

From: [Soil & Water Conservation Program](#)
To: [DNR.Soil and Water Conservation Districts staff](#)
Cc: [DNR.MGS_SWC_Staff](#)
Subject: N340 Updates
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 11:58:00 AM

Good morning.

The Soil and Water Program would like to remind and inform all SWCD's using the N340 cover crop practice of some recent changes to the standard by NRCS and changes made to the soil health tests that are required to be sent to SHAC.

Below is a link to the new instructions for taking a soil sample to be submitted to SHAC, soil rings are no longer used, the sampling method is similar to the process of pulling a soil test for fertilizer recommendations. Also for fiscal year 2026 a nutrient test will be included in the results of the soil health test at no additional charge. It's important to remember the soil health samples must still be mailed to SHAC, there is no need to send an additional sample to receive the fertilizer recommendations with the soil health test. The prices for the SHAC test for fiscal year 2026 will also remain the same as the prior year.

https://mosoilandwater.land/sites/mosoilandwater/files/Soil%20Sampling%20Depth%20and%20Collection%20Techniques%20for%20Soil%20Fertility%20and%20Soil%20Health%20Testing_Final.pdf

NRCS did send a Technical Transmittal regarding the practice as well dated July 18, 2025. The NRCS 340 standard and IR were updated with the following summary of changes:

340 Standard:

1. Addition and/or separation of purposes
2. New requirements included in Additional Criteria based on purpose.

340 IR:

1. Planting Zone Map has changed from 4 zones down to 3 zones
2. With the change to 3 planting zones, the planting dates have also been updated
3. Cool season grasses seeding rates have changed based on the resource concern being addressed. When addressing soil erosion, water quality degradation – excess nutrients,

and weed/plant pest pressure, the seeding rate remains 40 lbs/ac drilled rate. For all other purposes, the drilled seeding rate is 30 lbs/ac.

4. New species have been added such as browntop millet, Japanese millet, foxtail millet, proso millet, teff, camelina, chicory, berseem clover, balansa clover and sweetclover
5. Mix Guide examples have been updated based on resource concern
6. Legume inoculant technical as been updated to the National PMC version.

It is important to note with the update of the 340IR the newest form should be used with all FY26 state cost-share contracts as the planting zones have been reduced. Also, for all FY 26 cover crop contracts the contract and mapped acres in the DNR mapping system should match. Notes on the contract or map should no longer be used as a variance when acres are generated from Conservation Desktop, in those cases the transfer tool should be used for accurate map reporting when CD is used to plan to the practice.

Any questions please contact your district coordinator.

Thank you,

Soil and Water Conservation Program

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