

Haying

Will any of the contract acreage be used for hay production? Yes No
 If hayed, follow requirements listed under Permitted Activities.
 Additional specifications for haying:

Grazing

Will any of the contract acreage be used for grazing? Yes No
 If grazed, which option listed under Permitted Activities will be used?
 Not rotational grazing – Leave 25% of acreage un-grazed March 1 through July 15
 Rotational grazing – Leave 10% un-grazed and maintain 4" grass height March 1 through July 15
 Follow Grazing Management Plan
 Additional specifications for grazing:

Seed Harvesting

Will any of the contract acreage be used for seed harvesting? Yes No
 If seed is harvested, which option listed under Permitted Activities will be used?
 Mechanical harvest only after July 15
 Manual harvest at any time of the year
 Additional specifications for seed harvesting:

Other Management or Maintenance

Follow all requirements for mowing and other maintenance listed in this job sheet.
 Maintenance activities during the March 1 – July 15 period require prior approval of the FSA County Committee. Mowing may only be done between July 16 and August 20. Other maintenance activities must be conducted between July 16 and February 28 unless prior approval for work outside these dates has been given by FSA County Committee.

Wildlife Focus Plan

Is a Wildlife Focus Plan required for this contract? Yes No
 If yes, what is/are the targeted wildlife species?
 Additional specifications for wildlife focus plan: