



Brood Strips for Croplands



Figure 1. A brood strip left in a wheat stubble field.

PURPOSE:

Brood strips in cropland are designed to leave undisturbed/untreated strips of standing annual broad-leaf plants, like annual sunflower (*Figure 1*). Brood strips work great after wheat or other crops are harvested in early summer. These strips provide excellent food sources, such as insects, seeds, and green browse, for wildlife. The bare ground under the canopy of annual forbs allow young birds to move freely to forage and escape predators. Most importantly, they provide excellent brood-rearing habitat at the most critical time of the year when young game birds require insects for food.

SPECIFICATIONS:

- Brood strips can be left after wheat harvest or in fallow fields. Consider the effects of residual and pre-emergent herbicides when selecting fields for brood strips.
- If left in wheat stubble, it is important to harvest the wheat so that 15" of stubble remains.
- Strips should be a minimum of 30 feet wide and up to a maximum of 60 feet wide. Minimum total size should be about 1 acre per field up to a maximum of 10 acres per field.
- Fields left completely undisturbed/untreated, post-harvest, are still encouraged. These specifications are merely a guideline for those producers who closely follow a no-till/chemical-fallow rotation.
- Preferred brood strip locations may include the outer perimeter or field border; center pivot corners, sites adjacent to row crops, areas within the field to encourage snow catchment, as well as areas adjacent to streams, wetlands, wooded draws, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grass, and travel corridors between habitat types.
- Linear strips, which maximize widths and are well managed, will produce good sources of food and cover throughout the winter as well (*Figure 2*).

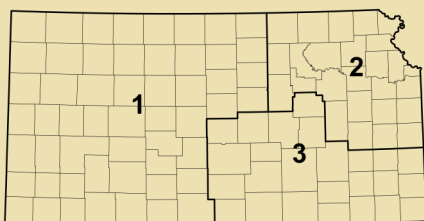
Primary Habitat Considerations:

- Provide brood rearing habitat for upland game birds.
- Provide food source for upland game birds, deer, dove, and other wildlife.
- Provide pollinator habitat.
- Provide escape cover for young wildlife.
- Provide winter cover and food throughout winter.



Figure 2. A brood strip left throughout winter to provide winter cover and forage.

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