EQIP PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Forage Harvest Management (511): Prevent Spread of Exotic Invasive Plants on NRCS List
Practice Life: 3 years

Participant: _____
EQIP Contract Number: _____

Purposes of Cost Share Practice

- Maintain desired species composition of the stand
- Promote vigorous plant regrowth
- Optimize the economic yield of forage at the desired quality and quantity
- Improve wildlife habitat

Conditions for Practice Eligibility

- Applicants must meet all EQIP requirements to be eligible for financial assistance.
- Target species must be identified on the NRCS Exotic Invasives list or approved by the state plant materials specialist.

Minimum Practice Requirements

Contract duration shall be a minimum of four (4) years, with treatment scheduled and cost-shared for three (3) consecutive years.

- Utilize control methods identified in the NC Ag. Chemical Manual, mechanical removal, or browsing animals. If target plants are moved off site for disposal, methods that lesson the potential for the plants to spread to new areas shall be used (e.g. – burning, burying, or bagging)
- Measurement and payment will be rounded up to the nearest half acre and will include the target species treatment area only – NOT the whole field.
- If target plant is scattered throughout planned field, treatment area for this practice will be determined by the percentage of ground cover composed of the target plant. Consider the line transect or step point method for documentation of percent ground cover.
  (*Example: Field = 10 ac. % Ground Cover Target Plant = 18% Treatment Area = (10ac x 18%) or 1.8 ac Payment = 2 ac)*
- Control in year one is accomplished when the targeted plant population has been reduced by at least 90%. The subsequent two years will be utilized to eradicate the residual target plants.
- Practice must be part of a contract that obligates at least $1000.

Considerations

- Consider pairing Forage Harvest Management with a nutrient management plan that meets NC NRCS 590 standards.
- Consider utilizing pest management and weed control methods that encourage mixtures of native warm season grasses that may reduce reliance on organic-approved chemicals and enhance wildlife habitat.
- When possible, time management activities to minimize disturbance of seasonal wildlife activities, with special consideration for nesting season.
- Written contracts with a service provider or vendor are recommended. Contract should cover things like: type, extent, timing or work, participant and vendor responsibilities, and payment provisions.
- Inspect stand regularly for future forage harvest management improvement needs.
- Consider prescribed burning as an additional source of control in warm season grass stands.

EQIP Practice Eligibility Checklist

The participant CANNOT participate in EQIP for this practice if any of the eligibility certifications are marked 'no'.

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** Participant meets all EQIP requirements and is eligible to receive financial assistance.

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** The target species _____ is identified on the NRCS Exotic Invasives list or has been approved by the state plant materials specialist.

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** Location of listed exotic invasive plant is clearly identified on the contract plan map and acreage to the nearest half acre has been determined for treatment area.

Comments:

EQIP Practice Certification Checklist

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** After application of this scenario the stand meets or is expected to meet the post-treatment condition of 90% reduction of targeted plant population following first treatment.

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** The completed forage harvest management operation is in compliance with all state and local laws, regulations and ordinances.

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** Photographs showing baseline and post-treatment condition are in case file or Toolkit folder in order to provide basis for payment.

Comments:

Follow-up Recommendations: Visit site with the participant after each treatment to review need for additional forage harvest management practices; and, discuss appropriate application of prescribed fire, if the site is capable of being burned.

Certification

This practice has been installed according to NRCS specifications and meets the EQIP requirements and the Forage Harvest Management (511) practice criteria

_____ acres (to nearest half acre) of Exotic Invasive Plants have been controlled per these practice guidelines.

_____

Designated Conservationist Date

2nd and 3rd Operation and Maintenance Recordkeeping:

Date of Inspection	*Acres Treated*	*Participant initials*	*Designated Conservationist initials/comments*