United States Department of Agriculture

Conservation Practice Overview

October 2017

Crosswind Ridges (Code 588)

Crosswind ridges are formed by tillage, planting, or other operations; and aligned across the direction of erosive winds.

Practice Information

Best adapted to soils with sufficient amounts of clay to produce stable soil clods and ridges, crosswind ridges reduce wind velocity and turbulence near the soil surface.

Conservation benefits include—

- Reduced soil erosion from wind.
- Protection of growing crops from damage by wind-borne soil particles.
- Reduced airborne particulate matter (dust).

Crosswind ridges are established and maintained by normal tillage and planting equipment such as chisel plows, drills with hoe openers, and similar implements that form effective ridges.

The ridges must be maintained through the major wind erosion season or until growing crops provide enough cover to protect the soil from wind erosion.

Ridges formed with soils such as sands, loamy sands, and certain organic soils will deteriorate quickly and shorten the protection period and are therefore not well adapted to the establishment of crosswind ridges.

Specifications for establishment and maintenance of crosswind ridges vary by soil, climate, crop, and crop management operations.

Common Associated Practices

Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Crosswind Ridges (Code 588) is commonly applied with CPSs Conservation Crop Rotation (Code 328), Cover Crop (Code 340), and Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (Code 345).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.

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