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**NF98-385 Returning CRP Land to Crops: Grass Management/Cropping Suggestions for Land Released in Winter or Early Spring**

Charles A. Shapiro  
*University of Nebraska-Lincoln, cshapiro1@unl.edu*

Mari Lubberstedt

Lisa Lunz

William L. Kranz  
*University of Nebraska--Lincoln, wkranz1@unl.edu*

Steven D. Rasmussen  
*University of Nebraska–Lincoln, srasmussen2@unl.edu*

*See next page for additional authors*

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Returning CRP Land to Crops: Grass Management/Cropping Suggestions for Land Released in Winter or Early Spring

by CRP to Crops Research Team*
Northeast Research and Extension Center

Planting Suggestions

This NebFact gives grass control and planting recommendations for producers who learn in January that their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land applications have been denied and who wish to put the land into production the upcoming spring.

For detailed instruction on returning CRP land to crop production, see NF97-324, Returning CRP Land to Crops: Cool-Season Grass Management/Cropping Suggestions; and NF97-343, Returning CRP Land to Crops: Warm-Season Grass Management/Cropping Suggestions.

Due to the short time available to prepare for spring planting for CRP land released in winter or early spring, the following strategies are suggested:

Cool Season Grasses

1. Shred or mow the old grass residue to allow new grass growth as soon as possible.
2. When grass greens up, spray Roundup Ultra® herbicide at 2 qts/acre or Touchdown 5® at 1.6 qts/acre + 0.25 percent nonionic surfactant.
3. No-till plant or drill Roundup Ready soybeans.
4. Apply 1.5 qt/acre of Roundup Ultra® herbicide for cool season grass escapes and annual grass and broadcast control.

Soybeans are the recommended crop to plant after CRP grass for several reasons; however, corn can be...
grown with these additional considerations:

1. Choose a later planting date to allow the CRP sod to warm up.
2. Apply 2 qts/acre of atrazine in March before grass greens up to kill smooth brome. Atrazine is also an effective pre-emergence herbicide. (Note: Apply atrazine only to corn plots.)
3. Use Roundup Ready corn hybrids. If Roundup Ready seed is not available, consider using Liberty Link® corn hybrids.
4. Increase the seed population by 10-15 percent over normal seed populations.
5. Increase nitrogen fertilizer rates by 50-80 lbs/acre above normal rates.

**Warm Season Grasses**

Warm season grass will not green up for spraying until mid-June, eliminating no-till row crop production as an option. Tilling warm season grasses is probably the only way to kill the grass, reduce residue, and level the seed bed in time to plant in the spring. However, because the soil surface can be rough and difficult to plant even after tilling, the best option is to shred and graze or hay for one season and kill the grass mid-season. Producers need to check with their local Farm Service Agency office for guidelines associated with residue management for future years. To protect soil quality gains, most farm plans will call for no-till planting of corn and soybeans in subsequent years.

   a. For Roundup Ultra or Touchdown 5 add 17 lbs ammonium sulfate (spray grade) per 100 gallons of spray. The ammonium sulfate is the first product added to the spray tank after water.
   b. Liberty only suppresses most perennial grasses.

*Team members are: Charles Shapiro, Extension Soils Scientist and CRP Project Leader; Mari Lubberstedt, CRP Research Coordinator; Lisa Lunz, Research Technologist; Jerry Echtenkamp, Research Technologist; Bill Kranz, Extension Irrigation Specialist; Steve Rasmussen, District and Extension Forester; David P. Shelton, Extension Agricultural Engineer; Keith Jarvi, Extension Assistant-Integrated Pest Management, John Witkowski, former Extension Entomologist; Robert Frerichs, Operations Manager; Ray Brentlinger, Agricultural Research Technician II; and Pat Bathke, Word Processing Specialist; all at the Haskell Agricultural Laboratory and Northeast Research and Extension Center; Terry Gompert, Extension Educator-Eastern Niobrara EPU; and Alex Martin, Extension Weeds Specialist, Lincoln; with assistance from Paul Jasa, Extension Engineer, and Bob Klein, Extension Cropping Systems Specialist.*

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