FINALIZED 4/10/2025

Cover Crop Addendum to Montgomery County ACAP Application and Policy

How many acres of cover crops are you applying for?

Are you receiving any other funding for planting cover crops? Yes _____ No _____

If so please explain and list number of acres: _____

ACAP can only fund cover crops on acres where no other funding is being received for planting cover crops

Have you used cover crops in the past? Yes_____ No_____ If yes, # of years _____

What is the planned planting method? _____

applicant must plant cover crops by methods approved by the conservation district

A plan map must be included with application with field names, acres, current crop and planned cover crop to be planted. Please reach out if you need assistance accessing aerial maps.

**Please keep in mind that all ACAP requirements apply, including for contracts applying exclusively for cover crops. This includes treatment of any animal heavy use areas under the applicant's control and having all necessary agricultural plans in place by the end of the project. These practices are also eligible for funding as necessary. **

- Planting rate and seeding dates must follow the attached NRCS Cover Crop Practice Guide Appendix. Winter small grain cover crops must be planted by October 31st. Cover crop mixes including legumes and/or brassicas must be planted by September 30th.
- Payment can be made upon verification of planting at proper rate and time. Cover Crops must be planted by outlined dates to guarantee payment, planting at a later date is subject to emergence verification before payment can be made.
- Cover crops funded through ACAP cannot be harvested for grain/seed. Cover crops may be grazed with adequate cover remaining on field.
- Cover crop payment rate:
    - $64 per acre for single species
    - $79 per acre for mixed species (which must include 2 or more different functional groups)
- Maximum of 200 acres per applicant per year eligible for ACAP funding
- Cover crop contracts can be up to two-year contract with annual payment on acres planted
- If manure or nutrients are applied to the cover crop it must be consistent with a current Nutrient Management Plan or Manure Management Plan.

Cover Crops must be seeded according to the seeding rate specifications from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) included below:

Addendum to Pennsylvania Cover Crop Practice Guide Appendix (2015)

March 2024

Included in this guidance document:

1. **Table 1A Pennsylvania base cover crop seeding rate specifications for Cover Crop standard (340),**
2. **Table 2A: Justifications for increasing and decreasing base seeding rate, and**
3. **Getting Started Developing Mixtures - simplified guidance for developing cover crop mixtures.**

The seeding rates listed in Table 1A provides the base seeding rates for monoculture cover crops sown with a grain drill within the recommended planting window.

Table 1A: Pennsylvania base cover crop seeding rate specifications for Cover Crop standard (340)

Functional Group	Plant Species	Base Seeding Rate	
		(lb.ac.)	(bu.ac.)
COOL SEASON GRASS			
CSG	**Winter rye**	**84**	1.5
CSG	**Winter barley**	**72**	1.5
CSG	**Winter wheat**	**90**	1.5
CSG	**Winter triticale**	**75**	1.5
CSG	**Spring oats**	**80**	2.5
CSG	**Annual ryegrass**	**18**	0.75
WARM SEASON GRASS & FORBS			
WSG	**Sorghum x Sudangrass**	**20**	
WSG	**Pearl millet**	**15**	
WSG	**Japanese millet**	**20**	
WSG	**Teff**	**8**	
WSB	**Buckwheat**	**50**	
WSB	**Sunflower**	**5**	
LEGUMES			
WSB	**Cowpea**	**30**	
WSB	**Sunn Hemp**	**10**	
CSB	**Berseem clover**	**15**	
CSB	**Red clover**	**10**	
CSB	**Crimson clover**	**15**	
WSB	**Yellow sweet clover**	**4**	
CSB	**Field & winter pea**	**50**	
CSB	**Hairy vetch**	**20**	
BRASSICAS			
CSB	**Forage radish**	**5**	
CSB	**Rapeseed/canola**	**6**	
CSB	**Mustards**	**8**	
CSB	**Turnip**	**5**	

Natural Resources Conservation Service
359 East Park Drive, Suite 2
Harrisburg, PA 17111
Voice: 717-237-2100 | Fax: 855-813-2861

Table 2A: Justifications for increasing and decreasing base seeding rate	
Purpose / reason	**Multiply base rate by**
Erosion	1.0
Weed Control	1.25
Grazing/forage utilization	1.25-1.5
Broadcast or aerial seeding	1.25-1.5
Late planting	1.25-1.5
Frequent Manure history	0.75
Early planting (Sept)	0.75
Planting green	0.5-0.75

Getting Started Developing Mixtures

1. To determine the appropriate seeding rates for each species in a mixture, start with the method described below, observe the results, compare to planned/desired outcome, then adjust as necessary.
2. Be aware that results will vary across fields, years, and climate zones.
3. As a starting point, divide the Base seeding rate of each species by the number of species in the mix. Then adjust based on the competitiveness.
4. Competitiveness - forage radish, canola, oats, and sorghum-Sudangrass are y competitive in a mix. Seeding rates of these species must be reduced more to prevent them from dominating the mixture. Successful seeding rates for these species in 2-3 species mixtures are: 1-2 lbs./ac. forage radish, 3-4 lbs./ac. for canola, 15-20 lbs./ac for sorghum-Sudangrass, and 20-40 lbs./ac. oats.
5. Legume components of a mixture, which tend to be weak competitors, are more safely kept at the base seeding rates to ensure establishment in the stand.

Natural Resources Conservation Service
359 East Park Drive, Suite 2
Harrisburg, PA 17111
Voice: 717-237-2100 | Fax: 855-813-2861