



**Tennessee Job Sheet
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
CP42 – Pollinator Habitat**



Photo courtesy NRCS

General Provisions

The purpose of the CP42 practice is to establish a perennial cover of pollinator habitat to enhance environmental benefits. The practice is open for enrollment on a continuous signup basis, and the contract term is 10 years.

Tennessee has one approved herbaceous mixture (per acre rate):

- Little bluestem – 1.5 lbs. Pure Live Seed (PLS)
 - Sideoats grama – 1 lb. PLS
 - Lanceleaf coreopsis – 3 ounces
 - Purple prairieclover – 2 ounces
 - Illinois bundleflower – 2 ounces
 - Purple coneflower – 6 ounces
 - False sunflower – 3 ounces
 - Gray-headed coneflower – 3 ounces
 - Black-eyed susan – 6 ounces
 - Partridge pea – 5 ounces
 - Rigid goldenrod – 2 ounces
- (Total of 4.5 pounds of seed per acre)

Alfalfa, red clover, ladino clover, crimson clover, or buckwheat may be substituted in the above mix, but a single species substitution cannot exceed 10% (1 forb species, 3 ounces of seed) and a multiple cannot exceed 20% of the planting mixture (2 forb species, 6 ounces of seed). Substitutions of native forbs with introduced legumes should be a straight replacement by species and seeding rate from the above mixture.

Pollinator habitat must remain in the location designated in the plan for the contract period.

For crop fields of less than 10 acres, pollinator habitat must be at least 1.0 acre, either as one block or strip, or two 0.5 acre blocks or strips. For crop fields that are 10 acres or larger, a minimum of 10% of the field may be established to pollinator habitat. Individual blocks or strips of pollinator habitat cannot be smaller than 0.5 acre.

Pollinator habitat established in strips must be at least 20 feet wide.

Whole fields may be established to pollinator habitat as long as the crop field is at least 0.5 acre in size.

An optional shrub planting component may be included in the pollinator habitat planting. If desired, a shrub component of no more than 20% of the pollinator habitat may be established. A shrub planting must be at least 0.1 acre within each pollinator block or strip.

For a shrub component at least three species from the following list must be planted: crabapple, silky dogwood, Chickasaw plum, American plum, chinkapin, indigobush, beautyberry, elderberry, mapleleaf viburnum, or one of either shining, staghorn, or fragrant sumac.

The planting period for the herbaceous planting is between February 1 and June 1. Shrub planting dates are December 1 to April 1.

Within the pollinator habitat additional woody habitat for nesting may be established (optional) with cost share, including brush piles, or felled trees as part of edge feathering. Brush piles must have a 12 foot or larger base and four foot height. Felled trees must be at least six inches in diameter. Woody habitat cannot exceed 1,500 square feet per acre of pollinator habitat (0.03 ac.), up to a limit of 1.0 acre per contract.

Specifications

The following specifications are required as part of the CRP conservation plan and contract:

1. A soil test within 24 months of planting to determine liming needs. Soil tests will be based on University of Tennessee standard methods. Omit lime if pH is above 5.0. No fertilizer is applied for establishment.
2. The no-till method of planting on steeper areas to avoid excessive erosion. The use of a special native grass drill will be required.

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3. Conventional seedbed preparation (plowing and disking or harrowing) on flatter slopes. For conventional the field must be allowed to settle unless a cultipacker is used to firm the seedbed. Broadcasting seed requires a carrier (e.g. pelleted lime).
4. Herbicide applications to control any weeds or vegetation existing prior to planting.
5. An approved temporary cover if the contract is approved outside the designated planting period and erosion may occur.
6. Control of weed competition through the first growing season after planting, if necessary, may consist of mowing the herbaceous plantings no lower than 12 inches (i.e. above the height of the desirable plants) when undesirable weeds reach a height of at least 18 inches. Mowing should be done through the first summer as needed until August 1.
7. Normal maintenance is required to insure the pollinator habitat persists for the life of the contract. Normal maintenance of pollinator habitat typically consists of “spot spraying” with an approved herbicide to control woody species invasion, prescribed burning, and/or rotational disking. Prescribed burning may be the best way to manage the pollinator habitat but may require a firebreak. Strip Disking is also highly preferred because disking will suppress grasses and aid in germination of forb seeds. Mowing to maintain pollinator habitat is acceptable by mowing every other year outside the primary nesting season of April 15-July 1, but mowing is the least preferred method. Mowing alone smothers forbs, may increase undesirable grasses, and fails to control invasive trees (e.g. maples and sweetgum). However, mowing may be a needed pre-treatment to other scheduled normal maintenance activities.
8. At least one management practice in the mid-contract period will be required to be performed on the herbaceous portion of the practice. Options include strip disking, strip herbiciding, legume interseeding, or prescribed burning. Shrub plantings do not require mid-contract treatment.

