United States Department of Agriculture

Notice of Proposed Changes to the National Handbook of Conservation Practices for the Natural Resources Conservation Service

[Docket No.]
PROPOSED FULL TEXT FOR PRACTICE STANDARD CODE 633

Natural Resources Conservation Service

CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

WASTE RECYCLING

CODE 633

(no)

DEFINITION

The on-farm agricultural use of nonagricultural waste by-products, or the off-farm nonagricultural use of agricultural waste by-products.

PURPOSE

This practice is applied to:

- Improve soil health.
- Reduce contamination of surface and ground water resources.
- Reduce emissions of air pollutants.
- Improve wildlife habitat.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies where waste by-products can be reused to prevent a resource problem, to protect and improve the quality of natural resources, and provide a conservation benefit. ~~Where the intended waste recycling activity is~~This practice applies to preparation of agricultural by-product wastes for export from the farm to be used ~~on-farm~~as nonagricultural by- product wastes. Additionally, this practice ~~should be included in the nutrient management plan~~applies to the reception and preparation of off-farm waste by-products for usage on-farm to address or prevent resource concerns.

~~Waste recycling applies where there is a need to protect and improve the quality of natural resources and the environment by properly using nonagricultural waste by-product material that would otherwise be discarded, and will instead be imported into a farm operation. Proper marketing for the export of agricultural waste by-products off-farm, leads to the responsible utilization and reuse of by-products to protect natural resources.~~

This practice does not apply to the on-farm agricultural use of manure or waste generated by-products that are produced on that farm. For on-farm reuse of farm generated waste, use Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Nutrient Management (Code 590). This standard also does not apply to municipal generated biosolids.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Comply with all Federal, State, Territorial, Commonwealth, Tribal, and local laws, rules, and regulations.

The owner or operator must secure all required permits or approvals ~~related to the waste recycling operation,~~, and operate and maintain components and equipment in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Perform at least one sample analysis of the waste by-product annually, or more frequently if needed to account for operational changes, to determine the characteristics that are critical to its use. Base analysis on the planned use of the ~~waste on the analysis~~by-product. Perform further analysis as needed as the waste is processed or undergoes changes. Use a laboratory certified by a ~~State~~state-recognized program that considers laboratory performance and proficiency to assure accuracy of testing results.

When composting is required for processing nonagricultural waste by-products for on-farm use, use the ~~CPS~~ criteria for CPS Composting Facility (Code 317) and criteria for CPS Animal Mortality Facility (Code 316) if appropriate.

~~Use~~Where nonagricultural by-product wastes are used on-farm and is applied to soil for improvement of soil health or moisture control, for example, use the criteria from ~~Conservation Practice Standard (~~CPS~~)~~ Nutrient Management (Code 590) for any materials imported ~~to~~that provide plant nutrients. Sample tests must include analyses pertinent to monitoring or amending the annual nutrient budget, e.g., pH, electrical conductivity (EC) and sodicity where salts are a concern, soil organic matter, phosphorus, potassium, or other nutrients and test for nitrogen where applicable. Follow land-grant university guidelines regarding required analyses.

Where on-farm generated waste byproducts are to be exported for nonagricultural use, collection, storage and transfer of those waste products should follow the appropriate conservation practices for waste storage and transfer. Records of the quantity of waste by-product transferred need to be kept to properly account for the on-farm nutrient management budget.

When nonagricultural by-product wastes are used on-farm for animal feed, use the criteria in CPS Feed Management (Code 592).

Manage residuals generated by waste processing and reuse activities in a manner that prevents degradation of natural resources and the environment.

Where off-farm waste by-products are imported for usage on-farm to address wildlife habitat issues, be sure that the recycled by-product does not cause unintended consequences such as spread of microplastics that will impact wildlife. Additionally, usage of the recycled material in this manner needs to have been tested to ascertain that the habitat improvement is accepted by the targeted wildlife.

CONSIDERATIONS

Consider using nonagricultural waste by-product materials that would otherwise be discarded and will instead be imported into a farm operation. Proper marketing for the export of agricultural waste by- products off-farm leads to the responsible utilization and reuse of by-products to protect natural resources.

Consider alternatives to handling agricultural waste by-products to make a product that adds value for an accessible off-farm market. One example would be biodegradable seed starter pots.

~~Consider recycling used containers by returning them to the suppliers or manufacturers that have a recycling program.~~
Consider using off-farm organic by-product wastes for bedding, feed, mulch, energy production, or soil quality improvement. Criteria in CPSs Composting Facility (Code 317), ~~Mulch~~Mulching (Code 484), Anaerobic Digester (Code 366), or other practices may apply.

Consider pathogen management. If the recycled product is to be used on food crops or as food for humans or animals, make sure that pathogen levels have been reduced to acceptable levels (reference Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Safety Modernization Act at www.fda.gov/FSMA). If the recycled product has come from another farming operation, consider biosecurity measures and the possibility of pathogen transfer that could cause plant or animal diseases.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Prepare plans and specifications that describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve the intended purpose. Account for the use or disposal of all by-products produced or received by the agricultural operation. For additional requirements ~~for~~to plans and specifications refer to the appropriate associated conservation practice standard.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Keep records for a period of at least 5 years, and include, when appropriate—

- The dates and quantities of by-product material imported to, or exported from, the agricultural production system.
- Analysis of by-product material and test results for critical characteristics.
- A description of how the by-product materials are reused and the conservation benefit achieved.
- Include the dates of periodic inspections and maintenance of equipment and facilities required for the utilization of the by-product material. List the specific equipment to be inspected or maintained and include a general time frame for preventive maintenance.

REFERENCES

~~None.~~Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Safety Modernization Act. www.fda.gov/FSMA