

§613.2

7 CFR Ch. VI (1-1-01 Edition)

providing for the commercial production and use of plant materials for programs of soil, water, and related resource conservation and development.

§613.2 Policy and objectives.

(a) It is NRCS policy to assemble, comparatively evaluate, release, and distribute for commercial increase new or improved plant materials needed for broad programs of resource conservation and development for agriculture, wildlife, urban, recreation, and other land uses and environmental needs. It is NRCS policy to conduct plant materials work in cooperation with other agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, such as the Agricultural Research Service, and with other federal and state research agencies including state agricultural experiment stations. The emphasis of the NRCS plant materials work is to find suitable plants for erosion control adapted to soil and site conditions where vegetation is difficult to establish. In contrast, the emphasis of research agencies and organizations in plant development is to improve economically important crops. The NRCS program of testing and releasing new seed-propagated plant materials follows the guidelines in "Statement of Responsibilities and Policies Relating to the Development, Release, and Multiplication of Publicly Developed Varieties of Seed-Propagated Crops," which was adopted in June 1972 by land grant colleges and interested federal agencies. NRCS releases improved conservation plant materials requiring vegetative multiplication in ways appropriate for particular states and particular species by working with experiment stations, crop improvement associations, and other state and federal agencies.

(b) The objective of the plant materials activity is to select or develop special and improved plants, and techniques for their successful establishment and maintenance to solve conservation problems and needs related to:

- (1) Controlling soil erosion on all lands.
- (2) Conserving water.
- (3) Protecting upstream watersheds.
- (4) Reducing sediment movement into waterways and reservoirs through

the stabilization of critical sediment sources such as surface mined lands, highway slopes, recreation sites, and urban and industrial development areas.

(5) Stabilizing disposal areas for liquid and solid wastes.

(6) Improving plant diversity and lengthening grazing season on dryland pastures and rangelands.

(7) Replacing brush on mountain slopes with fire-retarding plant cover to reduce the possibility of fires that threaten life and property or result in serious sediment sources.

(8) Improving the effectiveness of windbreaks and shelterbelts for reducing airborne sediment, controlling snow drifting, and preventing crop damage from wind erosion.

(9) Protecting streambank, pond, and lake waterlines from erosion by scouring and wave action.

(10) Improving wildlife food and cover.

(11) Selecting special-purpose plants to meet specific needs for environment protection and enhancement.

(12) Selecting plants that tolerate air pollution agents and toxic soil chemicals.

§613.3 NRCS responsibilities in plant materials.

NRCS operates or enters into agreements with state universities or other state organizations to operate plant materials centers. NRCS employs specialists for selecting and using plant materials. NRCS responsibilities are to:

(a) Identify the need for suitable plant materials and cultural and management methods in resource conservation and for environmental protection and enhancement.

(b) Assemble and comparatively evaluate plant materials at the plant materials centers and on sites where soil, climate, or other conditions differ significantly from those at the centers.

(c) Make comparative field plantings for final testing of promising plants and techniques in cooperation with conservation districts and other interested cooperators.

(d) Release cooperatively improved conservation plants and maintain the breeder or foundation stocks in ways

appropriate for particular state and plant species by working with experiment stations, crop improvement associations, and other state and federal agencies.

(e) Produce limited amounts of foundation or foundation-quality seed and plants available by grant to or by exchange with conservation districts, experiment stations, other federal and state research agencies, and state seed certifying organizations that will use the material to establish seed fields, seed orchards or plantings for vegetative increase.

(f) Encourage conservation districts, commercial seed producers, and commercial and state nurseries to produce needed plant materials for conservation uses and to assist them in this production.

(g) Encourage the use of improved plant materials in resource conservation and environmental improvement programs.

§ 613.4 Special production of plant materials.

NRCS can produce plant materials in the quantity required to do a specific conservation job if this production will serve the public welfare and only if the plant materials are not available commercially. This function will be performed only until the plant materials are available commercially. Specific production of plant materials by NRCS requires the approval of the Chief.

§ 613.5 Plant materials centers.

(a) The National Plant Materials Center. The National Plant Materials Center at Beltsville, Maryland, serves as the central facility for assembling, increasing, and determining the characteristics of plant materials from foreign and domestic sources. Plant materials with potential value for conservation and related uses are distributed to other plant materials centers.

(b) Other Plant Materials Centers. There are 23 other plant materials centers. Each serves several major land resource areas. Seventeen of these other centers are operated by NRCS, and six by cooperating agencies, as follows:

(1) Operated by NRCS:

Tucson, Arizona
Lockeford, California

Brooksville, Florida
Americus, Georgia
Molokai, Hawaii
Aberdeen, Idaho
Manhattan, Kansas
Quicksand, Kentucky
East Lansing, Michigan
Coffeetown, Mississippi
Elsberry, Missouri
Bridger, Montana
Cape May Courthouse, New Jersey
Big Flats, New York
Corvallis, Oregon
Knox City, Texas
Pullman, Washington

(2) Operated by cooperating agencies with financial and technical assistance from NRCS:

Los Lunas, New Mexico (New Mexico State University)
Bismarck, North Dakota (North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts)
Meeker, Colorado (White River and Douglas Creek Soil Conservation Districts with partial funding from NRCS)

(3) Operated by cooperating agencies with technical assistance from NRCS:

Palmer, Alaska (State of Alaska)
Kingsville, Texas (Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas Agricultural and Industrial University, and South Texas Association of Conservation Districts)
Nacogdoches, Texas (Stephen F. Austin University and the East Texas Association of Conservation Districts)

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