



Natural Resources Conservation Service
375 Jackson Street, Suite 600
St. Paul, MN 55101-1854

*Helping People
Help the Land*

Phone: (651) 602-7900
FAX: (651) 602-7914

Transmitted via Email

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MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 180-7-

SUBJECT: RESIDUE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Purpose. To provide clarification about our residue management practice standards.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2007

Earlier this year, revised practice standards were issued for the residue management practices. Practice Standard 329a was renumbered to **329, Residue and Tillage Management, No Till / Strip Till / Direct Seed**. The standard now includes a list of implements approved for use with this practice that only disturb strips and slots. It also includes a reference to the annual Soil Tillage Intensity Rating (STIR), which must be met for this practice to be applied.

Practice Standard 329b was renumbered to **345, Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till**. Under General Criteria, the reference to a residue budget was deleted, along with excess wording that did not apply to a practice standard. Criteria to Maintain or Improve Soil Condition includes a reference to the soil conditioning index. Criteria to Increase Plant-Available Moisture was expanded.

There has been some confusion about the changes that were made, and about what each standard says in general. The attached Tillage Practice Guide for No till / Strip Till / Direct Seed (329) and Mulch Till (345) is intended to clarify and explain these two practices. This guide explains what is meant in each practice standard, shows pictures of typical equipment that can be used, and discusses manure and fertilizer application methods.

Some of the points explained in this publication include:

- These are year-long residue management practice standards, not planting standards
- The no-till practice does **not** include row cultivation for weeds, except for emergency situations.
- In the context of no till, direct seed refers to a method of planting without soil disturbance, and does not refer to methods of planting alfalfa with a companion crop.
- Manure injection is allowed as long as all associated soil disturbing activities are documented in the RUSLE2 soil loss calculation and the resulting annual STIR value is no greater than 10 (for no till) or 15 (for strip till). Usually, this will be limited to a manure injector with minimum disturbance shanks.
- Solid manure can be spread as long as no incorporation is done.

- None of the practice standards include any reference to a minimum percent of residue that needs to be present at any point during the year. Some programs do include this as a program requirement.

This practice guide can be reproduced and printed locally, and it will be available on the Minnesota NRCS web site under Technical Resources, Agronomy.

Questions about these conservation practice standards may be directed to Robin Martinek, State Agronomist at (651) 602-7866.

WILLIAM HUNT
State Conservationist

Attachment

DIST: Area Resource Conservationists
Field Offices
Area Offices
ECS