



Operation Name: _____ Date: _____

You must implement production practices which maintain or improve the natural resources of your operation, including soil and water quality. **"Natural resources" are defined as the physical, hydrological, and biological features of your operation, including soil, water, wetlands, woodlands and wildlife.** Biodiversity conservation refers to your efforts to improve and maintain the variety of plants, animals, insects and microorganisms on your farm and in your soil.

- This form applies to all parcels engaged in organic crop and livestock production, including greenhouses, poultry production, and other non-field organic production systems. If needed, attach additional pages and/or maps reflecting natural resource management practices.

A. Biodiversity Conservation & Natural Resource Management

- 1) Describe the natural resources and biodiversity of your operation and surrounding ecosystems, including soil type and condition, bodies of water, nearby wetlands and woodlands, wildlife, windbreaks, hedgerows, native habitat and beneficial plantings. Include any problem areas such as erosion and invasive species.

- 2) Do you have a current conservation plan or contract with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or other conservation agency?
☐ No ☐ Yes.
a) If yes, list the conservation practices that are being implemented and be prepared to show your plan at inspection.

- 3) How do you maintain or improve your water resources (consider both quantity and quality)?
☐ Efficient irrigation use (quantity, timing and technology) ☐ Allocate water to non-crop areas for wildlife and habitat
☐ Target and meter fertilizer use to prevent nutrient runoff ☐ Manage excess water towards on-site retention and infiltration
☐ Vegetative cover filters for sediments and other pollutant ☐ Use fish screens ☐ Other (describe):

- 4) How do you improve and/or maintain natural resources in non-crop areas, such as borders, fallow ag land, and non ag habitats?
☐ Preserve/restore wetlands and riparian areas ☐ Increase and protect native plants/wildlife ☐ Minimize erosion
☐ Preserve/restore wildlife corridors ☐ Leave areas as undisturbed habitat refuge ☐ Wildlife friendly fences
☐ Establish legal conservation areas ☐ Restore degraded areas ☐ Native habitats not converted to farmland since certification
☐ Other (describe):

- 5) How are you managing habitat for pollinators, natural enemy insects and other wildlife throughout the production season?
☐ Hedgerows ☐ Windbreaks ☐ Raptor perches or trees at field edge ☐ Bird or bat boxes ☐ Ensure a clean water source
☐ Plant flowers interspersed with crops ☐ Implement measures to support a variety of bee species
☐ Allow non-invasive plants in non-cropped, fallow, & border areas ☐ Provide extended food supply ☐ Other (describe):

- 6) What actions do you take to prevent or control invasive plant/animal species, especially those threatening natural areas?
☐ Learn to identify invasive plant and animal species ☐ Monitor for new introductions and suppress or remove immediately
☐ Plant competing beneficial native plants ☐ Use weed & pest-free seed/planting stock/soil amendments/mulches
☐ State or Federal agency controls invasive species ☐ Other (describe):

- 7) If you restrict wildlife from your production areas due to food safety or other crop production concerns, or if you have converted wildlife habitat to crop production, how do you mitigate the resulting loss of wildlife habitat?
☐ Develop or enhance habitat in other areas of your farm ☐ Plant buffers between crop and habitat areas
☐ Leave room for habitat when using fencing (riparian or corridor) ☐ Other (describe):

☐ Not applicable (explain why not):





- 8) Operations producing crops within enclosed structures/buildings (i.e. greenhouses, sprout or mushroom production, etc): Describe additional conservation measures implemented at your operation. ☐ Not applicable
- ☐ Water conservation ☐ Energy conservation ☐ Recycling ☐ Composting ☐ Diverse outdoor plantings
- ☐ Surrounding habitat restoration ☐ Sustainable packaging ☐ Crop rotation within greenhouses ☐ Other (describe):

- 9) Describe any additional measures taken to conserve natural resources: ☐ Not applicable

B. Biodiversity and Natural Resources Monitoring Plan

- 1) How do you verify the effectiveness of your conservation measures and document whether they improve or maintain the natural resources of your operation?
- ☐ Photograph logs ☐ Document fertility & pest control cost trends ☐ Document water use trends
- ☐ Plant, animal, insect surveys ☐ Observations in farm logs and journals ☐ Maintain conservation map
- ☐ Water testing ☐ Soil testing ☐ Periodic expert evaluation and report (such as NRCS) ☐ Other (describe):

C. Conservation Involving Livestock ☐ Not applicable, no livestock involved

- 1) How do you protect natural wetlands, riparian areas and sensitive habitats from impacts due to livestock?
- ☐ Limit livestock access to riparian areas, sensitive habitats and use designated stream crossings
- ☐ Locate feed stations, water troughs and mineral blocks away from streams and water sources
- ☐ Conserve native vegetation along waterways ☐ Manage excess manure to prevent nutrient and pathogen pollution
- ☐ Allow the natural process of plant regeneration along stream banks ☐ Other (describe):
- 2) How do you improve or protect your pasture or rangeland?
- ☐ Manage the frequency, density and timing of grazing to allow plant regeneration ☐ Reseed trampled or eroded areas
- ☐ Plant a diversity of native species ☐ Provide adequate shaded areas to minimize soil compaction
- ☐ Prevent excess deposits of manure ☐ Encourage plant growth that filters manure runoff
- ☐ Minimize grazing wetlands and other soggy areas ☐ Other (describe):
- 3) What management practices do you use to ensure a healthy relationship between livestock and wildlife?
- ☐ Use guard animals ☐ Graze when predation is low ☐ House livestock overnight in protected area ☐ Use electric fencing
- ☐ Provide water troughs with escape ramps for wildlife ☐ Small animals are grazed with large ☐ Predator lights are used
- ☐ Design fencing to minimize entrapment and provide for wildlife corridors
- ☐ Allow non-predatory wildlife, such as grazers and birds to co-exist with livestock ☐ Other (describe):
- 4) How do you manage yards, feeding pads, feedlots, laneways and housing to prevent runoff to surface water and to prevent dust from moving offsite?
- ☐ A plan for confinement areas is in place before severe erosion problems occur ☐ Livestock is rotated to multiple areas
- ☐ Concentrated runoff is diverted into a temporary storage lagoon ☐ Manure is periodically removed and composted
- ☐ Confined sites are large enough to handle the type and number of animals present ☐ Air filtration is used in housing
- ☐ Manure ground into dust in confined areas is watered down ☐ Windbreaks are used outside housing
- ☐ Confined sites are made of concrete or well-draining rock bases ☐ Other (describe):

