

Planting and management of hedgerows

Goal Provision of habitat and winter quarters for beneficials and other wild animals and contribution to key ecosystem services

Short description of the measure

- Species-rich and diverse structured hedgerows should be maintained and/or planted
- Only plants of autochthon origin to the corresponding landscape shall be used
- Seedlings should be placed in a distance of at least 2 m (margins 1 m)
- Around the hedgerows and shrub islands there may be enough space for the establishment of wild herbs.
- First pruning should be done earliest 6 years after planting
- Pruning should be done in winter (Febr./March) in case of species with fruits which provide food for wildlife such as birds, ideally February/March.
- Pruning must only be done on one side per year and on maximum of 30–50 % of the whole hedgerows.
- Coppicing of either trees within the hedgerows or fast-growing bush-species may be done every 5–10 years in order to regenerate the hedgerows.

Timeframe
(When to start a measure and anticipated time for implementation)

When to start: Best time to plant hedgerows is autumn, but seedlings can be planted through whole winter as long as the soil is not frozen.

- Hedgerows of at least 3–4m width
- Length depending on the function and the landscape mosaic
- Hedgerows consisting of > 5 native species
- Representation of 3 strata: grass, shrub and tree element
- Strip of wild herbs or flowering strip surrounding the hedgerows

How auditors can assess if the measure has been implemented in a good quality?



Pic. 1: A half-year old hedgerows consisting of native species, well protected from animals.



Pic. 2: A natural hedgerows from many different native species, surrounded by a 1m buffer zone of grass strip before the agricultural used plot starts

Additional information the auditor need for verification (if any)

Hedgerows should only be planted on sites where they do not pose concurrence to animals which are dependent on open landscapes.

Effects on biodiversity

(ecosystems, species, soil biodiversity)



The multilayered structure of hedgerows (soil-, herb-, shrub- and (if any) tree layer) facilitates a potential high **species diversity**.

Hedgerows support **structural diversity**, act climate regulating and as a **windbreak** (which is e.g. in favor of heat-dependent species such as butterflies).

Many species also use hedgerows as **winter quarters** (hedgehog, Common Toad, ...), **hiding place** (Hare, Birds, ...), **forage** (e.g. already in early spring for wild bees and other insects; berries and other fruits in autumn), as well as **territory border** (e.g. perches and song post for birds, such as red-backed shrike, barred warbler, brown linnet, greater whitethroat).

Indicator/key data

- Hedgerows of at least 3–4 m width
- Number of species per hedgerows
- Length of hedgerows
- Complexity of the structure: grass shrub and tree elements are present

Reference

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- www.nabu.de/umwelt-und-ressourcen/oekologisch-leben/balkon-und-garten/naturschutz-im-garten/01955.html
- www.landwirtschaft-artenvielfalt.de/
- Promotion of biodiversity in fruit plantations – NABU; REWE and Lake Constance Foundation, 2015
- Stiftung Rheinische Kulturlandschaft, DBU: Abschlussbericht Maßnahmen- und Artensteckbriefe zur Förderung der Vielfalt typischer Arten und Lebensräume der Agrarlandschaften, 2018
- Entry Level Stewardship - Natural England publications

Further information: [Knowledge Pool](#)

This Action Fact Sheet belongs to the training package for auditors of standard organisations and companies and was developed within the project LIFE Food & Biodiversity (Biodiversity in Standards and Labels of for the Food Industry). The main objective of the project is to improve the biodiversity performance of standards and sourcing requirements in the food industry by helping standard organisations to integrate efficient biodiversity criteria into their schemes and motivating food processing companies and retailers to include comprehensive biodiversity criteria into their sourcing guidelines.

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