

Cropping/Tillage System Adjustment Requests

Public Law 107-171 defines the Conservation Security Program's (CSP) purpose as the "conservation and improvement of the quality of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life..."

The CSP regulation and contract requirements provide that CSP participants "agree to maintain at least the level of stewardship identified in the benchmark inventory for the entire contract period, and implement and maintain any new practices or activities required in the contract."

A CSP participant's request to change their cropping sequence and/or tillage system that reduces the resource protection provided by their benchmark conservation system would be inconsistent with the program purpose, and conflicts with CSP requirements.

Always check with the local NRCS field office staff before changing your cropping sequence or tillage system since changing those may affect your compliance with the CSP contract or your payment level. For CSP, it is important to maintain at least the benchmark level of resource protection upon which the contract was based, for the entire contract period.

NRCS can easily evaluate your proposed change by applying the RUSLE2 model to your unique situation. By evaluating the impacts of changes prior to implementation, NRCS can also present you with alternatives to counter the effects of cropping sequence and/or tillage system changes in order to comply with the CSP contract. For example, there may be opportunities to switch to a less intensive conservation tillage system and/or grow winter cover crops to balance the impacts of harvesting crop residue.

Participants who wish to pursue the opportunities of the favorable grain market in lieu of complying with the terms of their contract may request contract cancellation. Voluntary terminations will be subject to recovery of costs, including refund of payments received and liquidated damages, as specified in the contract appendix.

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