AG. WATER QUALITY ACT

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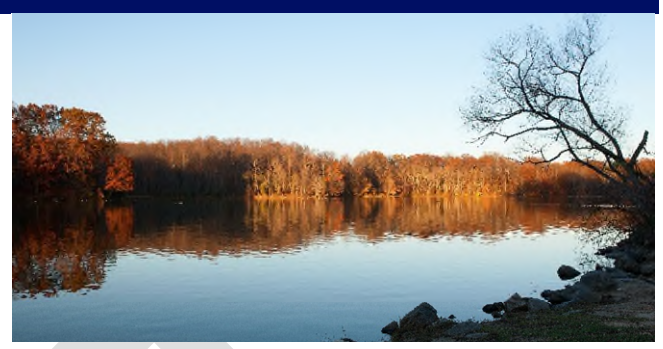

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE | **FUNDING ASSISTANCE** | **IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS**

CONSERVATION CROPPING SEQUENCE

CROPS BMP #1

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Description:
Conservation cropping sequence is designed to provide adequate organic residue for maintenance or improvement of soil tilth. Crops to be planted on a given field may be changed year by year in a planned sequence. Higher yields generally produce more crop residue, which results in more soil organic matter accumulation. Rotation of crop species generally results in higher yields of each crop species and promotes better soil quality. Where possible, the corn-wheat-double crop soybean rotation generally results in the best benefits to soils.

AWQA Minimum Requirements:
Maintain an adopted sequence of crops designed to provide adequate organic residue for maintenance or improvement of the physical, chemical, and biological condition of the soil. These methods will reduce soil erosion, improve water use efficiency and water quality, and break the reproduction cycle of plant pests.

Recommendations:
Choose crops suited to the soil type(s) of each field. Design crop rotations to meet the residue needs of your crop residue management plans. Rotations that include winter small grains, winter cover crops and/or pasture/hay fields all provide good erosion control. High-yielding crops produce more crop residue than low-yielding crops. Winter small grains and pasture/hay can be used in rotations with low-residue crops, such as tobacco, soybean and vegetables, to gain better erosion control. High-residue crops such as corn can be used to replace soybeans or any other low-residue crop in the rotation to gain better erosion control. Crop rotations that include pasture/hay can be lengthened by maintaining the existing stand for additional years.

Take soil tests and refer to University of Kentucky AGR-1 to determine the annual nutrient and lime application rates for obtaining desired yield levels. Scout fields for pests and take appropriate management decisions. Plant each crop species at the proper time, the proper soil depth and the proper plant population into weed-free conditions. Manage other plant pests as necessary to help protect grain yield potential and soil-carbon building potential. Consider herbicide carry-over to avoid crop failures.

Technical References

USDA/NRCS Publications
- Practice Code 328 Conservation Crop Rotation
- NRCS Field Office Technical Guide

University Publications
- University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Extension publications

Funding Assistance Options

State Cost Share
- See your local Conservation District to apply.

Kentucky Ag. Development Fund (KADB/KAFC)
- Select from available program options here.

NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Select from available program options here.

Important Considerations

Water Quality Benefit (💧-💧💧💧💧): 💧

Wildlife Benefits
- Contact the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife's Habitat Improvement Program how to improve wildlife habitat with select BMPs (1-800-858-1549).