

Soil Quality Enhancement Activity –SQL04- Use of cover crop mixes



Enhancement Description

This enhancement is for the use of cover crop mixes that contain two (2) or more different species of cover crops.

Land Use Applicability

Cropland.

Benefits

The use of a cover crop mixture that contains two (2) or more plants is often more effective than a planting of single species cover crop. Cover crop mixtures adapt to

variation in soils, increase biomass production, provide broader spectrum of weed control, have better winter survival and ground cover and attract a range of beneficial insects. Nutrients can be trapped or produced depending on existing soil conditions and plants used. Mixes can be a grass/legume, multiple cultivars of a single species, or a mix containing plants with different growth patterns, e.g. fast and slow, tall and short.

Criteria

1. Cover crop mixes must contain a minimum of two (2) different plant species or cultivars of a single species with different maturity dates.
2. Cover crop species will be selected from state specific lists in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.
3. Crops planted following cover crop must be no-tilled.
4. Nutrient applications for crops following cover crop should consider nitrogen fixation from leguminous cover crops.

Documentation Requirements

1. Written documentation for each year of this enhancement describing the following items:
 - a. Cover crop species used and dated planted
 - b. Date and amount of fertilizer applied
 - c. Method to kill cover crop and date completed
 - d. Crop planted after cover crop and method used
1. A map showing fields where the enhancement is applied
2. Photographs of a representative number of fields showing cover crop mix

ALABAMA SUPPLEMENT TO ENHANCEMENT SQL04 USE OF COVER CROP MIXES

Planting a cover crop mixture can be more effective in improving soil quality compared to a single species cover crop. This enhancement is for the use of cover crop mixes that contain two or more different species or single species with different maturity dates. All crops planted following the cover crop mixes must be no-tilled and consider nitrogen fixation if leguminous cover crop are used. For additional information see the national enhancement and the cover crop list below. Refer to the NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Cover Crops, 340, for information on planting dates and rates.

Documentation Requirements:

1. Documentation for each year of the enhancement the following, cover crop species and planting dates, date and amount of fertilizer applied, method and date of cover crop termination, cash crop planted and method of planting.
2. A map showing fields where the enhancement is applied.
3. Representative photographs of a number of fields showing the cover crop mix.

COOL-SEASON		WARM-SEASON	
These Crops	May be Mixed With	These Crops	May be Mixed With
Cereal Grains	Hairy Vetch	Sorghums	Velvetbean
Clovers	Austrian Winter Pea Different Clovers	Sorghum-sudangrass	Cowpeas
Ryegrass	Cereal Grains Clovers		
Cereal Grains	Brassicas		

References:

Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 3rd Edition

<http://www.sare.org/publications/covercrops/covercrops.pdf>

Cover crops and rotations. D.W. Reeves

http://www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Place/64200500/csr/ResearchPubs/reeves/reeves_94e.pdf

NRCS, Conservation Practice Standard Cover Crops (340)

<http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/AL/340rev04.pdf>

ALABAMA SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR THIS ENHANCEMENT

SQL04 - Use of Cover Crop Mixes

Documentation Form

Producer Name:		Date:
County:		
Tract Number(s)		
Field Number(s):		
Cover Crop Mixture Planted:		
Planting Date:		
Fertilizer Applied:		
Rate:		
Date:		
Method of killing Cover Crop:		
Date		
Crop Planted after Cover Crop:		
Method of No-Till planting:		

Attach map showing fields and acreage where enhancement applied. Also, attach representative photographs of cover crop plantings.

The supplied documentation accurately reflects the implementation of this enhancement.

SIGNATURE: _____