

## PART 481 - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

### Subpart B - Certification for Payment of Vegetative Plantings

#### IN481.1

This policy applies to any vegetative planting for any Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) standard located in Section IV of the FOTG. Vegetative Plantings include grasses, legumes, forbs, and/or trees. Variances to the applicable planting dates in the standards will not be granted.

**NRCS Policy prohibits certifying practices established outside of the requirements specified in each applicable standard in Section IV of the FOTG, except as noted below.**

- a) For any vegetative plantings planted within the approved planting time period specified in the applicable standard in Section IV of the FOTG, the NRCS representative may certify the practice as complete for reporting, financial assistance payments, etc.
  - (1) The following information must be provided prior to certifying that the practice meets NRCS standards:
    - (a) Seed tags documenting % Pure Live Seed and total pounds seeded, or numbers of trees planted. Totals must meet minimum rates specified for the practice.
    - (b) Documentation to show that the planting occurred within the approved planting time period and all other requirements (site preparation, method, etc.) were met.
    - (c) Weigh tickets or other appropriate documentation to show that fertilizer was applied as specified, if applicable.
    - (d) Documentation for the quantities of erosion control blanket, mulch, or temporary seeding as specified for the practice, if applicable.
      - (i) The landowner or contractor must certify that the erosion control blanket was installed according to the manufacturer's specifications, as applicable. This is documented on IN-ENG-65 form and signed by the installer.
    - (e) All other required documentation has been completed, including "as built" plans, as applicable.
  - b) For any herbaceous plantings planted outside of the **spring** approved planting time periods:
    - (1) Practices planted after the approved **spring** time periods will not be certified by NRCS unless the planted species are actively growing and at sufficient numbers according to the *Agronomy Technical Note: Guidelines for Herbaceous Stand Evaluation* and future weather and site conditions are conducive to successful stand development.
      - (a) If the landowner elects to plant vegetation outside of the approved time period, the landowner must also assume the responsibility for re-construction and re-planting if the practice fails due to lack of vegetation establishment.
        - (i) Landowners must be provided with the specifications, including the correct time to re-plant vegetation, needed to correct the practice's inadequacy.
    - (2) The following information must be provided prior to the NRCS representative certifying the practice as complete for reporting, financial assistance payments, etc.:
      - (a) Items (a) (1) (a – e) listed above must be completed.
      - (b) The planted species must be actively growing and at sufficient numbers according to the *Agronomy Technical Note: Guidelines for Herbaceous Stand Evaluation* and future weather and site conditions must be conducive to successful stand development.
      - (c) The site must be stable and there must be no evidence of rills that would indicate the site is actively eroding.

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- c) For any herbaceous plantings planted outside of the **summer/fall** approved planting time period:
- (1) Practices planted after the **summer/fall** approved time period will not be certified by NRCS until the next growing season (early spring for Cool Season Grasses; early summer for Warm Season Grasses) in order to document the practice was established successfully, or to document corrections needed by the landowner.
    - (a) If the landowner elects to plant vegetation outside of the approved time period, the landowner must also assume the responsibility for re-construction and re-planting if the practice fails due to lack of vegetation establishment.
      - (i) Landowners must be provided with the specifications, including the correct time to re-plant vegetation, needed to correct the practice's inadequacy.
  - (2) During the next growing season, the following information must be provided prior to the NRCS representative certifying the practice as complete for reporting, financial assistance payments, etc.:
    - (a) Items (a) (1) (a – e) listed above must be completed.
    - (b) The planted species must be actively growing and at sufficient numbers according to the *Agronomy Technical Note: Guidelines for Herbaceous Stand Evaluation*.
    - (c) The site must be stable and there must be no evidence of rills that would indicate the site is actively eroding.
- d) For any tree plantings planted outside of the approved planting time period:
- (1) Trees planted after the approved time period will not be certified by NRCS until the next growing season (early spring for trees) in order to document the practice was established successfully, or to document corrections needed by the landowner.
    - (a) If the landowner elects to plant trees outside of the approved time period, the landowner must also assume the responsibility for re-construction and re-planting if the practice fails due to lack of tree establishment.
      - (i) Landowners must be provided with the specifications, including the correct time to re-plant vegetation, needed to correct the practice's inadequacy.
  - (2) During the next growing season, the following information must be provided prior to the NRCS representative certifying the practice as complete for reporting, financial assistance payments, etc.:
    - (a) Items (a) (1) (a – e) listed above must be completed.
    - (b) The tree species must be actively growing at sufficient numbers according to the applicable standard in the FOTG, Section IV.
    - (c) The site must be stable and there must be no evidence of rills that would indicate the site is actively eroding.