

CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY



E328D (WITH MONTANA SUPPLEMENT)

Leave standing grain crops unharvested to benefit wildlife

Conservation Practice 328: Conservation Crop Rotation

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual & Mixed)

RESOURCE CONCERN: ANIMALS

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 Year

Enhancement Description

Implement a crop rotation which allows a portion of grain crops to be left in fields unharvested to provide food and cover for wildlife during winter months.

Criteria

- Crops must be grown in a planned sequence as outlined in the plan. The crop rotation shall include a minimum of three different crops. For this purpose, a cover crop is considered a different crop.
- Where applicable, plan suitable crop substitutions when the planned crop cannot be planted due to weather, soil conditions, or other local situations.
- Select the crops and crop management activities that provide food, cover, and shelter for the targeted wildlife species using an approved habitat evaluation procedure.
- Leave a minimum ½ acre of unharvested, standing grain crops for each 40 acres of cropland. Unharvested plots shall be located in a single location on the 40 acre unit and additional plots shall be located on different 40 acres. This enhancement is to be planned, contracted, and implemented on an entire field, not just the unharvested acres.

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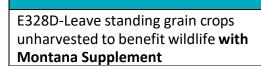


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 Locate the unharvested plots adjacent to permanent cover such as brushy fence rows, field borders, forest land, or wetlands (this does not include newly established vegetation).



- Leave unharvested crops standing over winter until it is time to prepare the soil for planting the next crop.
- MT: Grain crops include crops with a mature seed head, such as small grains, corn, soybeans, sorghum, millet, peas, lentils, canola, safflower, sunflower, and more. A cover crop can meet the criteria if a minimum 30% of the seed mix contains one or more grain crops and a mature seed head exists on these crops prior to winter. Contact area or state agronomist for further guidance.



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Participant will:

Prior to implementation, provide NRCS with the planned crop rotation.

Field	Acres	Planned Crops (in sequence)	Length of Crop Rotation (years)

- Prior to implementation, develop a map showing planned location(s), crop type(s), and acreage of crops to be left unharvested.
- During implementation, notify NRCS of any planned changes in crops, crop rotation, or unharvested areas to verify the planned system meets the enhancement criteria.
- During implementation, take photos of all unharvested plots. Photos must indicate field location and date.
- After implementation, if changes to the rotation were made, complete the tables above to document the applied Conservation Crop Rotation for the contract period and provide to NRCS.
- After implementation, make a map showing implemented location(s), crop type(s), and acreage of crops that were left unharvested each year available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.
- After implementation, make photos of the unharvested plots available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.

NRCS will:

- As needed, provide technical assistance in selecting crop rotations or substitute crops that would meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- As needed, provide technical assistance in selecting crops for food, cover, and shelter according to the approved habitat evaluation procedure.
- As needed, provide additional assistance to the participant as requested.

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 During implementation, evaluate planned crop changes, crop rotation, or unharvested areas to verify the planned system meets the enhancement criteria.



- After implementation, review the map(s) showing implemented location(s), crop type(s), and acreage of crops that were left unharvested each year, to verify implementation of the enhancement.
- After implementation, review photos of unharvested plots to verify implementation of the enhancement.
- MT: Use Biology Tech Note MT-19 <u>Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guides</u> <u>for Montana</u> for species of concern.

NRCS Documentation Review:

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

Participant Name	Contract Number	
Total Amount Applied	Fiscal Year Completed	
NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature	Date	

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