

Name of Practice: VOLUNTARY PROTECTIVE COVER FOR SPECIALTY CROPLAND  
DCR Specifications for No. VSL-8

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

A. Description and Purpose

This practice is to keep a cover on cropland when it is not being used after harvest of a specialty crop.

The purpose is to reduce wind and water erosion, thus improving water quality.

B. Policies and Specifications

1. Eligibility

Specialty crops for this practice are defined as:

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

2. 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.

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

4. Seed type and rates shall be those listed:

- i. Tetraploid Rye (pure strain only).....2.0 bu./acre
- ii Winter Rye .....1.5 bu. /acre
- iii. Winter Barley .....2.5 bu. /acre
- iv. Winter Annual ryegrass .....20 lbs. /acre
- v. Winter Wheat .....1.5 bu. /acre
- vi. Winter hardy Oats\*\* .....2.0 bu. /acre
- vii. 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
- viii. Triticale .....1.5 bu. /acre
- ix. Forage Radish .....6-8 lbs. /acre
  - 1) mixture with grass or legume† .....4 lbs. /acre
- x. Winter-hardy *Brassica* (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.**

5. This practice is subject to NRCS standard 340 Cover Crop.
6. Soil loss rates must be computed for all applications.
7. The practice must not be in lifespan from any other conservation program.

C. Technical Responsibility

Technical and administrative responsibility is assigned to qualified technical DCR and SWCD 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.

Revised March, 2016