



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program CP1
Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes
(Version 1.1 April 2022)

WHAT IS ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT INTRODUCED GRASSES AND LEGUMES?

Introduced grass and legumes enhance environmental benefits by providing soil erosion protection and habitat for a variety of wildlife.

Introduced grasses and legumes were introduced to Michigan from other countries, and are typically found in pastures, hay fields, and lawns. Some of the more common introduced grasses that grow well in Michigan include timothy, orchard grass, redtop, and smooth brome. Introduced legumes include alfalfa and red, ladino, and alsike clovers.

Introduced grasses and legumes can provide nesting cover for wildlife. Legumes will also provide a good seed and insect source for young birds.

Introduced grasses and legumes will live a long time after establishment. However, legumes typically dwindle over time and therefore maintenance and management are necessary to ensure their continued presence.

CREP POLICY

Introduced grasses and legumes will be established on cropland immediately adjacent to an eligible waterbody, as determined by USDA, and not exceed a maximum average width of 1,000 feet from the edge of the eligible waterbody, except that the average maximum width may exceed 1,000 feet from the edge of the eligible waterbody only when such additional width is required to address the water quality concern of the waterbody in accordance with the NRCS.

For CREP, the cover must be devoted to a cover comprised of a mixed stand of a minimum of five species of at least three species are introduced grasses and legumes and at least two forbs, or legumes species beneficial to wildlife. Trees, shrubs, and other woody vegetation are not authorized as part of the cover for practice CP1.

Introduced grasses and legumes will be established according to the Conservation Cover (327) standard in the local Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG), and they must be planted within 12 months of contract effective date of CREP-1 to remain in compliance. If circumstances beyond the landowner's control prohibit the planting within the first 12 months, the local FSA County Committee may approve an extension to the next planting season.

INSTALLATION

It is very important to plant introduced grasses & legumes into a weed-free, firm seedbed. If the field is currently in cropland, weed control efforts should begin prior to planting. Use herbicide or tillage to eliminate competing vegetation. If necessary, for erosion control, seed a temporary cover. Eliminate the temporary cover at planting time with tillage or herbicides.

If the field is currently in sod, begin weed control efforts using broad-spectrum herbicides in the fall. Apply herbicides again after the spring green-up prior to planting.

Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) extension agent for specific herbicide recommendations. Apply all herbicides according to the label.

Plant grasses and legumes according to the attached plan/design sheet and apply lime and fertilizer according to needs determined by a soil test and MSU recommendations for the grasses. Fertilizer requirements shall be based on the intended crop of conservation cover. The amount of lime to be used shall be based on a buffer pH (lime requirement) test. The soil test for commercial fertilizer shall be from an approved laboratory accredited with The North American Proficiency Testing Program when a MSU laboratory is not used.

If available use a specialized no-till drill that is able to handle the grass seeds. Plant the seeds no deeper than 1/8 inch.

If a no-till grass drill is not available, the seed may be broadcast or aerial seeded. In either case, the seedbed must be worked up and firmed with a cultipacker or similar equipment. A carrier such as potash may also be needed in order to spread the seed evenly. After seeding, the site must be rolled or cultipacked to ensure proper seed to soil contact. Plant the seeds no deeper than 1/8 inch.

For grasses, mow, or apply herbicides as needed to control unwanted vegetation until the practice is established. Mow when competing weeds are taller than the planted vegetation, and at a height above the planted vegetation. Introduced grasses will not be mowed lower than 4" - 6" to ensure plant health.

For additional information on establishment and maintenance, see NRCS – Michigan Conservation Sheets (available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/> in Section IV).

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled, including such maintenance as necessary to avoid detrimental effects to the surrounding land. Some of the most common pests that need controlled on CREP acreage include autumn olive, multi-flora rose, spotted knapweed, quackgrass, canada thistle, etc.

After practice establishment, maintain the planting according to your CREP conservation plan. Maintenance activities are allowed only on a spot basis and only if necessary, to maintain stand health, maintain stand diversity, or control pests that will damage the CREP cover or adjacent lands. Mowing is only authorized between Aug 1st and Aug 20th to protect ground-nesting wildlife and to allow re-growth for winter cover. Other maintenance activities (herbicides, burning, etc.) are only allowed between August 1 – May 1st (i.e. - outside of the Primary Nesting and Brood-Rearing season). If maintenance activities are needed at times other than these, the FSA County Committee must approve the maintenance activity prior to the activity occurring.

Mowing for generic weed control or for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

MANAGEMENT

CREP contracts must have management activities scheduled that are site specific and will ensure plant diversity, wildlife habitat, and protection of soil and water resources. Management activities that will benefit introduced grass and legume plantings include disking, grass-specific herbicide applications, and inter-seeding legumes. All management activities must be performed according to NRCS Standards and Specifications and CREP policy.

HAYING AND GRAZING

The seeded area must not be harvested or grazed by domestic livestock for the life of contract. However, CREP contracts may be approved for limited haying or grazing as a site-specific management activity or if authorized as an emergency by the Secretary of Agriculture. Any haying and grazing activities must be included in the conservation plan and approved by the FSA County Committee prior to harvesting the forage. Haying and grazing must be performed according to NRCS Standards and Specifications and CREP policy.

Establishment of Introduced Grass and Legumes Specification Sheet CP1

Landowner:	County:	Date:
Farm:	Tract:	Field(s):
		Acres: 0.00
COOL SEASON GRASS CREP MIX: Acres		
Species and Seeding Rate		
Species	Rate PLS	total (rate x acres)
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
Site Prep in Year:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Tillage		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary cover		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Lime and fertilizer		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		Date:
Planting Method in Year:		
Planting method:		Date:
Maintenance:		
Mowing: Before practice establishment = mow when weeds are taller than the planted grasses.		
Mowing: After practice establishment = minimum height 4-6" for introduced grass. *		
NOTE: After practice establishment, mowing will be conducted between August 1 & 20, and weeds will be treated on a "spot" basis only, with prior approval granted by the FSA County Committee		
Management:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed burn		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Disking		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Strip spraying (grass specific herbicide)		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Inter-seeding legumes		Date:
NOTE: After practice establishment, other management activities will be conducted between August 1 & May 1, and weeds will be treated on a "spot" basis only, with prior approval granted by the FSA County Committee.		

Additional Information:

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