ORGANIC SYSTEM PLAN– CROP PRODUCERS

Section E. Natural Resources and Biological Diversity

Crop Rotation and Biological Diversity

Tip! Crop rotation systems must maintain or improve soil organic matter content; provide for weed, pest, and disease management in crops; manage deficient or excess plant nutrients; and provide erosion control. For more information about the crop rotation standard, see the WSDA fact sheet on crop rotation in organic production (AGR 3004).

1. Do you produce annual crops on certified land?
   - Yes
   - No

   1a. If yes, describe your planned crop rotation sequence.

   1b. If yes, describe the records you maintain regarding your crop rotation strategies.

2. Do you produce perennial crops on certified land?
   - Yes
   - No

   Tip! Perennial cropping systems employ means such as alley cropping, intercropping, and hedgerows to introduce biological diversity in lieu of crop rotation.
3. Which of the following practices do you use to maintain biological diversity on or adjacent to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested?

**In-field management:**
- [ ] Alley cropping
- [ ] Annual crop rotation
- [ ] Conservation cover
- [ ] Annual cover crop
- [ ] Hedgerow planting

**Landscape management:**
- [ ] Brush management
- [ ] Early successional habitat development/management
- [ ] Field border
- [ ] Restoration and management of rare or declining habitats
- [ ] Structure for wildlife
- [ ] Tree/Shrub establishment
- [ ] Upland wildlife habitat management
- [ ] Windbreak/shelterbelt establishment

**Adjacent waterway management:**
- [ ] Channel bank vegetation
- [ ] Riparian forest buffer
- [ ] Riparian herbaceous cover
- [ ] Shallow water development and management
- [ ] Spring development
- [ ] Stream habitat improvement and management
- [ ] Streambank and shoreline protection
- [ ] Wetland wildlife habitat management

4. Are there any other practices you use to maintain biological diversity?

4a. If yes, describe the practices

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**Natural Resource Conservation**

**Tip!** Organic production is a system that is managed to respond to site-specific conditions by integrating cultural, biological & mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, & conserve biodiversity.

- Natural resources are the physical, hydrological, and biological features of a production operation, including soil, water, wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife.
- Organic operations must maintain or improve the natural resources of the operation, including soil and water quality.
- The producer must initiate practices to support biodiversity and avoid, to the extent practicable, any activities that would diminish it.
- You may consider natural resource conservation practices on land adjacent to your certified site if you manage the adjacent land and the practices directly benefit the organic site.
### Sheet, Rill or Wind Erosion

5. Is permanent ground cover (such as sod) established on at least 90% of the ground at all sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested? □ Yes □ No

6. Is the slope of the land less than 10% at all sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested? □ Yes □ No

   If you answered Yes to both of these questions skip to the next area of concern—*Inefficient use of Irrigation Water*

7. Do you have a third-party conservation plan addressing this area of concern? □ Yes □ No

   7a. If yes, note the type of conservation plan below and attach a copy of your current plan as part of your organic system plan

   7b. If no, identify which of the following practices you use on or adjacent to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested to maintain or improve soil stability.

   - [ ] Alley cropping
   - [ ] Annual crop rotation
   - [ ] Conservation cover
   - [ ] Contour buffer strips
   - [ ] Contour farming
   - [ ] Cover crop
   - [ ] Critical area planting
   - [ ] Cross wind ridges
   - [ ] Cross wind trap strips
   - [ ] Field border
   - [ ] Herbaceous wind barriers
   - [ ] Irrigation water management
   - [ ] Lined waterway or outlet
   - [ ] Mulching
   - [ ] No till
   - [ ] Pond
   - [ ] Reduced till
   - [ ] Seasonal till
   - [ ] Ridge till
   - [ ] Row arrangement
   - [ ] Strip-cropping
   - [ ] Vegetative barriers
   - [ ] Windbreak/shelterbelt establishment
   - [ ] Other (please describe):

### Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water

8. Do you irrigate sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested? □ Yes □ No

   If you answered No skip to the next area of concern—*Excess Nutrients in Surface and Ground Waters*

9. Which of the following irrigation sources are used on your farm?

   - [ ] Municipal / County
   - [ ] Irrigation District (include name):
   - [ ] Private Well
   - [ ] Other (please specify):
   - [ ] Public or Shared Well
10. Do you apply any of the following materials through your irrigation system to sites where conventional or organic/transitional crops are harvested? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10a. If yes, check all that apply
☐ Fertilizers ☐ Irrigation system cleaners
☐ Pre-harvest crop sanitizers ☐ Other (please specify):

10b. If yes, are all the materials allowed for use in organic production? ☐ Yes ☐ No

i. If no, describe your practices to prevent contamination to organic or transitional crops.

11. Do you have a third-party conservation plan addressing inefficient use of irrigation water? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11a. If yes, note the type of conservation plan below and attach a copy of your current plan as part of your organic system plan

11b. If no, identify which of the following practices you use on or adjacent to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested to improve irrigation water use efficiency.

☐ Alley cropping ☐ Cross wind trap strips ☐ No till
☐ Annual crop rotation ☐ Irrigation reservoir ☐ Ridge till
☐ Contour buffer strips ☐ Irrigation water management ☐ Row arrangement
☐ Contour farming ☐ Micro-irrigation ☐ Tailwater recovery
☐ Cover crop ☐ Mulching ☐ Windbreak/shelterbelt establishment

☐ Other (please describe):
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12. Indicate what monitoring activities you implement on sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested to ensure irrigation water is used efficiently?

- [ ] Soil moisture sensors
- [ ] Irrigation Scheduling Software
- [ ] Visual observations
- [ ] Other

13. Describe the records maintained to document your monitoring activities or your overall water usage.

Excess Nutrients in Surface and Ground Waters

14. Do you apply nutrients to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested?  
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No

15. Do you pasture livestock on sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested?  
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No

15a. If yes, indicate which type of livestock are being pastured.

   - [ ] Poultry
   - [ ] Swine
   - [ ] Cattle
   - [ ] Other (please specify):

   If you answered No to both of these questions skip to the next area of concern

   Pesticides Transported to Surface and Ground Waters
16. Do you have a third-party conservation plan addressing this area of concern?  

   Yes  No

16a. If yes, note the type of conservation plan below and attach a copy of your current plan as part of your organic system plan.

16b. If no, identify which of the following practices you use on or adjacent to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested to maintain or improve water quality in terms of nutrient contaminants.

- Alley cropping
- Conservation cover
- Contour buffer strips
- Contour farming
- Field border
- Filter strip
- Grassed waterway
- Heavy use area protection
- Irrigation water management
- Lined waterway or outlet
- Micro-irrigation
- Nutrient management
- Pond
- Prescribed grazing
- Seasonal till
- Riparian forest buffer
- Riparian herbaceous cover
- Stream crossing
- Strip-cropping
- Tailwater recovery
- Tree/Shrub establishment
- Other (please specify):

Pesticides Transported to Surface and Ground Waters

17. Do you apply pest, disease, or weed control materials to sites where organic crops will be harvested?  

   Yes  No

If you answered No skip to the next area of concern—Excessive Sediment in Surface Waters.
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18. Do you have a third-party conservation plan addressing this area of concern?  
   □ Yes  □ No

   18a. If yes, note the type of conservation plan below and attach a copy of your current plan as part of your organic system plan

   18b. If no, identify which of the following practices you use on or adjacent to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested to maintain or improve water quality in terms of pesticide contaminants.

   □ Agrichemical handling facility  □ Heavy use area protection  □ Seasonal till
   □ Alley cropping  □ Integrated pest management  □ Riparian forest buffer
   □ Contour buffer strips  □ Irrigation water management  □ Riparian herbaceous cover
   □ Contour farming  □ Lined waterway or outlet  □ Strip-cropping
   □ Filter strip  □ Micro-irrigation  □ Tailwater recovery
   □ Grassed waterway  □ Pond  □ Tree/Shrub establishment
   □ Other (please specify):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Excessive Sediment in Surface Waters</th>
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<tr>
<td>19. Are streams, shorelines, or irrigation channels (canals, ditches, etc.) on or adjacent to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested?  □ Yes  □ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Are gullies present on or adjacent to sites where organic crops will be harvested?  □ Yes  □ No</td>
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   If you answered No to both of these questions skip to the end of this section.
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21. Do you have a third-party conservation plan addressing this area of concern?  
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

   21a. If yes, note the type of conservation plan below and attach a copy of your current plan as part of your organic system plan.

   21b. If no, identify which of the following practices you use on or adjacent to sites where organic or transitional crops are harvested to maintain or improve water quality in terms of sedimentation.

   ☐ Channel bank vegetation  ☐ Irrigation water management  ☐ Streambank and shoreline protection
   ☐ Conservation cover  ☐ Lined waterway or outlet  ☐ Tailwater recovery
   ☐ Contour buffer strips  ☐ Pond  ☐ Tree/Shrub establishment
   ☐ Contour farming  ☐ Seasonal till  ☐ Vegetative barriers
   ☐ Filter strip  ☐ Riparian forest buffer  ☐ Water and sediment control basin
   ☐ Grassed waterway  ☐ Riparian herbaceous cover  ☐ Other (please specify):  ☐ Stream crossing