

For: State and County Offices

**Cropland Information**

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



**1 Overview**

**A**

**Background**

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 provides that the sum of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage, wetlands reserve, bases, and any other acreage enrolled in a conservation program that prohibits the production of agricultural commodities, cannot exceed actual cropland. An exception is made for double-cropping.

Current farm maintenance software allows for the entry of only CRP and Water Bank Program (WBP) acres. Changes are being made to farm maintenance software to allow for the entry of Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), State conservation, and other conservation acres. These new fields will be used in the calculation for determining the cropland amount that 2002 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) bases cannot exceed.

**B**

**Purpose**

This notice provides the following:

- cropland definition
- information on the new fields being added to farm maintenance
- County Office action
- producer responsibility.

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| <b>Disposal Date</b> | <b>Distribution</b>                                  |
| December 1, 2002     | State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices |

## Notice DCP-15

### 2 Cropland

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#### A

#### Definition of Cropland

Cropland is land that COC determines meets any of the following conditions:

- currently being tilled to produce a crop for harvest
- **not** currently tilled, but has been tilled in a prior year and is suitable to be tilled for crop production
- currently devoted to 1- to 2-row shelterbelt planting, orchard, vineyard, or other related crops
- in terraces that, according to FSA records, were cropped in the past even though they are no longer capable of being cropped
- in sod waterways or filter strips planted to perennial cover
- under CRP-1, including alternative perennials, until CRP-1 expires or is terminated
- new land broken out if both of the following conditions are met:
  - land is planted to a crop to be carried through to harvest
  - tillage and cultural practices in planting and harvesting the crop must be consistent with normal practices in the area.

**Note:** Violations of highly erodible land conservation or wetland conservation provisions do **not** affect cropland classification.

Land classified as cropland shall be removed from this classification upon a determination by COC that the land is:

- no longer used for an agricultural use
- no longer suitable for producing a crop

**Note:** Land that has been flooded for 2 full FY's shall be removed from cropland classification immediately.

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## Notice DCP-15

### 2 Cropland (Continued)

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#### A

#### Definition of Cropland (Continued)

- subject to a restrictive or permanent easement that prohibits the planting of an annual crop

**Note:** This does **not** include land under CRP-1 or WRP.

- converted to ponds, tanks, or trees.

**Note:** This does **not** include trees planted under CRP-1 or currently devoted to 1- to 2-row shelterbelt planting, orchard, or vineyard.

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#### B

#### Example 1

Farm 100 has 50 acres of cropland. All 50 acres have been cropped in the past; however, since FY 2000, 20 acres have been under water because of flooding. The 20 acres under water have not been suitable to be tilled for crop production since FY 2000. This land will no longer be considered cropland at the start of FY 2003 and must be removed from cropland status at that time.

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#### C

#### Example 2

Farm 100 has 50 acres of cropland. In the particular area, irrigation is necessary to produce crops. All 50 acres have been cropped in the past; however, 20 acres are no longer cropped because irrigation is no longer on the land. If the land can no longer sustain crop production, it is not considered cropland. The land must be removed from cropland status immediately. However, in some areas of the country, this land can still sustain crop production; therefore, it is still considered cropland in those areas and no action is necessary.

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#### D

#### Example 3

Farm 100 has 50 acres of cropland. All 50 acres are planted to trees. Unless the land was planted to trees under CRP-1, the land is no longer considered cropland. This land must be removed from cropland status immediately.

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## Notice DCP-15

### 3 Changes to 2002 Farm Maintenance

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#### A

#### 2002 Farm Maintenance

For 2002, farm maintenance software will allow County Offices to view and/or update the following 2 different programs:

- production flexibility contract (PFC)
- DCP.

When accessing 2002 farm maintenance software, the County Office will be required to select which program to access for viewing and/or updating. County Offices **must** ensure that:

- PFC information is only updated through the 2002 PFC menu option
  - DCP information is only updated through the 2002 DCP menu option.
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#### B

#### Ag Use

For 2002 DCP, ag use and effective ag use will **not** be displayed.

When 2003 farm records rollover occurs, the ag use field will be displayed and repopulated to match the cropland field. The effective ag use field will be recalculated by subtracting CRP, WBP, WRP, State conservation, and other conservation acres from ag use.

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### 4 New Fields

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#### A

#### Effective Cropland

The effective cropland is calculated by subtracting CRP, WBP, WRP, State conservation, and other conservation acres from cropland.

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#### B

#### WRP Acres

WRP acres are acres enrolled in an active wetland reserve program.

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#### C

#### State Conservation Acres

State conservation acres are acres on the farm enrolled in a conservation program for which payments are made in exchange for not producing an agricultural commodity on the acreage.

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## Notice DCP-15

### 4 New Fields (Continued)

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#### D

##### Other Conservation Acres

Other conservation acres are acres on the farm enrolled in a conservation program for which payments are made in exchange for not producing an agricultural commodity on the acreage. Other conservation acres include, but are not limited to, the following:

- county conservation programs
- municipality conservation programs
- corporation conservation programs.

**Example:** A corporation conservation program may prohibit the growth of certain crops under power lines.

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### 5 Responsibility

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#### A

##### County Office Action

Software is **not** yet available to load these acreage amounts. In the meantime, County Offices shall begin to research WRP, State conservation, and other conservation acres to enable quick action when the software becomes available. County Offices **must** load all WRP, State conservation, and other conservation acres into 2002 DCP farm maintenance as soon as the software is made available. Not loading the acreage timely could result in additional workload for County Offices.

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#### B

##### Producer Responsibility

The System/36 will automatically calculate the effective cropland and place it into a new effective cropland field in 2002 DCP farm maintenance. The system will validate that the base acres do **not** exceed the effective cropland. If the base acres **do** exceed the effective cropland amount, the producer will be responsible for letting the County Office know which base or bases to reduce so that the total of all bases is equal to or less than the effective cropland amount. The base reductions must be made before making base selections. If the base acres **do not** exceed the effective cropland amount, no action will be necessary by the producer.

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