

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM MANAGED HAYING AND GRAZING PLAN



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) - Minnesota



Photo courtesy of USDA, NRCS

WHAT IS MANAGED HAYING AND GRAZING?

These practices are considered permissive uses of the conservation reserve program contract acres. They are not an approved management activity, and are not intended to be used to maintain approved cover.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

CRP managed haying and grazing activities apply to practices CP-1, CP-2, CP-4B, CP4D, CP-10 and CP-18 B and C. Acres planted to trees in CP4B and CP4D cannot be hayed or grazed. Acreage is eligible for this practice 12 months after the cover is fully established.

Participants must request approval before starting this practice and it must be included in the conservation plan.

Managed haying and grazing will only be permitted from August 1 to September 15, and

bales or livestock must be removed by September 16th.

Fields cannot be hayed or grazed more than one out of every three years.

Either haying or grazing, NOT BOTH, will be permitted on the same field once in the same three year period.

REQUIREMENTS FOR HAYING

Haying operations shall be limited to one cutting. Three to four inches of stubble will be left after harvest of cool season grasses. Five or more inches of stubble will be left after harvest of warm season grasses.

Perform haying operations as early in the period as possible, to allow for the maximum regrowth time.

All hay shall be removed from CRP fields by September 16th.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRAZING

The minimum vegetation height to begin grazing shall be 8 to 10 inches for cool season grasses. For tall warm season species (such as switchgrass, big bluestem and indiagrass) the minimum vegetation height to begin grazing is 10 – 14 inches, and for short to medium height species (sideoats grama, little bluestem) the minimum height shall be 5-7 inches.

End grazing when the stubble height reaches 3 to 4 inches for cool season species and medium height warm season species, and 6 to 8 inches for tall warm season species. The stocking rate will be determined using NRCS standards. Livestock will be removed from fields when the minimum stubble height is reached or by September 16, whichever comes first..