

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice CRP-801

For: State and County Offices

CRP Practices Available for Organic Farming

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

Recently, USDA announced its intent to assist organic farmers with the cost of establishing up to 20,000 acres of new conservation buffers and other practices through CRP on and near farms that produce organic crops. FSA continues to evaluate and examine new ways to identify, approach, and engage potential program participants. Highlighting and marketing continuous CRP to organic producers is one opportunity.

Financial assistance available from CRP can help tailor existing conservation practices to the needs of organic farmers, and farmers transitioning to organic agriculture, helping to improve soil and water quality while also providing more wildlife habitat. CRP is one component of the wide variety of services available to all segments of agriculture at local FSA offices.

By creating conservation buffers, CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. Organic producers interested in establishing buffers of shrubs and trees, or supporting pollinating species, can offer eligible land for enrollment in this initiative at any time.

B Purpose

This notice reminds State and County Offices:

- of existing CRP provisions and available practices compatible with certified organic production operations and those transitioning to organic production
- as with any FSA program, normal producer and land eligibility rules apply.

Disposal Date	Distribution
December 1, 2016	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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2 Organic Buffer Availability

A Available Practices

Of the available CRP practices, a few of the most likely to be considered beneficial by organic producers and their operations may include:

- CP5A, Field Windbreaks
- CP16A, Shelterbelts
- CP21, Filter Strips
- CP33, Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds
- CP42, Pollinator Habitat.

B CRP Policy

There is no change to CRP policy related to this initiative; normal producer and land eligibility rules still apply.

2-CRP, Amendment 23 clarified the availability of CRP practices to organic operations in the respective practice policy statements.

C Automation

No new automation processes are necessary for this initiative, as the focus is to highlight the CRP Continuous Sign-up practices available to organic producers.

D Tracking Organic Producer Participation

In the future, an enhancement to CRP software will provide users the opportunity to designate these offers as being associated with organic farming.

Until this enhancement is released, County Offices must manually track CRP offers filed by organic producers in the event a data request is made.

3 Action

A State Office Action

State Offices shall:

- follow the provisions of this notice
- ensure that County Offices follow the provisions of this notice
- provide a copy of this notice to NRCS.

B County Office Action

County Offices shall:

- follow the provisions of this notice
- include the provisions of this notice in County Office outreach efforts