



Food Plots on CREP Easements

General Food Plot Guidelines:

- Always follow Illinois State Laws governing planting and manipulation of food plots (baiting).
- Always follow rules provided by FSA during the term of the 15-year Federal Contract.
- Use the NRCS standards and specifications (Conservation Practice 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management) as reference for managing for the desired wildlife species to determine:
 - suitable plant species for food plots,
 - establishment and management of food plots,
 - food plot location, and
 - total acres to be devoted to food plots.
- Apply this practice to CREP/CRP land that is suitably located and adapted to the establishment of annual or perennial wildlife food plots.
- Food plots shall:
 - enhance wildlife habitat,
 - be managed such that erosion levels are at or below the soil loss tolerance,
 - prevent degradation of environmental benefits from recurring
 - be included in the approved conservation plan, and
 - be carried out as specified in the approved conservation plan.

Guidelines for Food Plots on Expired Federal Contract Acres and CREP Additional Acres:

- Food plots may be moved from year-to-year and, if relocated, the previous food plot area **must** be seeded to an approved permanent vegetative cover at the landowner's expense. The producer must inform SWCD/IDNR of new location.
- Food plots may not be harvested or manipulated (except for mowing or discing of sunflowers for dove management).
- Total acreage in food plots cannot exceed 10% of the total easement acres.
- Food plots must be at least 30' wide.
- No single food plot can exceed 5 acres.
- Food plots must be a minimum of 660' from one another if together they sum five acres or more.
- Food plots cannot exceed 10% of a distinct area or field.
- Landowners may not clear native woody vegetation greater than 3" diameter at breast height (DBH) in order to establish food plots.
- Landowners may not clear an area with an average canopy cover greater than 25% of native woody vegetation in order to establish food plots.
- Landowners may not clear trees planted as part of a Federal Contract.

- Food plots are generally allowed on the following Federal CREP/CRP Conservation Practices:
 - CP1
 - CP2
 - CP3
 - CP3A
 - CP4D
 - CP25
- After IDNR review, food plots **may** be allowed on expired Federal CREP/CRP Conservation Practices: CP9, CP21, CP22, and/or CP23.
 - After IDNR approval on these practices, food plots may be:
 - permitted only if the conservation practice was applied to an entire field,
 - prohibited if the conservation practice is less than 100' wide on average,
 - prohibited within 50' of a river or stream,
 - prohibited within 30' of where earthwork was conducted for wetland restoration or shallow water area, and
 - prohibited on berms or levees.

Conservation Practice Reference Table

| Practice Code | Name |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| CP1 | Introduced Grasses |
| CP2 | Native Grasses |
| CP3 | Tree Planting |
| CP3A | Hardwood Tree Planting |
| CP4D | Wildlife Habitat |
| CP9 | Shallow Water Area for Wildlife |
| CP21 | Filter Strip |
| CP22 | Riparian Forest Buffer |
| CP23 | Wetland Restoration |
| CP25 | Rare or Declining Habitat |