

Crop Residue Management

Definition/Purpose

Crop residue management means maintaining cover on sixty (60) percent of the soil surface at planting to protect water quality. Crop residue management also provides seasonal soil protection from wind and rain erosion, adds organic matter to the soil, conserves soil moisture, and improves infiltration, aeration and tilth. Benefits may include reduction in soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution from dissolved sediment-attached substances.

Policies

1. Must maintain 60% ground cover at planting. This may require the previous crop to be no-tilled or followed by a cover crop. Cover crops must be planted after harvest of low residue crops (i.e. peanuts, cotton, etc)
2. Fields that are under active contract for the cover crop incentive, nutrient scavenger crop incentive, 3-year conservation tillage incentive or long-term no-till incentive is not eligible for this incentive.
3. Crop residue must be managed at harvest for maximum land cover.
4. No burning of residue is allowed.
5. Two inspections of fields will be made; one after fields is planted and the second before the soil is disturbed before planting a subsequent crop.
6. Payment will be made after the 2nd inspection.
7. BMP soil, nitrogen, and phosphorus impacts are required on the contract. Include the planted acreage as well. Refer to the Minimum NCACSP Effects Requirements table later in this section for the correct methods of calculation.
8. Practice has a \$15,000 lifetime cap per cooperator. Each field is eligible for up to three annual contracts per cooperator. Annual contracts do not need to be consecutive years. Life of BMP is one (1) year.
9. When determining the acreage for which payments can be made for this practice, only the acreage actually planted shall be considered. The area occupied by farm roads, BMPs, ditches, structures, etc. shall not be included in the acreage managed.
10. On occasion it may be unavoidable for the cooperator to need to access the field when the traffic will result in ruts in the field (e.g., harvest operations). With documented approval from field staff, the cooperator can spot disk/level ruts to smooth out the surface. The field staff will work with the cooperator to stay in compliance with his/her conservation tillage contract. If field staff determines adequate cover can be established prior to next crop being planted, a cover crop should be planted immediately. The field staff can provide a recommendation on what might be best to plant as a quick cover. Cooperators must contact their district office for assistance.

Agriculture Cost Share Program

- a. Field staff needs to determine the level of need for isolated disking. If smoothing the ruts will allow for the cooperator to stay in compliance, no contract extension will be required.
- b. If extensive disking and leveling occurs, contract must be extended by one year or cooperator must refund entire amount of incentive payment.

Standards

NRCS Technical guide Standards #344 (Residue Management, Seasonal) and #340 (Cover Crop)

(Adopted March 2009; Revised September 2009; Policy #10 added March 2010)