



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY
E612133X1

CONSERVATION
STEWARDSHIP
PROGRAM

Adding food-producing trees and shrubs to existing agroforestry plantings

Conservation Practice 612: Tree/Shrub Establishment

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture, Range, Forest, Associated Ag Land, Farmstead

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Degraded Plant Condition

PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 15 years

Enhancement Description

Plant food-producing trees and shrubs for wildlife or human consumption within windbreaks, alley cropping, multi-story cropping, silvopasture systems, and/or riparian forest buffers.

Criteria

- States will apply general criteria from the NRCS National Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) 612 as listed below, **and additional criteria as required by the NRCS State Office.**
- Plant tree, shrub, and bramble species that produce food and/or culinary items to create an edible landscape. See State lists for suitable woody plants.
- Apply at least one of the following activities, within existing windbreaks, alley cropping, multi-story cropping, silvopasture systems, and/or riparian forest buffers, to improve edible food production:
 - Add at least one edible, food producing row to existing linear plantings.
 - Add clusters of food-producing plants to existing plantings, so that food plants occupy at least 10% of the total area established in an agroforestry practice.



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- Add food-producing plants to occupy idle areas of the operation, such as field corners adjacent to existing plantings.
- Plant a variety of tree, shrub and bramble species (3 or more, using native species whenever possible) with varying flowering times to favor pollinator species and to provide an extended time frame for available food.
- Trees and shrubs will be planted on selected areas within any land use that contains an agroforestry installation. Groupings of trees and shrubs will be designed for best growth. Further considerations are visual appeal, proximity to farmsteads, proximity to areas of wildlife use or viewing, or other locations depending on landowner objectives.
- Maximize planting space by creating vertical structure with varying plant heights and plant sizes.
- Minimize herbicide use. Use spot weed treatments and avoid spraying when flowers are present.
- No plants on the Federal or state noxious weeds list, or plants known to be aggressive in the local area, shall be planted.
- Planting rates will be adequate to accomplish the planned purpose for the site.
- Planting dates, and care in handling and planting of the cuttings or seedlings will ensure that planted materials have an acceptable rate of survival for the intended purpose.
- Only viable, high-quality and adapted planting stock will be used.
- A precondition for tree/shrub establishment is appropriately prepared sites. Refer to criteria in CPS Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490).
- Selection of planting technique, type of planting stock, and timing will be appropriate for the site and soil conditions.
- Refer to criteria in CPS Integrated Pest Management (595) to assist with site-specific strategies for pest prevention, pest avoidance, pest monitoring, and pest suppression. Protect plantings from competition from invasive plants.



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- Each site will be evaluated to determine if mulching, supplemental water or other treatments (e.g., tree protection devices, shade cards, weed mats) will be needed to assure adequate survival and growth.
- The enhancement will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and with States' Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality.

Documentation Requirements

- Plans and specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using approved specification sheets, implementation requirements, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation. Clearly state the goals and objectives of the treatment, including documenting the suitability of selected food-producing plants for the site, dates of planting, and supplemental treatments if any.
- Document locations of plantings on a map or aerial photo.
- **Additional documentation as required by NRCS State Office.**