

Best Management Farming Practices for Water Quality Protection

Conservation Cover (327) Fact Sheet

BMP: Bare soil is covered with vegetation. Ditches and banks are protected from concentrated flow, gullies and ditches are stabilized, and erosion is reduced on cropped and non-cropped areas. Crop and air quality are protected from dust.

NRCS Practice Standard: Conservation Cover (327)

Planting, establishing and maintaining vegetation on land needing permanent vegetative cover and protection.



Conservation Cover (NRCS Conservation Practice Code 327)

Definition: Establishing and maintaining permanent vegetative cover.

Purposes:

- Reduce soil erosion and sedimentation
- Improve water quality
- Enhance wildlife habitat
- Improve soil quality
- Manage plant pests
- Provide beneficial insect habitat

For more information contact your local NRCS office or visit our website at <http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/treemenuFS.aspx>

CONSIDER THIS:

This practice involves establishing and maintaining a protective cover of perennial vegetation.

In perennial crop systems such as vineyards, vegetation established needs to provide full year- round coverage in vineyard middles.

Permanent plant mixes may consist of grasses, legumes and/or other forbs adapted to soils and micro-climates of Napa County.

Select species for planting that are suited to current site conditions and intended uses.

Avoid invasive plant species.

Prepare a seedbed sufficient to suppress weeds and provide for germination and growth of selected species.

Establish vegetation by October 15.

When applying straw mulch, apply certified weed free mulch at 1500 lbs/acre at planting, distribute uniformly over seeded area within 48 hours after seeding. Anchor straw using hand tools, rollers, crimpers, disks or similar equipment.

Use hydro-mulch planting on steep, inaccessible sites not suitable for straw mulch planting and on other sites when rain is expected 60 days following planting.

Do not use fertilizer when using this practice for water quality purposes.