

Plant a hedge using native plants and shrubs



Authors:

Corinne Zurbrugg
(corinne.zurbrugg@agridea.ch)



Geographical location:

Switzerland, Europe



Keywords:

Biodiversity, farmer knowledge, hedge, native plants

Hedgerow planting the what and the where

Hedgerows structure the landscape and connect natural habitats. When properly planted and maintained, hedgerows perform a variety of functions for nature and agriculture.

Hedgerows should preferably be planted with native, regionally typical species of local origin. Such species meet the nutritional needs of the animals that live in and have adapted to them. Hedgerows with at least five species are particularly valuable. Species selection should include a combination of thorny species (20-30%) for nesting cover e.g. hawthorn and blackthorn, berry-producing species for winter food e.g. elder, guelder rose, and early flowering species for pollinators e.g. willow, hazel. The selection of species also depends on site conditions e.g. soil moisture and exposure.



Photo credit: Corinne Zurbrugg

Benefits

Hedgerows provide various animals with food, shelter, breeding and hibernation sites, and connect natural habitats providing corridors for wildlife. Hedgerows offer many agronomic advantages such as supporting natural pest control, pollination, erosion and wind protection, regulating the water balance, preventing landslides, bank erosion and soil drift, reducing water evaporation, and marking field boundaries.

Practical recommendations for planting

- Connect with other habitats (e.g. orchards, extensively used meadows, fallow land, or forests).
- Plant parallel to the direction of cultivation and, if possible, in a north-south direction to minimise shade and not hinder mechanical cultivation.
- Plant on the south side of paths and streams so that the shade cast by the hedges does not fall on cultivated land.
- Be careful when choosing varieties: some plants carry disease that can be transported to arable crops (e.g. hawthorn, rowan, red honeysuckle).

Further Information on farmbionet.eu

This project receives funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme under project No. 101082102. Grant agreement ID: 101182942. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI



Funded by
the European Union