

Name of Practice: PROTECTIVE COVER FOR SPECIALTY CROPS  
DCR Specifications for No. SL-8

This document specifies terms and conditions for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's protective cover for specialty crops best management practice that are applicable to all contracts entered into with respect to that practice.

A. Description and Purpose

Cost-share or tax credit are provided to establish vegetative cover on specialty cropland and thereby reduce wind and water erosion, thus improving water quality.

B. Policies and Specifications

1. Eligibility

Specialty crops are given consideration due to bare sites and highly erodible soil conditions. Specialty crops for this practice are defined as:

- i) Vegetables
- ii) Tobacco
- iii) Small grains

2. Soil loss rates must be computed for all applications for use in establishing priority considerations.

3. Payment is provided as a flat rate per acre incentive payment to encourage proper establishment and to offset a portion of the cost of seed and the seeding operation.

4. A good stand and good growth of cover must be obtained in sufficient time to protect the area. The seeding must be planted and certified by November 30. After the growth has been maintained for at least 90 days after seeding certification or until the conservation purpose has been served in accordance with NRCS 340, whichever is greater, it may be left on the land or incorporated.

5. Pasturing consistent with good management may be permitted. No vegetative growth may be harvested for hay or seed.

6. Seed type and rates shall be those listed:

Seed Type	Rate
Tetraploid Rye (pure strain only)	2.0 bu./acre
Winter Rye	1.5 bu./acre
Winter Barley	2.5 bu. /acre
Winter Annual Ryegrass	20 lbs./acre
Winter Wheat	1.5 bu./acre
Winter Hardy Oats	2.0 bu./acre
Small Grain Mixtures	1 bu./ac.with
a) legume†	10 lbs./acre or,
b) forage radish	6 lb./ acre or,
c) canola or rape	4 lbs./acre
Triticale	1.5 bu. /acre
Forage Radish	6-8 lbs. /acre
1) mixture with grass or legume†	4 lbs./acre
Winter-hardy <i>Brassica</i> (canola/rape)	5 lbs./acre
1) mixture with grass or legume†	2-4 lbs./acre

† - legume = Crimson Clover, Austrian Winter Pea or Hairy Vetch

°Use higher seeding rates for pure stands and lower seeding rates for mixed species plantings

**Higher seeding rates are recommended for aerial seeding.**

7. This practice is subject to NRCS standard 340 Cover Crop.

C. Rate(s)

1. For participants who are not receiving payment for cover crops from another source on the same acreage, a state cost-share payment rate of \$30 per acre is available.
2. As set forth by Virginia Code § 58.1-339.3 and §58.1-439.5, Virginia currently provides a tax credit for implementation of certain BMP practices. The current tax credit rate, which is subject to change in accordance with the Code of Virginia, is 25% of the total eligible cost not to exceed \$17,500.00.

D. Technical Responsibility

Technical and administrative responsibility is assigned to qualified technical DCR and District staff in consultation, where appropriate and based on the controlling standard, with DCR, Virginia Certified Nutrient Management Planner(s), NRCS, DOF, and VCE. Individuals certifying technical need and technical practice installation shall have appropriate certifications as identified above and/or Engineering Job Approval Authority (EJAA) for the designed and installed component(s). All practices are subject to spot check procedures and any other quality control measures.

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