CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY
E512140Z

Native grasses or legumes in forage base

Conservation Practice 512: Forage and Biomass Planting

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (perennial); Pasture; Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Livestock Production Limitation

PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 5 years

Enhancement Description

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of perennial, herbaceous species that can provide the structure and composition needed to enhance livestock and wildlife habitat, particularly when targeted forage supply and quality, cover, and shelter are not available in other pastures.

Criteria

- Select native, perennial, grass/forb/legume plant species and their cultivars based on climatic conditions, soil condition, landscape position and resistance to disease and insects, that meet the cover demand for movement by the wildlife species of concern.

- Recommendations for planting rates, methods, depths, and dates from land grant universities (LGU), plant materials program, extension agencies, or agency field trials will be followed.

- Seeding medium that does not restrict plant emergence will be provided, and planting will take place when soil moisture is adequate for germination and establishment.

- Federal, state, or local noxious species will not be planted.

- Plant nutrients and/or soil amendments for establishment purposes will be applied according to a current soil test. Legume seed will be pre-inoculated or inoculated with the proper viable strain of Rhizobia immediately before planting.
• Plants will be selected that help meet livestock forage demand during times that normal farm/ranch forage production is inadequate. When wildlife species are of concern, plant selection will be made and maintained based on the state’s approved NRCS habitat evaluation procedure.

• Forage species selected will meet the desired level of nutrition for the kind and class of the livestock to be fed. Forage species planted as mixtures will exhibit similar palatability to minimize selective grazing.

**Documentation Requirements**

• NRCS State approved Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) as completed and certified by an NRCS or partner wildlife biologist when applicable. Wildlife species of concern for habitat continuity will be specified on the WHEG, and total score after implementation will equal 0.75 or greater.

• Documentation of seed (Pure Live Seed) and any fertilizer or amendments purchased.

• Completed forage balance sheet for farm/ranch and grazing records.
KANSAS SUPPLEMENT TO
CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY
E512140Z

Additional Criteria for Kansas

- In addition to the criteria specified in National Enhancement E512140Z, the following apply in Kansas:

  o Due to management implications, do not seed native grass species into existing established cool-season grass plantings.

  o Establish new plantings into approved seedbeds. See Kansas Conservation Practice Standard 512, Forage and Biomass Planting, Construction Specifications, for details.

  o For approved species and seeding rates planted into new or existing forage bases, refer to Kansas Conservation Practice Standard 512, Forage and Biomass Planting, Construction Specifications, Table 1–Seeding Rates.

  o Planting dates (statewide) are as follows for native species plantings:
    - March 15 to May 15 (optimum)
    - December 1 to May 15 (maximum)
    - The responsible technician may extend the seeding dates two weeks where justified by climatic conditions.

  o Apply lime and fertilizer requirements as described in Kansas Conservation Practice Standard 512, Forage and Biomass Planting, Construction Specifications, Section 4.

  o Refer to Kansas Conservation Practice Standard 512, Forage and Biomass Planting, Construction Specifications, Section 10, for management practices during establishment of forage and biomass planting.

  o Field will be protected from grazing and disturbance during the following nesting and fawning dates:
• Upland bird nesting dates—April 15 to July 15
• Migratory bird nesting dates—April 1 to July 15
• Fawning dates—May 20 to June 10

**Additional Documentation Requirements for Kansas**

- In addition to the documentation requirements specified in National Enhancement E512140Z, the following apply in Kansas:
  - Use Form KS-ECS-4, Grass Seeding, for seeding design/certification.
  - Refer to Kansas Conservation Practice Standard 512, Forage and Biomass Planting, Construction Specifications, Section 11, for determining stand establishment of forage and biomass planting.
    - Procedures for determining stand adequacy are outlined in Kansas Agronomy Technical Note KS-27.
    - Plantings will be protected from grazing and disturbance until an adequate stand is established and meets the species specific, local standard for beginning grazing and disturbance. Established stands will be documented prior to any grazing and disturbance.