



United States
Department of
Agriculture

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Farm and
Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm Service
Agency

Adams County
Service Center
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Dear CRP/CREP Participant,

As a Conservation Reserve Program Participant (CRP/CREP), it is your responsibility to maintain the vegetative cover and control the noxious weeds and other invasive plants on your CRP acreage. This is particularly important in an effort to provide the program's intent to improve water quality and wildlife food and cover. **Additionally, it is extremely important that the cover be maintained as outlined in your conservation plan so that you remain eligible for your annual rental payments and for the opportunity to re-enroll your acreage if future regulations allow.** Contracts that are not in compliance with their plans risk the suspension of future rental payments and the possibility of contract termination with required refunds and penalties and you may lose the opportunity to re-enroll the acreage in future sign ups.

The following discussion is provided to you to help you understand your maintenance responsibilities and to provide some guidance on things you need to do to remain in compliance. Additional help can be found at your FSA or NRCS offices.

Have you scouted your riparian buffer or other tree plantings this past year? Do you have an acceptable stand? Are weeds or rodents a problem in your planting? Weeds rob valuable moisture and in the case of noxious weeds, are illegal. Rodents such as voles will girdle trees and shrubs causing them to die. FSA is looking to achieve a 70% survival rate on our riparian plantings. Taking action to control pests will help assure our success.

Established plantings may be experiencing some noxious weed and invasive species pressure. It is important for you to identify the problem species and target your treatment. Mowing does not provide a permanent solution and is prohibited in established plantings. Your best option is a **spot treatment** of herbicide to get lasting control. Canadian thistle and multiflora rose are two of our most prevalent problems. Both species are listed on PA's noxious weed list and must be controlled by law. During past years, we have found excellent control with the following mix;

Crossbow	2 fluid oz. per gallon of water
Surfactant	use at label rates where applicable

Note that many companies manufacture or distribute their own 2-4-D and surfactant products. You should follow the label recommendations for the exact rate for their formulation. This mix will run from \$18.00 to \$20.00 per acre for the material. It is also rated very good on several other weed problems. Our experts tell us that it is most effective when applied to actively growing weeds and Canadian Thistle that are no more than 4 inches tall.



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The following products have also given us satisfactory results:

Stinger (effective but costly)
Milestone
Banvel & 2-4-D (best results in combination)
Cimarron

Applying a herbicide within a riparian buffer requires caution to prevent the death of planted trees and shrubs. In many cases you will be treating very small areas with a hand sprayer. If you have a problem mixing very small quantities of material you should consult with your chemical dealer or the County Extension Service for a suitable product for your problem. They can also inform you which herbicides require an applicators license to use.

The problem with voles chewing the bark of trees is common where freezing and thawing have caused tree tubes to lift out of the ground. This can be solved by digging the tubes in each spring and/or by using a rodenticide. There are some excellent products which can be used in bait stations to prevent vole damage. You should contact your dealer or Extension Service for advice on product use and safety.

Whenever you are using pesticides you must be fully aware of the label recommendations. Study the label for safety precautions, rates and timing of application, weeds controlled, and mixing instructions. Labels and material safety data sheets are available at www.greenbook.net.

Have you been caring for your planting to raise your probability of success? Have you removed your bird nets timely? Did you fix broken or fallen tubes immediately? Are you thinking of the time when you may be able to remove the tubes? Are you aware of the level of survival you have in your planting? Your planting will be a great deal more successful with a little effort. If you feel you do not have an acceptable level of survival you should notify the FSA Office at once. If you did all you could and the plants still died it may be possible for you to get cost sharing from FSA to help with the cost of replanting. Approval must be granted prior to replant.

Feel free to contact the office if you have any questions concerning the care and maintenance of your riparian buffer.

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