

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM
2010 Practice Implementation Sheet
Cover Crop (340) – Organic Initiative



EQIP Participant

EQIP Contract Number

Purpose: Growing crops, including grasses, legumes and forbs for seasonal cover. This practice may be used to reduce wind and water erosion, increase soil organic matter, promote biological nitrogen fixation, and for weed suppression in organic IPM systems.

- The practice will not be eligible in areas receiving less than 25 inches of annual rainfall unless irrigated.
- Where applicable, cover crops will be irrigated sufficiently to achieve the intended purposes.
- All species will be planted within the recommended planting dates, at the recommended planting rates and depths.
- Planted species will be adapted to the soil and climate as determined by the Field Office Technical Guide.
- The practice, when applied alone (not part of a crop rotation) must control soil erosion to the soil tolerance (T) level.
- All legume species will be inoculated with the proper inoculant at planting.
- Cover crops may be terminated by mowing, tillage, crimping, or approved organic herbicides in preparation for the next crop.
- Legume species may be selected and allowed to grow to maturity in order to provide enhanced pollinator habitat.
- Mixed seedings of legumes and grasses will be done at 2/3 the full seeding rate of **each** species. Mixed seedings should be contracted at the legume cover crop rate

NRCS will:

- Assist participants in preparing a plan for planting including species selection, planting rates, and dates.
- Utilize the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE2) and Wind Erosion Equation (WEQ) as appropriate, to insure that soil losses resulting from the cover crop or planned rotation are at tolerance levels are below.
- Measure and certify planted acres upon receiving confirmation that the practice has been completed.

Participant will:

- Ensure that the requirements of the National organic Program (NOP) will be followed for implementation of this practice.
- Plant adapted species at proper rates within designated planting dates.
- Notify NRCS when shredding (to prevent seeding), tillage, or other termination procedures are planned.
- Haying or grazing will be managed to maintain sufficient residues or growing crop on the land to keep soil erosion at or below soil loss tolerances.
- Provide the NRCS with all bills associated with the practice including seedbed preparation, seed costs/amounts, and seeding operation.
- Provide the NRCS with a copy of the Organic System Plan (if already certified). For non-certified organic acres, a producer “self certification” letter must be signed stating the producer’s intent to become a certified organic operation.

*****Annual implementation will be considered complete and payment made when the cover crop has fully established and all requested seeding documentation (*INCLUDING BILLS AND SEED TAGS*) has been certified by NRCS.**

I have read this Cover Crop fact sheet and my questions concerning the practice implementation have been answered. I understand that failure to follow the practice standard, this fact sheet, and the contract provisions could jeopardize any and all payments.

Participant Signature

Date