

Conservation Reserve Program Note #104
January 11, 2001

In October 2000, the FSA national office distributed national notice CRP-372, which contains background information eligibility requirements, and the practice purpose of the most recent Continuous CRP practice CP-15B, establishment of Permanent Vegetative Cover (Contour Grass Strips) on Terraces. This practice establishes vegetative cover on terraces, which are no longer under a practice lifespan to ensure that their long term function is maintained. The information provided in this notice clarifies which terraces or portions of terraces are eligible and the seeding requirements for this CRP practice.

Eligibility Criteria

Only those terraces which are functioning properly and which have a crop history are eligible. This could include properly functioning and cropped broadbase terraces and the front slope of grass back terraces. Terraces determined by NRCS to need repair to restore their functionality are not eligible unless the repair is successfully completed prior to enrollment in CRP. The CP-15B practice does not include cost share for terrace repair. This practice can also establish a 10-foot wide grass buffer strip on the area immediately up-slope of the terrace channel and immediately down-slope from the toe of the terrace back slope. The up-slope portion of this practice can begin 10 feet (horizontally) above the designed terrace ridge height. Positioning the buffer in this location will allow for some filtering of runoff prior to its reaching the channel. In no case can the CP-15B practice exceed 60 feet in total width. The 60-foot maximum width included these 10-foot buffer strip areas adjacent to the terrace. Notice CRP-0372 contains examples, which diagram the areas eligible and the maximum width for this practice.

Properly functioning narrow base terraces or other terraces without crop history are eligible to have a 10-foot wide buffer strip established immediately up-slope of the channel and immediately down-slope of the toe of the backslope.

Seeding Requirements

This practice can help to reduce soil erosion and protect water quality. Many terrace channels direct runoff water to an outlet such as a tile intake or grass waterway. Grass seeded in these channel areas can help filter sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants from runoff prior to reaching the outlet. All grass seedings for the CP-15B practice will follow the vegetation establishment recommendations found in one of the following NRCS standards: 327, Conservation Cover; 332, Contour Buffer Strip; or 393, Filter Strip.

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