

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN
AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

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OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND
MECHANICAL COLLEGE AND
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE, COOPERATING

EXTENSION SERVICE
COUNTY AGENT WORK
STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA

Distributed in Furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914

ADJUSTMENT IN AGRICULTURE—III
ADMINISTRATIVE RULINGS AMENDED

**B. Use of Contracted Acres Under The
Wheat Contract**

The government is urging wheat farmers who have signed the wheat allotment contract to avail themselves of the opportunity to use the contracted acreage for various constructive purposes. The government's program of crop adjustment would be greatly handicapped if the contracted acreage should be used to increase in any way the existing surpluses of agricultural commodities.

Every wheat farmer who has signed the wheat allotment contract should understand that he is receiving a cash rental from the government for the land which is being retired from wheat production. He should keep in mind that in his contract with the government he has agreed to abide by the conditions and regulations approved by the Secretary of Agriculture which concern uses of contracted acres. Wheat growers generally are hopeful of the ultimate success of the government's program and are willing to use the contracted acres in accordance with the wishes of the government. It is probable that very few growers will intentionally attempt to misuse the contracted acreage.

The requirements of the wheat allotment contract and of the administrative rulings are quite easily explained by stating typical questions which arise among farmers who have signed the wheat allotment contract, and giving answers taken either from the contract or from administrative rulings. Many such questions relate to the possibility of using the contracted acreage for the production of food and feed. Other questions involve the possibility of using this land directly or indirectly in such a way as to make an additional profit. Every wheat grower should study carefully the uses of the contracted acreage which have been approved.

TO THE WHEAT FARMER: This circular is based upon administrative rulings of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in effect April 1, 1934. Said rulings are subject to changes and modifications by the Secretary of Agriculture. Contracting growers agree to conform to wheat allotment contract regulations and administrative rulings pertaining to contracted acres. The answers to questions were approved by the Replacement Crops Section of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the Wheat Section concurring. This circular should be used in connection with others in the Adjustment in Agriculture series listed below.

- I. The Live at Home Plan for Oklahoma.
- II. Crop Adjustment—Oklahoma's Opportunity for Soil Improvement.
- III. Administrative Rulings Amended.

Question 1. I have signed the wheat allotment contract and have contracted to the government a certain number of acres of my wheat land. Can these contracted acres be used for any particular purpose?

Answer: The purpose of the government in contracting with you and paying you a cash rental per acre is to take the land out of production. The success of the entire crop adjustment program would be at stake if the contracted acreage should be used to produce other crops than wheat to be harvested and if such crops or the products obtained from feeding such crops should be placed on the market. Such a practice would be unwise because it would add to existing surpluses of these crops, thus creating an additional burden to other farmers who have been growing these crops.

Question 2. When are the contracted acres released from the terms of the wheat allotment contract?

Answer: The wheat year runs from July 1 to July 1 in this state. The contracted acreage should be designated and marked out at that time. When a tame permanent pasture or a meadow crop is planted on the contracted acreage in the fall or spring the crop may be grazed or harvested after wheat harvest time when the contract expires, provided that another contracted acreage is designated and set aside at that time.

Question 3. What different uses of the contracted acreage will the government approve?

Answer: Every farmer who signs the wheat allotment contract is urged by the government to use the contracted acres in a way that will improve or increase the value of his farm, but not add to any existing agricultural surplus. The following different uses of the contracted wheat acreage have been approved by the government:

(1.) **Permit ground to lie unplanted.** The land may be permitted to lie unplanted or uncultivated when this can be done without serious loss due to soil erosion. Also, it is expected that any obnoxious weeds on such land shall be mowed before the seed develops. Such a practice of resting land is not uncommon in certain sections of the country. Often a heavy weed growth can be plowed under to advantage for soil improvement.

(2.) **Practice summer fallowing.** In the panhandle of Oklahoma and to a lesser extent the other western counties, summer fallowing has been found to be desirable under certain conditions. In dry farming sections experience has indicated that low yields may be expected when wheat is sown on soils which are low in subsoil moisture. Crop production is most certain when subsoil moisture is plentiful. Summer fallowing often will prove beneficial when it becomes necessary to accumulate a reserve supply of moisture in the subsoil. The typical soil of the panhandle is deep, often five or six feet, and will retain a large amount of moisture when summer fallowing is properly done. Contracted acreage which has been summer fallowed may be planted to wheat, provided another contracted acreage is designated and set aside at that time.

(3.) **Plant to permanent pasture.** The wheat acreage reduction program is a real opportunity for Oklahoma farmers to establish tame pastures. The use of the land for this purpose is to be encouraged. Frequently it may be desirable to retire permanently from production certain sloping fields which are subject to serious soil erosion. The need for good tame pastures has become general in many sections of the state. Pasture grass mixtures which are adapted to local conditions should be used. An extension circular giving pasture recommendations for different sections of the state may be obtained from your county agent. It should be kept in mind that land seeded to permanent pasture is not eligible as contracted acreage during the second year when used for pasture or when a hay crop is harvested.

(4.) Plant to meadow crops. Meadow crops for all practical purposes will include alfalfa, sweet clover, red clover, alsike clover, lespedeza, timothy, redbud and orchard grass when grown for the production of hay. Oftentimes, the meadows are used for grazing during certain seasons of the year. Meadow crops may be planted on the contracted acreage when such acreage is a part of a main field normally devoted to wheat in the customary cropping system of the farm. Meadow crops shall not be harvested for hay during the term of the contract.

(5.) Practice weed control. On farms badly infested with certain obnoxious weeds, it may be desirable to use the contracted acreage to eradicate weed pests by approved methods of control. There are many patches of field bindweed in western Oklahoma and of Johnson grass and other weed pests in other sections. Frequent cultivation during the summer growing season in which all growth is prevented will prove very effective in weed control. Intensive cultivation during a period of drouth in summer is a particularly effective means of weed control in practically all instances. The use of chlorates for weed control is often practicable when undertaken under careful supervision. However, contracted acreage shall not consist of small patches, or fields of irregular shape for the purpose of weed control.

(6.) Plant forest trees. In many instances, it will be desirable to plant a part or all of the contracted acreage with adapted forest trees. It is often practicable to establish a shelterbelt of timber around the farmstead to provide protection during the windy seasons of the year. Shelterbelts would add greatly to home comfort on western Oklahoma farms. Timber is not abundant in most sections of the state. The planting of wood lots to provide fuel or fence posts for farm use would seem desirable on many farms.

(7.) Plant soil improvement crops. Very few Oklahoma farmers have made a serious attempt to build up and maintain the soil fertility of their farms. On many wheat farms small grain crops, chiefly wheat, have been grown almost continuously on the same land since it was first cultivated. In nearly all sections of the state wheat yields have declined greatly because of poor cropping practices. Many wheat growers will find the contracted acreage a real opportunity to begin a much needed soil improvement program on their farms.

For soil improvement such crops may be planted as cowpeas, mungbeans, soybeans, Austrian winter peas, hairy vetch and sweet clover. Other clover and green manuring crops may be used in accordance with adaptation. Such crops shall not be pastured or otherwise harvested, but shall be plowed under to add to the nitrogen and organic matter content of the soil.

(8.) Plant erosion prevention crops. In certain sections of western Oklahoma dust storms during the spring months frequently cause much damage. Under such conditions, it will be desirable to plant erosion prevention crops, such as a small grain crop or a sorghum crop (including Sudan grass) when sown broadcast, or any legume crop when sown broadcast. An erosion prevention crop may usually be considered as a soil improvement crop. Such a crop shall not be pastured or otherwise harvested, unless in accordance with terms of the contract.

Question 4. Is it permissible for me to use the contracted wheat acres to grow food and feed for home use?

Answer: It is not permissible to use the contracted acreage for the production of food and feed crops for use on the farm if any other land is available on which such crops can be grown, after you have taken out enough land to comply with your wheat contract, and also any other crop adjustment contracts on your farm. If you do not have additional land to grow food and feed for your actual home needs, then you are entitled to use the contracted acres or part of the contracted acreage for this purpose,

according to your probable needs. The burden of proof for doing so lies with the farmer himself.

It shall be deemed to be a violation of your contract to shift food crops grown for home consumption on the farm or feed crops grown for the production of livestock (or livestock products) for home consumption or use on the farm, to the contracted acreage, thereby releasing other lands for the planting of crops for sale or for feed for the production of livestock or of livestock products for sale. If you are in doubt as to whether you are entitled to use the contracted acreage for growing food and feed for home use it is quite important that you obtain the approval of your county wheat allotment committee before doing so.

Question 5. Can I grow all the feed I will need on the contracted acreage for home use and continue to plant other fields on the farm to a grain sorghum crop, corn, oats, or barley?

Answer: No. The feed crops that would normally be grown on other land of the farm for the feeding of the farm livestock shall not be shifted to the contracted acreage, thereby releasing acreage for the production of some crop or product for sale.

Question 6. Can oats or any other feed crops be grown on the contracted acreage during the term of the contract, to be stored for future use?

Answer. No.

Question 7. Can grain sorghum, oats, or any other feed crop be grown on the contracted acreage to be fed to young mules or to young beef animals that will not be sold until after the expiration of the wheat contract?

Answer: No. The contracted acreage shall not be used to produce feed for livestock kept for sale or kept for the sale of their products.

Question 8. If I plant cowpeas, or any other legume crop to plow under for soil improvement, can I harvest enough seed for my own use before turning under the vines?

Answer: Yes, provided you do not have any other land available upon which you can produce a seed crop. The burden of proof for so doing rests with you. You do not have the right to harvest the seed crop and offer any part of it for sale on the market to help pay the expenses of producing the crop.

Question 9. I am operating a farm and use my work stock for doing a certain amount of contract work on the side. I find it necessary to buy additional feed each year. Is it permissible for me to use the contracted acres for raising feed needed for my work stock?

Answer: No. You have more work stock now than is needed for conducting your regular farm operations. You admit that it has not been your policy to produce the feed you needed for your work stock in the past. If you had so desired, you could have reduced your acreage of wheat in previous years and produced the amount of feed you needed. Certainly you are not entitled to use the contracted acreage for producing such feed at the present time.

Question 10. I have a few cows which I milk regularly and sell cream. I have never produced enough feed to supply the needs of my farm. I can do so this year if I can use the contracted acreage. Is this permissible?

Answer: No. The contracted acreage shall not be used to produce feed for dairy cattle, beef cattle, hogs, sheep or poultry kept for sale or kept for the sale of their products.