**alliance practice worksheet**

VIRGINIA

CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION (328)

*The conditions and specifications below are adapted from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Producers who are installing these practices under the Alliance will use the conditions and implementation guides below but are exempt from NRCS verification and certification. Completing the Purposes and Practice Specifications on this document is sufficient to self-verify practice installation and completion.*

# Farm Info

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Producer Name |  | |
| County (Farm Location) |  | |
| FSA Farm Number |  | |
| FSA Field Number(s) |  | |
| FSA Tract Number(s) |  | |
| Practice Status:  *If a practice has not yet been implemented, select Planned*  *If a practice has been implemented, select Applied* | Planned | Applied |
| Planned Date of IMPLEMENTATION: | Date Practice was APPLIED: |

# PRACTICE: CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION (328)

**DEFINITION**: A planned sequence of crops grown on the same ground over a period of time.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION (328):** This practice applies where at least one annually- planted harvestable crop is included in the rotation.

# Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

* Crops shall be grown in a planned sequence as specified below.
* Crops shall be adapted to the local climate, the soil resource, and the producer’s goals.
* The crop rotation shall include at least three different crops within the contract year.
  + Non-harvested cover counts as a crop; eligible species of cover crops includes at least any two of the following: cereals, grasses, brassicas, and/or legumes.
* Plan suitable crop substitutions for cases when the planned crop cannot be planted.
* Selected cover crop species and management shall be consistent with approved guidance from the USDA-NRCS Virginia Plant Establishment Guide.
* The fallow period between crops shall not exceed 60 days.

# Additional Criteria to Reduce Sheet & Rill and/or Wind Erosion

The cropping sequence, along with other practices in the management system, shall produce sufficient biomass, crop residue, and/or intervals without soil disturbance to achieve the planned soil loss objective.

# Additional Criteria to Maintain or Increase Soil Health and Organic Matter Content

Soil health refers to the amount and function of soil organisms. Enhance soil health with rotations that implement soil health principles (keep soil covered, minimize soil disturbance, maximize living roots, and maximize soil biodiversity).

Soil organic matter refers to total non-mineral carbon content of the soil. The cropping sequence, along with other practices in the management system, shall produce sufficient biomass, crop residue, and/or intervals without soil disturbance to ensure that:

* For soil organic matter maintenance, (a) predicted sheet & rill erosion is at or below the soil loss tolerance value (T) and (b) the Soil Conditioning Index predicts an SCI score of +0.00 or greater.
* For soil organic matter increase, (a) predicted sheet & rill erosion is at or below the soil loss tolerance value (T) and (b) the Soil Conditioning Index predicts an SCI score of +0.25 or greater.

# Additional Criteria to Reduce Water Quality Degradation Due to Excessive Soil Nutrients

Select/manage crop sequence to achieve any of these:

* Reduce the supply of excess nutrients in the soil (e.g., grasses or brassicas scavenging excess soil nitrogen (N) in the fall; covers must be planted in a timely manner to produce sufficient biomass).
* Reduce the need to supply excess nutrients to the soil (e.g., legumes fixing atmospheric nitrogen for use by subsequent nitrogen-fertilized crops)
* Reduce transport for excess nutrients from the soil (e.g., crops reducing runoff, erosion, and leaching risk by transpiring moisture, increasing soil cover).

# Additional Criteria to Improve Soil Moisture Management

Select crops sequences to deplete soil moisture on sites with excessive moisture or to reduce runoff and evaporative losses on sites with inadequate moisture.

# Additional Criteria to Reduce Plant Pests

Design the crop sequence to suppress pests, which may include weeds, insects, and pathogens.

# Indicators for Evaluating Crop Rotations

See the Considerations Section of Standard for simple numerical indicators for assessing and comparing rotations, including rotation duration, summers in perennial, fallow frequency (crop continuity), species counts (crop diversity), percent cover after planting, and Soil Tillage Intensity Rating (STIR).

|  |
| --- |
| **Notes:** |

# PRODUCER SELF-CERTIFICATION

By signing below, I certify that I have reviewed all required documentation, and the information outlined above meet all criteria and requirements as defined in the Natural Resources Conservation Service **CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION (328)** standard and specifications for the identified acres or animal units.

Further, I agree that:

I have not received a payment for this conservation practice on these fields and acres from another USDA Conservation Program or another USDA Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities grant partner.

I will retain all practice documentation to support this certification for up to 12 months following practice adoption and will provide this documentation to the Alliance if selected for a spot check. *(Up to 10% of enrolled Alliance participants will be randomly selected for spot checks).*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Producer Name:** |  | |
| **Date:** |  |