



**Tennessee Job Sheet
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
CP15A – Establishment of Permanent
Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips),
Noneasement**

Purpose

The purpose of this practice is to establish strips of permanent vegetative cover generally following the contour on eligible cropland alternated with wider cultivated strips farmed on the contour that will reduce erosion and control runoff. The purpose of this practice is not to develop or establish wildlife habitat. Field border areas may be included in the contour buffer provided they are needed to drain water from the field as an integral part of the contour buffer system.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this practice the land must have a cropping history (4 out of 6 years from 1996 – 2001). This practice shall improve environmental benefits to less than the soil loss tolerance and prevent degradation of environmental benefits from recurring.

General Provisions

This practice is eligible in the Continuous CRP. Producers can enroll any time landowner and land eligibility requirements are met. Length of contract is 10 years.

Contour grass strips under CP15A are not eligible to be installed on terraces. Contour grass strips installed on terraces are available under another practice. Contour grass strips under this practice may still be used in conjunction with terraces as an overall conservation management system (contour grass strips installed between terraces) if needed.

Payments include annual rental payment based on a soil rental rate, an annual maintenance payment, a one time practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40% of the total eligible cost of practice installation, and 50% cost share for installation of the practice.

Specifications

WIDTH REQUIREMENTS

INTERIOR FIELD STRIPS

Interior grass strips will be designed to the minimum standard width to reduce erosion and control runoff, based on soil type, percent slope, slope length, and existing field practices. The minimum acceptable width of a contour buffer strip designed for soil erosion control and sown to grass or grass/legumes is 15 feet. The minimum width

established to legumes only is 30 feet. The maximum allowed width for an interior strip is 30 feet.

BOTTOM FIELD STRIPS

The lowest contour buffer strip in a field may have a minimum width of 30 feet when established to grass or grass/legumes, and 60 feet when seeded only to legumes. The lowest field strip shall not exceed a 60 foot width.

FIELD BORDERS WITH THIS PRACTICE

Field borders capable of receiving runoff are eligible for this practice and will have a design width of 15 feet. Field border areas are not eligible above the highest elevation interior buffer strip of the field.

ESTABLISHMENT REQUIREMENTS

Either introduced or native grasses and/or legumes may be established. A list of approved planting mixtures is available at the local USDA Service Center.

Temporary cover may be required to provide erosion control outside of planting dates.

Cost share will be based on a required current soil test (within 24 months). Native grass plantings do not require nitrogen fertilizer, or lime when soil pH is 5.5 or higher.

The no-till method of planting is recommended when applicable. If conventional tillage is used, a firm seedbed should be prepared by plowing or disking, rolling or cultipacking, broadcasting or drilling, and rolling or cultipacking again. Do not plant native grass seed deeper than ¼ inch deep and do not disk to cover broadcast seed. Broadcast seeding of native fluffy seeds does require the use of a carrier such as cracked corn, pelleted lime or granular phosphorus or potassium.

Follow University of Tennessee recommendations for application of herbicides and pesticides.

The established planting must be maintained by the producer for the duration of the contract. Normal maintenance usually includes rotational mowing outside the primary nesting season (April 15-July 1), and may include periodic liming and fertilizing, spot spraying of noxious or competing weeds, controlling herbicide drift when spraying crops, or other treatments required to maintain the established stand.

No mid-contract management treatments are required for this practice.