

COVER CROP PROGRAM FY 2012 GUIDELINES

Kent Conservation District

The purpose of this practice is to reduce the pollution of ground and/or surface water.

Cost-Share Rates and Planting Dates

Crop	Planting Rates	Planted By Sept. 1	Reported By Sept. 6	Planted By Sept. 30	Reported By Oct. 4
Spring Oats	100 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Rape	8 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Forage/Oilseed Radish	15 lbs. / acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Forage Turnip	4 lbs. / acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre

Crop	Planting Rates	Planted By Oct. 1	Reported By Oct. 4	Planted By Oct. 31	Reported By Nov. 2
Clover and Annual Rye Grass	20 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Vetch	25 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Rye and Triticale	100 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Wheat / Speltz	120 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Barley	140 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre
Winter Oats	100 lbs. /acre	\$40 per acre	\$40 per acre	\$30 per acre	\$30 per acre

CONDITIONS

- Application of commercial fertilizers or animal manures (N and P) are not allowed on a field that is intended to receive or is receiving cover crop incentive payments. In the case of a hardship, manure may be allowed to be applied to enrolled land in the fall only after receiving approval from the Kent Conservation District (KCD) Board of Supervisors or their designee. If the cover crop has not already been planted, it must be planted within 7 days of manure application. Examples of hardships might include heavy rains that fill to capacity or overflow a liquid manure storage structure or diseased poultry litter that must be removed from the house immediately. The Board of Supervisors has the right to approve or disapprove such requests.
- You will receive two payments: one for planting and one for destruction. Payment will be split with 50% being paid after November 2 and no later than December 31 after the written planting certification provision is met. The second payment being paid after June 5, 2012 and no later than July 15 occurs once the participant certifies **in writing** that the crop has been disposed of in an approved manner between March 15, 2012 and June 1, 2012.
- Farmers will self-certify in writing that program provisions have been met prior to receiving payment. **Each program participant must visit the District office to review the maps and certify the fields planted by the dates listed in the above chart. Failure to do this will result in no cost-share payment and withdrawal from the program.** Spot checks will be conducted.
- Program participants must visit the KCD office to review the maps and certify in writing, by completing the destruction form, that the cover crops are destroyed between March 15 - June 1, 2012 in accordance with step #2 before receiving the final payment. Failure to certify by June 5 will result in nonpayment, and may result in a partial or full refund of the first payment.**
- In the spring, if the participant decides to harvest the cover crop, then they will notify the District office in writing with the tract / field number and acres to be harvested by June 5, 2012. **The participant harvesting the crop may apply manure / fertilizer on or after March 1, 2012.** A second payment will not be made on harvested acres; however, the participant will not be required to repay the first payment received in December.
- Options for end-of-winter management include killing by a "burn-down" herbicide, by plowing it under, or green chop (for on-farm use only), before planting to the new crop.
- Aerial seeding must be completed by the listed dates and at the required rates.

- Planting of cover crop into hay ground and / or pasture is not eligible.**
- Grazing on KCD cost-shared cover crops is allowed with the following conditions:
 - Farmer must notify KCD **in writing** two weeks prior to grazing livestock. Please identify the fields to be grazed and the number and type of animals.
 - Cover crop must be well established. Under optimal conditions, grazing can commence 6 to 8 weeks after planting and after two week written notification.
 - The KCD reserves the right to deny a grazing request based on poor crop establishment, too many animals per acre, or other conditions that may apply.

RANKING CRITERIA (If demand exceeds funds available)

Where water quality is the goal, the University of Delaware recommends that the use of winter cover crops be targeted to the following situations:

- Watersheds in close proximity to sensitive surface waters and/or those most susceptible to groundwater contamination by nitrogen and phosphorous.
- Soils most likely to experience erosion that is in close proximity to surface waters sensitive to eutrophication by nitrogen and phosphorus.
- Artificially drained soils where shallow groundwater discharges rapidly into surface waters.
- Cropping systems that are most likely to have significant amounts of residual nitrate-N in the upper portions of the soil profile in the early fall ("upper portion" is defined as <1 foot for loamy sand and sandy loam soils and <2 feet for silt loam soils). In general, winter cover crops should be targeted to previous cash crops that had below normal yields, in the following priority order:
 - Dryland corn that received animal wastes and commercial fertilizer N.
 - Dryland corn that received only commercial fertilizer.
 - All other corn that received fertilizer or animal wastes.
 - Any other crop (e.g. commercial vegetables) that received fertilizer or animal wastes N.
 - Soybeans that received animal wastes, alone or in rotation with small grain.
 - Soybeans that received no supplemental N.
 - Grain sorghum.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Cover Crop Assistance will be \$6,000 per applicant, with \$3,000 paid at planting and \$3,000 paid at destruction. In the event enrollment in the program exceeds available funding, the Kent Conservation District reserves the right to reduce the maximum payment amount per participant.

For more information, please call the District at 741-2600, ext. 3.