

Landowner: _____ Tract: _____

CRP CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is responsible for administering the rules of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). All questions related to CRP contract requirements, payment, or modifications should be directed to the FSA office where your contract originated.

CRP policy requires some type of “disturbance” to certain CRP practices during the life of the contract. The goal of required management is to enhance CRP cover. This job sheet describes the Disking and Interseeding for Cool Season Grass Cover required management practice in more detail.

Grassland fields need to be managed so that grasses do not crowd out the forbs and legumes over time. If no disturbance and interseeding occur, the composition of grassland communities will change over several years through normal plant succession. These changes may lead to a decline in wildlife benefits.

The purpose of this required management practice is to enhance the wildlife habitat value of the enrolled acres by increasing the amount of bare soil and encouraging a diverse forb/legume community. Forbs and legumes are beneficial to birds, insects such as butterflies, and other wildlife. Disking and interseeding is an efficient and cost-effective disturbance tool that can be used where vegetation is too thick. Reduced plant residue and open ground are critical for young chick mobility in grassland areas.



The improvement in habitat is especially important for bobwhite quail, wild turkey, ring neck pheasants, and other grassland wildlife species. The structural diversity that results from disking also improves habitat for songbirds such as bobolinks and savannah sparrows.



PRIMARY NESTING SEASON

CRP rules do not allow disturbance of cover during the primary nesting season recorded in the CRP contract. This rule prevents injury to nesting and fledgling birds. The dates have varied over time, but the current primary nesting season for new CRP contracts is May 15 through August 1. CRP participants are also required to control invasive and weed plant species before they produce viable seed. Spot clipping or spot spraying may be done during the primary nesting season with prior approval from the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee.

DISKING AND INTERSEEDING

Disking enhances habitat quality because it inhibits growth of woody plants, promotes favored seed-producing plants, reduces plant residue, and increases insect abundance.

DISKING AND INTERSEEDING SPECIFICATIONS

- This practice **shall not** be planned and/or applied to any field that:
 - ▲ has a significant population of invasive or weed plant species,
 - ▲ is known to have previously had a significant weed problem, or
 - ▲ is located near a field with a weed/invasive plant problem that has the potential to invade the required management practice field.
- Fields must be disked enough to expose at least 50% of the soil. This may require several passes over a field at a depth of 3-5 inches. To minimize compaction issues, disk when soil is friable which means when squeezed tightly, the soil still falls apart.
- When the potential for excessive erosion is identified as a risk by a conservation planner:
 - ▲ Disk on the contour.
 - ▲ Only disk and interseed 50% of the field in a single year.
 - ▲ Implement additional erosion control practices identified by the conservation planner.
- For fields enrolled in CRP with cover established as a new practice, manage 100% of the field in year 6 if under 40 acres. For fields 40 acres and larger, manage 50% of the field in year 6 and 50% of the field in year 7. For contracts that are 15 years in length required management practices are required in the 11th year or 11/12 for fields 40 acres or more.
- For contracts enrolling existing cover, the disking and interseeding is required in year 1 or 1 and 2 if 40 acres are larger. These fields will be managed for disking and interseeding again in year 6 or (6 and 7 on fields of 40 acres or more).
- A designated filter strip area will be maintained in areas adjacent to surface water or wetlands. See NRCS Field Office Technical Guide Practice Standard 393, Filter Strip, for guidance.
- Disking of filter strips, riparian buffers, grassed waterways, contour buffers, or areas planted to trees and shrubs is not allowed.

- Only certified seed shall be planted. The planting rate shall be adjusted to reflect the actual amount of Pure Live Seed (PLS).
- Seed shall be properly stored and legume seed inoculated prior to planting.
- The no-till drill or other seeding equipment shall be adjusted to ensure that seed placement provides uniform soil/seed contact to encourage consistent germination.
- The seed shall be placed at a depth of ¼ inch or less.
- The timing for interseeding should be planned to appropriately match the soil moisture conditions of each site and the growth characteristics of the species to be planted. The specific planting date that provides the best chance for success will vary from south to north and from year to year with prevailing moisture and temperature conditions. Utilize the planting periods in Table 1 to develop the planting plan.



CONSIDERATIONS

A site assessment should be conducted to avoid:

- Disking where gully formation is a problem. Caution: disking in late fall on highly erodible sites will increase the potential for erosion to occur over winter months.
- Spot spray or clip areas where noxious weeds (Canada thistle) or other invasives (Reed Canary Grass) are present prior to disking. This will reduce the potential for spreading these species by disking.
- Consider delaying legume interseeding after disking (within specified planting deadline) to evaluate weed pressure. A herbicide should be applied where significant weed pressure is observed.

- Consider applicable program practice implementation deadlines when planning a late season or selecting a herbicide treatment (residual herbicide effect).
- Consider a late summer disking and interseeding in fields where some weed or invasive plants are identified as present in the cover.
- Landowners should walk the site prior to disking to locate animal holes, fallen tree limbs, and other hazards that are not easily seen in well established cover.

**Table 1
Timing of Interseeding**

Spring Interseeding	Disk and plant when soil is friable April 1 through May 14
Late Summer Interseeding	Disk and plant between August 2 and August 30
Fall Interseeding	Disk and plant between October 8 and freeze up

The timing for interseeding should be planned to appropriately match the soil moisture conditions of each site and the growth characteristics of species to be seeded.

To promote native forbs, a fall seeding between October 8 and November 15 is recommended.

**INTERSEEDING PLS-BASED SEED MIX
*SELECT ONLY ONE OF THESE MIXES:**

Mix A: Introduced mix – dry site.

Alfalfa: 6 lbs.
Alsike Clover: 1.5 lbs.

For use with practices CP1, CP23 (cool), CP23A (cool), CP28 (cool), and CP33 (strips only).

Mix B: Introduced mix – mesic or wet site.

Red Clover: 5 lbs.
Ladino Clover: 1.5 lbs.

For use with practices CP1, CP23 (cool), CP23A (cool), CP28 (cool), and CP33 (strips only).

Mix C: Introduced Grass Component.

Orchardgrass: 5 lbs.
Timothy: 4 lbs.

For use with practices CP1, CP23 (cool), CP23A (cool), CP28 (cool), and CP33 (strips only).

Mix D: Native mix – dry site.

Purple Prairie Clover: 2 oz.
Black-eyed Susan: 1 oz.
Ox-eye Sunflower: 2 oz.
Stiff Goldenrod: 2 oz.
Round Headed Bushclover: 4 oz.

For use with practices CP1, CP23 (cool), CP23A (cool), CP28 (cool), and CP33 (strips only).

Mix E: Native mix – mesic or wet site.

Canada Milk Vetch: 1 oz.
Ox-eye Sunflower: 2 oz.
Stiff Goldenrod: 2 oz.
Round Headed Bushclover: 4 oz.

For use with practices CP1, CP23 (cool), CP23A (cool), CP28 (cool), CP33 (strips only).

Guidelines for Disking and Interseeding on CRP:

1. Identify the need for disking and interseeding.
2. Determine what date the disking/planting will occur based on cover objectives.
3. Follow the guidance outlined in this job sheet.



Note: Use of mixes D and E will require additional management actions (burn/mow) beyond the seeding year to ensure successful establishment.

PLS Based Seed Mix Calculations

Species	Field: _____ Acres: _____	
	PLS Rate Per Acre	Seed Needed

Date Scheduled for Disking and Interseeding: _____ **Year:** _____

Disking/interseeding can be done when erosion control has been considered on steep fields. If a field is over 50% D slope, verify what needs to occur to keep this practice from causing erosion concerns.

Disk on contour

Leave narrow band of grass (<20 feet) undisturbed along field edges where erosion may occur.

Not more than 50% of the soil surface will be disturbed.

Specify other conservation considerations: _____

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