

## § 612.4

drometeorological data, such as precipitation, temperature, humidity, solar radiation, and wind.

(b) Water supply forecasts in the western states area are generally made monthly from January through June. Forecasts may be made more frequently for an established need when data are available to NRCS.

### § 612.4 Eligible individuals or groups.

(a) Any individual or group who is a significant water user and who would benefit from a water supply forecast may obtain forecasts from NRCS on a regular basis provided data are available to NRCS to develop a forecast at the desired location.

(b) The program collects and interprets data as a service and an aid to agricultural interests, particularly those served by or affiliated with soil, water, and other conservation districts. Information collected by NRCS for these agricultural users is also made available to other Federal, State, and private agencies and to the general public without charge. Cooperator financial contribution is usually required for special measurements or interpretations beyond the scope of the regular program.

### § 612.5 Dissemination of water supply forecasts and basic data.

Water supply outlook reports prepared by NRCS and its cooperators containing water supply forecasts and basic data are usually issued monthly by each NRCS state office in the western states area for the months of January through June. Other reports jointly issued by NRCS and its cooperators include a fall water supply summary, annual and accumulative summaries of data, and a western states area report covering water supply outlook.

### § 612.6 Application for water supply forecast service.

Requests for obtaining water supply forecasts or related assistance may be directed to any NRCS office in the western states areas. NRCS offices are described in part 600 of this chapter.

### § 612.7 Forecast user responsibility.

The forecast user's obligation to the federal government is to give appro-

## 7 CFR Ch. VI (1-1-03 Edition)

appropriate credit and recognition to NRCS for information furnished. The Federal Government does not assume any responsibility for management decisions the user makes which may be based in whole or part on information provided by NRCS.

## PART 613—PLANT MATERIALS CENTERS

Sec.

613.1 Purpose.

613.2 Policy and objectives.

613.3 NRCS responsibilities in plant materials.

613.4 Special production of plant materials.

613.5 Plant materials centers.

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### § 613.1 Purpose.

This part provides Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) policy on the operations of plant materials centers. The centers have responsibilities for assembling, testing, releasing, and 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.