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# NRCS Conservation Practice Adoption and Motivation Pilot Study

Interviewer's Manual Version 3: Grazing Practices

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# **Chapter 1: NRCS Conservation Practice Adoption and Motivation**

# Background

The Conservation Practice Adoption and Motivation (CPAM) pilot survey is a reimbursable survey that the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has contracted the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to collect. The information collected during the pilot survey which is being conducted with a small sample across four states will be used to make decisions going forward for a larger, national survey that will be conducted in 2022. The four states involved in the pilot study, Nebraska, Oregon, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania, were chosen due to the diversity of agriculture within each state along with the contrast of agricultural practices between the states.

There are four different questionnaire versions for the CPAM pilot study:

- Version 1 Crop Practices
- Version 2 Confined Livestock Practices
- Version 3 Grazing Practice
- Version 4 Forestry Practices

The surveys conducted in each state will vary based on the agricultural and forestry enterprises within each state. The questionnaires are designed to obtain information about producer adoption of various conservation practices, past and present, participation in technical and financial assistance programs, and motivations for practice adoption or non-adoption (e.g., on-farm conservation, financial return, producer time and effort, and off-farm environmental benefits). The question format between all the versions is very similar, though the specific questions and practices are different for each version. There are some classification and demographic questions that are similar across versions to facilitate comparisons between versions.

# **Employer**

You are an employee of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA). Work on this survey is covered by a cooperative agreement between NASDA and NASS. Introduce yourself as a NASDA employee working for the (your State) Field Office of the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

# Responsibility

Accurate information collected directly from farmers and ranchers by trained interviewers provides the best possible information for developing a national survey for 2022. When you contact survey respondents, it is your responsibility to:

- obtain cooperation from selected operations,
- remind respondents of the confidential nature of the data,
- explain the uses of the data collected,
- collect quality data on survey items.

Once you have completed data collection, you are responsible for returning all completed questionnaires to your RFO in a timely manner and before the survey due date. Keep in mind the confidential nature of

the data you have collected. Protect the data and the respondent's personal information with utmost care and respect.

# Survey Results

There will be no published results from the CPAM pilot study. Instead, the responses, along with the method of response, will be used to refine the survey questionnaires to reduce the time required to complete each survey and identify most efficient data collection method. By responding the operator will help create the foundation of the national survey by making data collection easier and more accurate. NASS and NRCS will review survey responses and use them to refine survey questions and identify the most effective mode of data collection.

The data collected will be for research and development purposes only. The sample size is much too small to draw any statistical conclusions. Because the sample size is small, however, it is important to obtain as many completed surveys as possible, maximizing the amount and diversity of information gathered in the pilot study. Most operations will be using only a subset of the practices asked about in each questionnaire version. In fact, there will be some practices that are in use on only a handful of operations, making it important that we collect as many pilot surveys as possible.

# **Chapter 2 – Terms and Definitions**

**AUM** – Animal Unit Month, or the amount of forage required by an animal unit for one month. An animal unit is generally one mature cow of approximately 1,000 pounds and a calf as old as 6 months, or their equivalent. Animal unit equivalents vary somewhat according to kind and size of animals.

**Breeding Livestock** – Livestock used for the purpose of breeding and reproduction.

**Breeding Sire** – A male animal (e.g., bull) used for breeding purposes.

**Brush** – Woody plants (shrubs, trees, cacti) including invasive, noxious, or undesirable plants.

**Financial Assistance** – A payment or grant that helps defray the cost of installing or implementing conservation practices.

**Stocker** – Stockers are livestock that are being raised to be slaughtered once they have reached a mature weight.

**Technical Assistance** – Direct consultation with the farmer, rancher, or landowner that may include developing a conservation plan for the operation or the planning, design, and layout for structures (such as grassed waterways, terraces, waste storage facilities, fences, and livestock water facilities in pastures) and management practices (such as nutrient management, irrigation water management, grazing management, and forest stand improvement). Technical assistance does not include community workshops, internet resources, farm shows and conventions, and information not directly specific to your operation.

Weed – non-woody plants (grasses, herbs) that are undesirable in a particular situation or location.

# **Chapter 3 – Enumerator Procedures**

## Questionnaire

The Conservation Practice Adoption and Motivation Survey (CPAMS) has 4 different questionnaire versions. This manual contains information for version 3, grazing practices. The questionnaire was developed in cooperation with the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and is directed at finding out what conservation practices are currently being used or have been used in the past, whether technical or financial assistance was received, why operators choose to adopt the practice, and why they may have chosen to continue, expand, or discontinue the practice.

## Method of Interviewing

The Conservation Practice Adoptions and Motivation Survey may be collected by mail, phone (CATI), fax, internet, or personal phone interview by Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI). Currently there are no plans for in person interviews. All sampled operations receive a copy of the questionnaire through the mail, with telephone follow-up by field enumerators via CAPI and associated Data Collection Centers (DCCs). Telephone enumerators at the DCCs will utilize the Blaise CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) Instrument, which automatically delivers forms and manages call backs and appointments.

Operations assigned to CATI follow-up will receive a letter and a copy of the questionnaire in the mail. The operator may choose to complete and return the questionnaire by mail or complete the questionnaire online at agcounts.usda.gov. If the operation reports data by either of these methods, they will become ineligible for calling through CATI.

Some operations will be held for Regional Field Office enumeration and will be collected by telephone, mail, fax, or field phone interview.

#### **Burden Statement**

Federal regulations require that all questionnaires used by agencies of the Federal government provide a burden statement – an estimate of the average time required to complete the questionnaire. This regulation is administered by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which has the duty of approving and overseeing all government data collection efforts. The public may respond to the Office of Management and Budget regarding any aspect of a survey.

The burden statement appears on the front page of each version of the CPAMS Questionnaire. The average time indicated on the burden statement represents the average completion time estimated for completion. If respondents ask, "How long will this take?" note the burden statement average time requirement and never directly contradict it. However, you may provide additional information, such as, "The official average for this survey is 60 minutes, but the interviews I have been doing in this area are averaging around 30 - 45 minutes."

#### SAMPLE BURDEN STATEMENT

The information you provide will be used for statistical purposes only. Your responses will be kept confidential and any person who willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about you or your operation is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both. This survey is conducted in accordance with the Confidential Information Protection provisions of Title V, Subtitle A, Public Law 107-347 and other applicable Federal laws. For more information on how we protect your information please visit: <a href="https://www.nass.usda.gov/confidentiality">https://www.nass.usda.gov/confidentiality</a>. Response to this survey is voluntary.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number is 0535-0264. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

# Confidentiality

Reports received from individual operations remain confidential and are used only for research and development purposes for the larger national survey that will be conducted in 2022. There will be no data published using the information collected during the CPAMS pilot study.

It is your responsibility to inform the respondent that this is a voluntary survey and assure them their report is confidential. A respondent has the right to know under what authority the information is being collected, the purpose for the information collected, and how information about their operation will be used. See your NASDA handbook for additional information regarding confidentiality.

# Completing the Interview

The primary operator for the targeted operation, or a partner, should be your first point of contact. The person on the operation who is most familiar with conservation practices will be best able to provide the information that is being asked in the CPAMS questionnaire.

Encourage respondents to have any records of conservation contracts or easements on hand, or other records that involve the use of conservation practices such as written plans. Using records makes for more reliable reporting.

Make sure you are familiar with and understand the questionnaire. Review the survey letter, survey instructions, and other materials. Prepare an introduction and be prepared to answer questions about the survey purpose, uses of the data, and items on the questionnaire.

Ask questions in the order they appear on the questionnaire. Do not skip questions unless instructions printed on the questionnaire allow you to do so. Read statements and questions fully and exactly as written.

Following are examples of the type of instructions that you may find on the questionnaire.

#### **Enumerator Instructions**

Enumerator instructions may be included with some questions. Enumerator instructions are provided to you so that you will complete the questionnaire correctly. Enumerator instructions are enclosed in square brackets. They should not be read to the respondent.

Example:

[Verify name and mailing address of this operation. Make any corrections necessary (including the correct operation name) on the label and continue.]

#### "Include" and "Exclude" Statements

"Include" and "exclude" statements appear with many questions. "Include" and "exclude" statements are provided to help you and the respondent clarify the meaning of the question. Read the "include/exclude" statements so that the meaning of the question is clear.

#### "Skip" Instructions

Sometimes you may encounter questions which instruct you to skip a question or section based on a particular response. Follow the "skip" instructions when they appear with questions. If the interview is being completed via CATI or CAPI, the instrument is programmed to automatically "skip" when appropriate.

#### **Example:**

Note that depending on the response ('Yes' or 'No'), you may continue or skip to the next question or next section.

201 1 Yes - Go to Item 2	3	_ 1	No - Complete Items 1a and 1b below, then go to Section 4 - Nutrien
			Management on page 9

Sometimes you will need to probe to get an adequate answer to a question, for example, when the answer isn't precise enough or if you think the respondent didn't understand the question. Probing is important to verify unusual data or correct misreported data. Be careful that you don't appear to be questioning or challenging the respondent's answers, but clarifying an answer given.

#### Reference Dates

The CPAMS questionnaire asks about different reference periods such as previous year, within the last 15 years, or at any time in the past. Be sure to read the questions careful and only refer to the date referenced for each question.

## **Important Reminders**

As you complete the questionnaire:

Make good notes. This is especially important when you find unusual situations.

Record your answers in whole numbers (no decimals) and pay attention to if the question is asking for acres or percentages.

When completing a paper questionnaire, make all entries clear and easy to read. Use a black #2 lead pencil. Do not use ink or a mechanical pencil, as questionnaires will be scanned.

Answers must be written entirely within the box or space provided (including 'Yes' and 'No' check boxes). If the answer to a question is "none", enter a dash (--) NOT a zero unless specified by the instructions.

#### Call Back Procedures

Plan each phone call for a different time of day or early evening. Use the following instructions as a guide.

#### First Attempt

If the operator or partner is not present, but is expected shortly, make an appointment to call back later or, if interviewing in person, wait for the interview. It is very important for you to keep the appointment or to call back if it cannot be kept.

If the operator or partner will not be available until after the survey is over, interview a knowledgeable person such as a spouse, son, daughter, or hired person. Try to interview the person most knowledgeable about the farming operation.

#### Follow-up Attempts

If a follow-up call is required after the first attempt, try again to interview the operator or partner. If they are still unavailable, set up an appointment if possible.

## Final Attempt

If the operation is assigned for CATI enumeration, your supervisor will determine the number of attempts for call-backs.

#### Refusals

There are always respondents reluctant to provide information and some will refuse completely. When a refusal occurs, note the reason why the operator refused. If possible, try to determine if the operation is still in business and what commodities (crops, livestock, etc.) are produced. Do not become discouraged when you get a refusal. On the next interview, continue to greet the operator with an easy, friendly manner.

# Supervision

All questions regarding data collection should be directed to your NASDA supervisor. Contact your supervisor with questions or problems as soon as they arise. Your supervisor or Regional Field Office may contact some of your respondents after you interview them as part of a Quality Check.

#### **Materials**

All Enumerators

Materials used in the Conservation Practice Adoption and Motivations Survey are listed below. Your supervisor is responsible for furnishing all necessary materials. Notify your supervisor if you are running low on supplies.

All Enumerators	
	) Copy of Survey Letter ) Copy of EDR Instructions
Field Enumerators	
( ) CAPI iPad ( ( ) NASDA Identification Card (	) Motor Vehicle Accident Report Kit ) NASDA Employee Handbook

# Survey Response Rate

A minimum 80% response rate is required by OMB and is expected from all Regional Field Offices.

#### Feedback

Everyone involved in the survey is encouraged to recommend changes to clarify or improve survey materials and procedures. Forward all recommendations to the CPAMS administrator in your Regional Field Office, who will forward them to the Survey Administrator in HQ. This will be very important due to the nature of the pilot survey and feedback is greatly welcomed.

# **Chapter 4 – Operation Identification and Screening**

# Operation Identification – Name and Address Labels

#### **Operator**

The person responsible for the day-to-day decisions for the land operated is considered the operator and is listed on the label. The operator could be the owner, hired manager, cash tenant, or share tenant. If land is rented or worked on shares, the tenant or renter is the operator.

#### **Farm Name**

A farming operation may or may not have a farm name listed on the label. If the farm does not have a farm name, the operation will be listed under an individual operator. If the respondent indicates the operation has a farm or ranch name, ask the respondent if this name should appear on the label. This will help the Regional Field Office know whether to update the label for future surveys and can be checked against the List Sampling Frame to identify potential duplication.

Names such as "The Old Smith Place," "Jones Farm," etc., should not be included if they are used only to identify different parcels of land in the respondent's operation. The farm or ranch should do business and be known by the operation name.

#### Name and Address Labels

Here is an example of a questionnaire name and address label. The format of the label in your Regional Field Office may differ from this example but will contain the same basic information.

#### BARCO B BA BAR BARCO B BA BARCO B C

State, POID, Tract, Survey ID numbers

CASI Respondent Survey Code, Strata, Sequence #
Operation Name, District, County

Operator Name, ODStatus, Supervisor, Enumerator

Address

City, State, Zip-Zip4

SURVEY CODE = 11-222222221- 71 10000

AA1AAA

RIVER VALLEY FARM 20 129 JOHN SMITH 00 307 359

**12345 RIVER RD** 

OURTOWN DE 12590-4582

## **Target Operation**

The 'target' of this CPAM survey pilot study is going to be the sampled operation. Regardless of other operating arrangements; partnerships, multiple operations, managed operations, etc., the target will be the operation that is listed on the label and the land (owned and leased) that it operates. The respondent should be the person most involved in the conservation practice decision making. If all operators are equally involved in the conservation practice decisions, then any one of them can respond.

# **Operation Target Examples**

#### **Example 1. Individual Target Name on label.**

BARCO B BA BAR BARCO B BA BARCO B C

10 300123890 01 01 2315 125698 00 SURVEY CODE=10-300123891-GMX78Q 71 10000

20 129

DENNIS R. SCOTT

00 307 359

12345 RIVER RD

OURTOWN DE 12590-4582

In the example above, there is no operation name listed, so the target will be Dennis R. Scott. **You should collect data for Dennis R. Scott's agriculture operation.** If Dennis is involved in more than one operation, you should collect data only for the operation for which he is the individual operator.

**Example 2. Combination of Names with Individual Target Name on Label.** 

BARCO B BA BAR BARCO B BA BARCO B C

10 300123890 01 01 2315 125698 00

SURVEY CODE=10-300123891-GMX78Q 71 10000

BILL & JOE FORD 20 129 BILL FORD 00 307 359

12345 RIVER RD

OURTOWN DE 12590-4582

In example 2, the operation name is Bill & Joe Ford, so the target will be the partnership by the name of Bill & Joe Ford. You should collect data for the partnership named on the label only. Bill or Joe may also be involved in a different operation, or even jointly in an operation by a different name, but you will only want to complete the survey for the Bill & Joe Ford operation.

#### **Example 3. Operation Name and Target Name on label.**

# BARCO B BA BAR BARCO B BA BARCO B C

10 300123890 01 01 2315 125698 00 SURVEY CORE = 10 300123891-GMX78Q 71 10000<sub>0 129</sub> RALPH DEAN 00 307 359 12345 RIVER RD OURTOWN DE 12590-4582

In example 3, the operation name is Windy Acre Farm, so Windy Acres Farm is the target. **You should collect data only for Windy Acres Farm, and no other operations.** The operator, Ralph Dean, may be involved in other operations, but you will want to collect data only for the land operated (owned and leased) by Windy Acres Farm.

# **Chapter 5 – Questionnaire**

# Face Page and Screening

On the front page, after confirming the address or making updates, use the screener questions to determine whether the operation is in-scope for the survey. The operation is in-scope if it:

- was in business for any time during 2020
- grazed livestock (regardless of ownership) on pasture or grazing land operated by the sampled operation (owned or rented) within the last 10 years.

If the operation meets both conditions, proceed to Section 1. If either of the conditions are not met, ask 1a. to assess the status of the livestock operation, then go to Section 15 on the back page of the questionnaire.

If the operation is not grazing livestock, it may still have other livestock or other types of agricultural production, so make sure to note if they are still operating a farm or ranch. We will not be doing any substitution for the CPAM survey, so if the operation has been turned over to someone else, collect the contact information and then conclude the survey.

#### Section 1 – Land Use and Livestock

The purpose of Section 1 is to collect some operational data for all the acres operated in order to classify the operation later for comparison of operations of different sizes and types. This section contains questions about land use, conservation programs, livestock inventories, and organic production.

#### **Questions 1-2**

For land use, there are questions about land owned, rented or leased, along with land rented out to get a total acres operated on January 1, 2021. Some things to watch:

- Owned land should include all land owned by the operation, not just cropland.
- Land rented or leased, again should include all acres that the operations pays to rent or rents on a share basis or flexible arrangement. This includes any land leased on a short-term basis or AUM basis as of January 1, 2021.
- Land rented to others needs to include any land (owned or leased) that is rented or leased by another operator or operation.
- Calculate a total by following this formula: Owned land + rented land land rented to others = total land operated on January 1, 2021.

#### **Ouestions 3-4**

Once the total land operated is established you will need to further establish, of the total acres, how many are cropland, grazing land or pasture, woodland not pastured, and other land. The sum of the items in question 3 should equal the total land reported in question 2. The acres reported in question 4 should be accounted for in question 3a.

#### **Question 5**

This question asks about the livestock inventories on the operation on January 1, 2021, or as close an approximation as can be had. The inventories of interest are beef cows, milk cows, other cattle (steers, heifers that have not calved, calves, bulls, feeder cattle, etc.), hogs and pigs, and poultry.

#### **Question 6**

This question is to find out if the operation produced organic products according to the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) standards or if the operation is in the process of transitioning to the USDA NOP in order to sell their production as certified organic. Only if the operation has at least some of their production in the USDA NOP they would answer 'yes'.

#### Section 2 – Technical Assistance

Technical assistance (See Terms and Definitions in Chapter 2) is available from several difference sources. This section is devoted to finding out which sources of technical assistance the operation has used in the past. Federal agencies such as NRCS provide technical assistance, but there may be other state or local conservation agencies, university extension services, or even advisors that can be hired.

#### **Question 1**

The respondent may or may not have received technical assistance (TA) in the past. If they have received TA, check 'yes' and ask 1a. If they haven't received TA, skip to 1b. For question 1a, TA from universities (extension services) should be included in the State or local resources. If the respondent is unsure about where a TA source falls in the 3 categories, make a note and it can be researched later.

Regardless of whether the respondent or their operation received or sought out any technical assistance, they should provide their agreement or disagreement with each of the statements in question 1b.

## Section 3 – Herd Composition and Animal Performance Goals

Section 3 asks about the type of livestock grazed, how they are divided among pastures, the ratio of male animals to female, and performance expectations and goals. This section asks specifically about the 3 most common types of grazing livestock: cattle, sheep, and goats. There is an 'other' option for any additional animal types such as bison, deer, elk, horses, llamas, alpacas, etc.

**Question 1** is a table that asks about the pastures used for grazing in 2020, with the first row asking about the number of different pastures used. Each pasture should be defined as a separate containment area where livestock are regularly grazed. This can be land that is owned, rented, or leased on an AUM basis regardless of the length of the lease. Include temporary pastures used in 2020 that may not be grazed in an average year.

The second row asks the average number of acres in each pasture, which is the total acres divided by the number of pastures used. So if in 2020 there were 3 pastures of the following acreages; 200, 400, and 900, then the average number of acres would be 1,500/3 or 500 acres.

Rows 3 through 5 are to determine the primary purpose of the livestock being grazed. The sampled operation could be primarily breeding, feeding for slaughter (stockers), or a combination of both. For each type of livestock listed in each of the columns only be one of the last three rows should be checked 'yes'. If the respondent says that the operation is primarily breeding and stockers then make sure the last row is checked 'yes'.

**Question 2** is a table that is asking about the peak number of livestock for each species on the operation during 2020, and how those livestock were divided into herds for grazing. The last column is to specify

the primary breed of the livestock grazed during 2020. If there is a mix of breeds or the breeds are not known, put 'mixed' in the cell.

**Question 3** is a table asking about the composition and performance of the breeding livestock on the operation. If the operation is strictly for feeding stockers (row 4 in question 1 is 'yes' for all livestock species), you will follow the instruction to skip the table and go to question 4 on the next page.

The first row is asking the average weight in pounds of the mature sire (bull, ram, buck, etc.) used for breeding. The second row is asking what the average weight of the breeding females (cows, sheep, does, etc. used for breeding is in pounds.

The third row is asking about the current breeding crop percentage for 2020, or the ratio of offspring to breeding females. For example: if 100 cows were bred, and there were 90 calves that were born alive, then the breeding crop percentage would be 90%. The fourth row is the desired breeding crop percentage, which could be higher or lower than the current breeding rate.

The fifth row is asking how old on average, in months, were the offspring (calves, lambs, kids, etc.) when weaning occurred. The last row is then going to ask, for the offspring that were weaned (or will be) what was the average weight at weaning in pounds, or what is the expected weaning weight.

**Question 4** is a table that is asking about the stockers that were grazed on the sampled operation in 2020. Do not include any animals that were fed in confinement. Stockers are livestock that are being raised to be slaughtered once they have reached a mature weight. If the operation did not have any stockers grazed during 2020, then leave the table blank and move to question 5. Otherwise, report the average weight of the stockers when they were first placed on the operation in the first row. Report the average number of days that the stockers were grazed on the operation in the second row. And in the third you report the average weight of stockers when removed from the operation.

**Question 5** is a table that is asking the respondent to rate the importance of different qualities or factors in deciding to purchase livestock either for breeding or stockers. Each factor should be rated in its importance individually.

**Question 6** is a table that is asking the respondent to rate the importance of different factors when deciding to reduce the size of the herd by removing livestock from the operation. If there is an additional factor not in the table that the respondent finds important or very important record that factor in question 6a. Be concise in your answer as the field is limited to 30 characters.

# Section 4 – Grazing Management

Grazing management is the process of making decisions about the harvest of vegetation with livestock, using a variety of different inputs to place or remove livestock on pastures or grazing acres.

Question 1 is a table where the respondent is being asked eight basic 'yes' or 'no' questions about how they manage the livestock on the sampled operation. Decisions can be about moving livestock, resting pasture, stocking rate decisions, along other management decisions.

**Question 2** defines the properties that are typically found in a grazing plan, and asks if, based on the definition, the respondent has a grazing plan. Question 2a. further asks if the respondent has a <u>written grazing plan</u> that was developed with assistance from an outside entity such as a government agency, private consultant, or other technical expert. If the respondent does have a written grazing plan, make the

response to 2a. 'yes' and then follow the skip instruction to go to question 3 on page 8. If the respondent doesn't have a written plan, respond 'no' and ask question 2b.

Question 2b. asks if the operation has a written grazing plan but no longer uses the plan. If the answer is 'yes', mark the response as such and follow the skip instruction to go to question 6 on page 11. If the respondent answers 'no' ask question 2c which asks if the respondent has ever had a written grazing plan for the operation. Record the response as 'yes' or 'no' and then move to question 2d.

Question 2d. should only be asked if the operation does not have a written grazing plan. Have the respondent rate their agreement or disagreement with all the statements about why they do not have a written grazing plan. Once the table for question 2d is completed, and 2e. if there was any additional reason, follow the instruction to go to Section 5 on page 12.

**Question 3** asks what proportion of all grazing land was managed using the written grazing plan in 2020. This will be a percentage of all pasture and grazing land. If the response is less than 100%, then ask question 3a, which asks whether grazing land not managed following the written grazing plan was leased from a private landowner, state agency, or permitted from a federal agency.

**Question 4** establishes the first year the respondent used a written grazing plan. Make sure that the year recorded in question 4 is the four digit year, such as 2005, not just 05. Question 4a. asks what proportion of the total grazing land was covered by the written plan for the first year of use from question 4.

Question 4b is about technical or financial assistance that the respondent may have received in the first year a written grazing management plan was used. If the respondent received technical expertise for planning or implementation that was provided by (or reimbursed by) federal, state, local government, check 'yes' for technical assistance. If the respondent received financial assistance, from any source, to help defray the cost of implementing the pest management plan, check 'yes' for financial assistance.

Respondents who check 'yes' for financial assistance should also provide the number of acres where financial assistance was received and the percentage of actual grazing management cost covered by financial assistance. If no financial assistance was received, the last two columns of the table should be left blank. Question 4b.i. asks what percentage of financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from a non-federal source (a state or local government, for example), enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 4c.

Question 4c asks the respondent to assess the importance a series of conservation, financial, and other factors deciding to use a written grazing plan for the first time. Question 4d should be completed if there is an additional factor not contained in the table that was important or very important to the respondent in deciding to start using a written nutrient management plan. There is a limit on the number of characters available so be concise in your description.

**Question 5** asks whether the respondent expanded the percent of grazing land covered by the written grazing plan since the first year it was used. If the respondent has expanded the written grazing plan to cover a larger percent of total grazing land, check 'yes' and ask question 5a through 5b. If the operator never expanded use of the grazing plan, answer 'no' and follow the skip logic to Section 5 on page 12.

Question 5a asks for information on technical and financial assistance received for expanding the percent of grazing land managed according to a written grazing plan. Assistance could be for developing or implementing the written grazing plan after the initial year established in question 4. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. Question 5a.i. asks

what percentage of financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from non-federal sources, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 5b.

Question 5b. asks the respondent to rate the importance of a series of conservation, financial, and other factors in their decision to expand the percent of acres covered by the written grazing plan.

**Question 6** asks if the operation did not use a written grazing plan in 2020, do they plan to in the next 3 years. If the answer is 'yes' go to Section 5 on page 12. If the answer is 'no' they don't intend to use a written grazing plan in the next three years, then have the respondent rate the importance of the factors in 6a. in the decision to stop managing in accordance with a written grazing management plan.

#### Section 5 – Brush and Weed Control

**Question 1** asks about brush management (woody plants) or weed control (non-woody plants) on grazing land during the past 15 years. In the table for question 1a., the first row asks if brush management was done on land owned by the operation or leased by the operation. The second row asks if weed control was practiced on owned land or leased land. If the answer is 'no' to both brush and weed control practices for both owned and leased land, then ask 1b. If any of the responses were 'yes', the operation practiced brush or weed control, skip to question 2 on page 13.

Question 1b. should only be asked if no brush or weed control was practiced (all responses in 1a. were 'no'). Have the respondent rate their agreement with each of the statements about why they did not practice any brush/weed control on grazing land that was operated. If there was an additional reason not listed in the table for 1b., then record that reason in 1c. Be concise with the answer since there is a limit to the number of characters allowed. Once completed, skip to Section 6 on page 15.

**Question 2** is a table that asks about the use of common brush and weed management methods. Ask about each method for both brush removal or control (column 1) and weed control (column 2). If an operation is controlling both brush and weeds in the same area they may use the same means for both, such as burning or mowing.

Question 2a. and 2b. ask for the percent of the total grazing land where the operation used brush and/or weed control, respectively. This percentage should be the percent of acreage on which the control was done, not just the acreage where the actual brush or weeds were. For example: If a 100 acre pasture had brush control done on patches scattered everywhere that accounted for 5 acres, you would record that all 100 acres had brush control.

**Question 3** is about technical and financial assistance received by the operation for practicing brush or weed control in the past 15 years. The first and second columns ask about receiving technical assistance and financial assistance, respectively. The third and fourth columns are filled out only if the operation received financial assistance. If financial assistance was received, ask on how many acres had assistance and the percent of the total cost covered by the financial assistance. Since the question is asking about a span covering 15 years, acres may have had brush or weed control more than once, but each should be only counted once. Question 3a. asks if the financial assistance was from a federal source like NRCS.

Question 3b. asks the respondent to rate the importance of six factors in the respondent's decision to practice brush or weed control. Fill out question 3c. if there is an important or very important reason that is not included in the table. Be concise as there is a limit to the number of characters allowed.

# Section 6 – Drinking Water and Source Water for Livestock

This section is designed to gather information about how water is made available to livestock while grazing on the pasture that is operated. There are a wide variety of different method of providing water, ranging from maintenance free options such as a stream or spring, to methods that involved transporting water to the pasture location.

**Question 1** is a table that is asking the respondent to rate their agreement with five different statements concerning the livestock watering systems that are currently in use. Ask each factor in turn and record how the respondent would rate the factor for the operation.

**Question 2** is a large table that asks about different structures and/or water sources in use on the operation in 2020. Respondents should include structures or sources that may be in use on grazing land leased from others, including state and federal permit land and short-term grazing arrangements.

Question 3 asks whether any of the livestock water systems or structures listed in response to question 2 were built, replaced, re-built, or upgraded by the operation. This should exclude and routine maintenance such as cleaning or small repairs. If the respondent answers 'yes', skip to question 3c. If the respondent answers 'no', go to table 3a. which asks the respondent to rate their agreement with the six statements about why the operation did not build, replace, re-build, or upgrade any livestock drinking water storage structure or system. If there is an additional reason not covered by the six in the table, complete 3b. Be concise with your answer as there is a limit to the number of characters. After 3b. has been completed, skip to Section 7 on page 18.

Question 3c is a table that asks about water system structures that are commonly found for providing water to livestock. The first column asks if the operation built, re-built, or improved any of the structures that are currently in use. Columns two and three ask if the operation received and technical or financial assistance for building, rebuilding, or improving the system. Column four asks how many acres of grazing land benefitted from the water structure being built, re-built, or improved (how many acres does the water structure service). The last column asks, if there was financial assistance provided, what proportion of the total expense for the water structure was provided by the financial assistance. If no financial assistance was received, leave the last column blank. If financial assistance was received, ask question 3ci. to determine if the financial assistance was from a federal source like NRCS.

Question 3d. is a table to have the respondent rate the importance of various factors in the decision to build, re-build, or improve any livestock drinking water storage systems. If there were any additional factors that the respondent found important or very important, record that in question 3e. Be concise with your answer as there is a limit to the number of characters.

# Section 7 – Controlled Burning (Prescribed Burning)

The routine practice of burning pasture has been practiced for many years to promote forage growth and to help control the spread of weeds.

**Question 1** asks if the operator has used controlled burning (prescribed burning) at any time on any portion of their grazing operation. This can be on acres that they no longer operate, but have in the past.

If the respondent says that no, they have never used controlled burning on the acres they operate (or have operated in the past), then they will need to complete the table for 1a and 1b rating their agreement with each of the statements for why they have never used controlled burning (1a) along with any additional

reason not listed in the table (1b). Once they have completed 1a and 1b, they are directed to section 8 on page 22.

If the respondent says 'yes', they have used controlled burning in the past then they will skip over 1a and 1b and go directly to question 2.

**Question 2** asks if the respondent has used controlled burning regularly for 15 or more years. "Regular use" could mean that the respondent has a schedule for burning or has used burning on an as-needed basis as a part of their pasture management plan.

If the operation regularly used controlled burning for 15 or more years, answer 'yes' and go to question 5 on page 21. If the operation hasn't been using controlled burning for 15 or more years, answer 'no' and go to question 3 on the next page.

**Question 3** asks if the operation used controlled burning regularly for less than 15 years. "Regular use" could mean that the respondent has a schedule for burning or has used burning on an as-needed basis as a part of their pasture management plan. If controlled burning has been regularly used, answer 'yes' and continue to question 3a. If controlled burning hasn't been used regularly for less than 15 years, answer 'no' and go to Section 8 on page 22.

Question 3a. asks the first year that controlled burning was used. Report this with a 4-digit year such as 2010.

Question 3b. asks what percentage of the total grazing land was controlled burning used. The percentage should be for the total grazing land that was used that year, even land on a short term lease or state/federal permit.

Question 3c. is a table that asks the respondent about any technical or financial assistance received in the first year using controlled or prescribed burning. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of burning, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial assistance. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 3ci. the survey is asking if any of the financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from a non-federal source, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 3d.

Question 3d. is a table that is aimed at assessing what factors the respondent found important in their decision to use controlled/prescribed burning for the first time. Question 3e. should be completed if there is an additional factor not contained in the table that the respondent found to be important or very important in their decision to start using controlled burning. There is a limit on the number of characters available so be concise in your description.

**Question 4** asks if the respondent has expanded the percentage of grazing acres where controlled burning was used since the first year of adoption. If the respondent has expanded the use of controlled burning since the year reported in question 3a., answer 'yes' and ask question 4a and all the sub-questions and 4b. If the operator never expanded their use of burning, answer 'no' and move on to question 5 on page 21.

Question 4a is a table to gather information on technical and financial assistance for expanding the use of controlled burning after the initial year. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of burning, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial assistance. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 4a.i. the survey is asking if any of the financial

assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from a non-federal source, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 4b.

Question 4b is a table to assess what factors the respondent found important in their decision to expand the use of controlled burning.

**Question 5** is a screening question that asks what percentage of the grazing land where controlled burning is practiced regularly (although not necessarily annually). If the answer is 100%, then you will skip to question 6 lower on the page. If the answer is anything less than 100%, ask 5a. and 5b.

Question 5a. is a series of yes/no questions about factors that may or may not be a reason that limit what percentage of grazing acres can be burned regularly. Question 5b. is to specify is there is an additional factor not covered in 5a. that limits the use of controlled burning on pasture. There is a limit on the number of characters available so be concise in your description.

**Question 6** asks about the last year that controlled burning was used. Report this with a 4-digit year such as 2010. If the response is 2020, skip to Section 8 on page 22. If the last year that controlled burning was used is 2019 or earlier, then you will ask question 5a. If the respondent does not plan to use controlled burning at all in the next 3 years, then you will check 'no' and ask 5b. If the respondent does plan to use controlled burning again in the next 3 years, then you will check 'yes' and go to Section 8 on page 22.

The table for 5b should only be completed if the respondent hasn't used controlled burning since 2019 or earlier and has no plans to use controlled burning in the next 3 years. The table is used to see what factors were important in the respondent's decision to stop practicing controlled burning.

# Section 8 – Forage Improvement or Establishment

Forage improvement or establishment is the process of seeding or reseeding grazing land to ensure that plant species and plant populations provide more and more nutritious feed for the animals being grazed. This may also be to plant species with specific qualities such as drought tolerance or for weed control.

**Question 1** asks if the operator has periodically seeded or re-seeded pastures. Periodically means that the seeding can be done on a schedule or on an as-needed basis, but that seeding or re-seeding is done with a frequency of at least once every 15 years. This can be on acres that are no longer operated, but have been seeded in the past.

If the answer to question 1 is 'yes' the operation does periodically seed or re-seed pastures, answer 'yes' and go to question 2. If the respondent says that no, they have not done any seeding on the acres they operate (or have operated in the past), then complete the table for 1a and 1b rating their agreement with each of the statements for why they have don't seed pasture (1a) along with any additional reason not listed in the table (1b). Once they have completed 1a and 1b, they are directed to section 9 on page 24.

**Question 2** is a table to gather information on technical assistance and financial assistance for pasture or hay planting or range planting. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of seeding, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial assistance. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 2a. the survey is asking if any of the financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If the financial assistance was from another source, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 2b.

Question 2b. asks the respondent to rate the importance of a series of in their decision to seed or re-seed the grazing land. Question 2c. should be completed if there is an additional factor not contained in the table that the respondent found to be important or very important in their decision to seed or re-seed grazing land. There is a limit on the number of characters available so be concise in your description.

# Section 9 – Wildlife Habitat Management

Wildlife habitat is often a consideration is managing grazing land. The planning and management of the timing of livestock grazing and adjustment to fencing, watering troughs, or vegetation.

**Question 1** is a large table that asks about a series of wildlife management practices potentially in use on the operation at any time. The responses should include practices used at any time on grazing land leased from others, including state and federal permit land, or short-term grazing arrangements. Some practices may be a requirement of the permit or lease agreement.

If the response to any factor in the table is 'yes', skip to question 3 on page 25. If <u>all</u> the responses to the table in question 1 are 'no', only then will you proceed to question 2.

**Question 2** and 2a. should be completed only if all of question 1 is 'no' for the different practices to manage wildlife habitat. Have the respondent rate their agreement or disagreement with all the statements about why they do not practice wildlife habitat management on the operations grazing land. Once the table for question 2 is completed, and 2a. if there was any additional reason, follow the instruction to go to Section 10 on page 27.

**Question 3** asks if the respondent took any action (the list of actions in question 1) to enhance the wildlife habitat on grazing land during 2020. If the answer is 'yes', then ask question 3a. which asks what percentage of grazing land action was taken to improve the wildlife habitat. If the answer is 'no', follow the instruction to skip to question 4.

**Question 4** is a screening that asks what was the first year that the operation took action to enhance wildlife habitat on grazing land. Make sure the year is recorded in 4-digits such as '2010'.

Question 4a. is a table to gather information on technical assistance and financial assistance for wildlife habitat practices. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of wildlife practices, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial assistance. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 4ai. the survey is asking if any of the financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from non-federal sources, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 4b.

Question 4b asks the respondent to rate the importance of a series of factors in the decision to enhance wildlife habitat on the sampled operation. Question 4c. asks if there are any additional reasons beyond the factors in 4b. There is a limit on the number of characters available so be concise in your description.

**Question 5** asks if since the first year, has the operation expanded the wildlife habitat enhancement to a larger portion of the grazing acres. If the answer is 'no', follow the skip instruction to go to question 6. If the answer is 'yes' ask question 1a. and 1ai. Question 1a. is a table to gather information on technical and financial assistance for expanding the use of wildlife habitat practices after the initial year. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of these practices, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial

assistance. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 5ai. the survey is asking if any of the financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from a non-federal source, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 6.

**Question 6** asks if the operation did not take habitat enhancing actions in 2020, is there a plan to do so again in the next 3 years. If the operation was still involved in wildlife habitat enhancement during 2020, or plan to in the next 3 years you will answer 'yes' and go to Section 10. If the operation didn't practice wildlife habitat enhancement and has no plan to in the next 3 years answer 'no' and continue to 6a.

The table for 6a. will be completed only if the respondent didn't practice wildlife habitat enhancement in 2020 and has no plan to for the next 3 years. The respondent needs to rate the importance of each factor in the decision to stop practicing habitat enhancement.

## Section 10 – Pasture Irrigation

Pasture irrigation is a practice used to improve the forage and/or livestock capacity of grazing land. Irrigation can be done after grazing or haying, or in preparation to have livestock brought on to graze.

**Question 1** is a screening question to determine if the operation has at any time used irrigation on the grazing land it operates. If the answer is 'no', the operation has never used irrigation, then skip to Section 11. If the answer is 'yes' irrigation is used or has been in the past, then continue with question 1a.

Question 1a. is a table that asks about 4 different irrigation management operations for pasture. Ask each option, record the answer, and then move to question 1b. which asks how many acres are typically irrigated (average acres irrigated) annually. After that, question 1c. is a table that has different irrigation systems listed for each row, and asks, by column, how many owned acres the system irrigates, how many rented acres the system irrigates, if the system was installed new in the past 15 years, or if the system received any upgrades (improvements beyond normal repairs or maintenance) in the last 15 years. If there were no new irrigation systems installed, or upgrades made to existing systems during the same time, then follow the skip instruction to go to question 2 on page 28. If any irrigation system was replaced or received an upgrade, continue to the table 1d.

The purpose for table 1d. is to gather information on technical assistance and financial assistance received for installing new or upgraded irrigation systems or system components. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of these practices, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial assistance. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 1di. the survey is asking if any of the financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from a non-federal source, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 2.

**Question 2**, based on the definition of a water management plan, asks whether the operation has a written irrigation water management plan in place on the grazing operation. If the response is 'yes', there is a plan in place, proceed to question 2a., but if the answer is 'no', follow the skip to proceed to question 2b and 2c.

Question 2a. asks whether the operation has ever followed a <u>written</u> irrigation water management plan on the grazing operation at any time. The written plan would most likely involve assistance from an outside source or an expert within the operation. If the answer is 'yes', they have followed a written irrigation

water management plan, proceed to question 3. If the answer is 'no', they have never followed a written plan, then go to questions 2b. and 2c.

If the respondent says that no, they have not ever used a written irrigation water management plan on the grazing acres they operate (or have operated in the past), they will need to complete the table for 2b and 2c rating their agreement with each of the statements for why they have never used a written plan (2b) along with any additional reason not listed in the table (2c). Once they have completed 2b and 2c, go to Section 11 on page 32.

**Question 3** asks if the respondent followed the irrigation water management plan on the grazing land in 2020. If the answer is 'yes', ask question 3a. which asks what percentage of the irrigated pasture (not total pasture) did the irrigation water management plan cover. If the answer is 'no' the respondent didn't follow the written plan in 2020, then skip to question 4.

**Question 4** asks what year the operation started to follow the irrigation water management plan. Make sure this is recorded in a 4-digit year such as '2012'. Question 4a. follows up by asking for the <u>first</u> year that the plan was implemented, what proportion of the irrigated pasture (not total pasture) was covered in the irrigation water management plan.

Question 4b. is a table to gather information on technical assistance and financial assistance received for developing or implementing a written irrigation water management plan in the first year. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of developing or implementing the plan, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial assistance). This should be limited to assistance for the written plan, not for any irrigation equipment. If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 4bi. the survey is asking if any of the financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from a non-federal source, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 4c.

Question 4c is a table that asks the respondent to rate the importance of a series of factors in their decision to follow a written irrigation water management plan on the grazing acres for the first time. Question 4d should be completed if there is an additional factor not contained in the table that the respondent found to be important or very important in their decision to start following a written irrigation water management plan. There is a limit on the number of characters available so be concise in your description.

**Question 5** asks if the operation has expanded the percent of irrigated grazing land (not percent of total grazing land) that was included in the written irrigation water management plan since the first year of adoption. If the respondent has expanded the amount of cropland since the year reported in question 4, check 'yes' and ask question 5a and the sub-question along with 5b. If the operator never expanded their use of conservation tillage, answer 'no' and move on to Section 11 on page 32.

Question 5a is a table to gather information on technical assistance and financial assistance received for developing or implementing written irrigation water management plan in the first year. If financial assistance was received to offset the cost of developing or implementing the plan, fill out the fourth column (acres covered by financial assistance) and the fifth column (what proportion of actual costs were covered by financial assistance). If no financial assistance was received, then the last two columns of the table should be left blank. For question 5a.i. the survey is asking if any of the financial assistance was from a federal source such as NRCS. If all financial assistance was from a non-federal source, enter a 0 for the percent and move to question 5b.

Question 5b. asks the respondent to rate the importance of a series of factors in the decision to expand pasture acres covered in the written irrigation water management plan.

**Question 6** asks: if the operation did not follow a written irrigation water management plan was in 2020 (which was already asked in question 3), do they plan to use follow the plan again at any time in the next three years. If the answer is 'yes', go to Section 11 on page 32. If the answer is 'no', proceed to ask question 6a. The table for 6a should only be completed if the respondent didn't follow a written irrigation water management plan in 2020. The table is used to see what factors were important in the respondent's decision to stop using the irrigation plan.

# Section 11 – Conservation Stewardship Program

**Question 1** is a screener to determine if the sampled operation (not the respondent) has ever been enrolled in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). If the answer is 'yes', you will continue by asking questions 1a. If the answer is 'no', the operation has never been enrolled in CSP, you will move on to Section 12 on page 33.

Question 1a. is another screener to see if the sampled operation ever received any financial assistance through their enrollment in CSP for the enhancement of a practice. If 'yes', the respondent should indicate whether they have received financial assistance for an enhancement to any of the practices listed in question 1b and the percentage of actual costs of applying the enhancement. If the operation has not received any financial assistance, proceed to Section 12 on the next page.

# Section 12 – Demographics

Questions 1-5 are a series of questions that are to be used for classification purposes of the operator. If there is more than one operator involved with the operation, try to collect the demographics of the principal operator if possible. If there is no principal operator or more than one principal operator, then collect the demographics of the person who would be making a majority of the conservation practice decisions.

**Question 6** transitions to ask specifically about the legal status of the sampled operation. There are 4 options; family or individual, partnership, corporation, or other. Based on the selection of the operating arrangement, you will then ask the additional questions for the legal status if there are any.

#### Section 13 – Value of Sales

The two questions in this section are for classification purposes as well to establish the size and type of operation that was sampled.

**Question 1** is asking about the <u>gross</u> value of sales that the operation had in 2020 for all agricultural products along with any government payments, rent, or landlord share of the production. The respondent is directed to choose which of the nine categories the operation falls into for 2020.

**Question 2** is asking which of the sixteen different operation types does the sample operation fall in terms of largest value of sales for 2020. If the respondent says that two different operation types are equal, then have them choose which operation type is most represented in other ways.

# Section 14 – Succession Planning

Succession planning is the process of creating a plan to transition the land and grazing operation to another operator at some point in the future.

**Question 1** asks what timeframe is the respondent using for the decisions and planned activities involved in operating the farm or ranch.

**Question 2** simply asks if the operation has a succession or estate plan in place in order to transition the operation to the next operator.

**Question 3** is a table that has 5 different potential barriers to either continuing the farm or ranch as a business or being able to pass the operation on to the next operator. Ask each factor and record if the respondent feels that it is a barrier (yes) or not a barrier (no).

**Question 4** asks if any of the five factors listed as a potential barrier in question 3 have any influence on whether or not the respondent is motivated to improve the grazing land. This includes participating in conservation practices that affect the longevity of the grazing land operated.

#### Section 15 – Conclusion

**Question 1** is to be filled out if the sampled operation is no longer in business and the business has been sold or turned over to someone else. Do your best to collect the operation name, operator's name, address, and phone number. If possible, find out if the operation was in business on June 1, 2020.

Question 2 can be comments that are related to anything on the survey, changes in the operation, or anything else that was communicated to you, such as reason for refusal.

At the end of the survey try and collect the operation email, the best phone number, the respondent's name, and the respondent's phone number if different from the operation phone number. Fill out the date in the correct month/day/year format. Conclude the survey by thanking the respondent for their time.