



Conservation Practice Standard Overview

January 2022

Silvopasture (Code 381)

Silvopasture involves establishing a combination of trees and compatible forages on the same acreage. Shrubs may be used along with trees and forages where desired and compatible.

Practice Information

Silvopasture systems are specifically designed and managed to produce trees, forage, and livestock on the same acreage. Silvopasture is created when forage crops are introduced or enhanced in a forested system (typically a plantation), when trees are added to a forage system, or when both trees and forages are established on suitable land.



Silvopasture practices contribute to the well-being of livestock, providing high-quality forages along with shade and shelter from sun, wind, and storms. They can be designed to produce income from wood products in the longer term, and a livestock operation in the short-term.

Silvopastures can provide cost-effective economic returns with environmental benefits such as—

- increased carbon capture and storage
- improved water quality
- reduced erosion
- improved soil quality
- enhanced wildlife habitat

Where trees or shrubs are planted, species selection, site preparation, planting date and method, and tree spacing will vary depending on the specific purpose of the silvopasture, and on site conditions. Once planted, trees and shrubs need to be inspected periodically and protected from insects, diseases, competing vegetation, fire, and damage from livestock or wildlife.

Depending on the site, supplemental water may be required to ensure survival during the establishment period, typically 1 to 3 years. Replanting trees or forage may be necessary to meet objectives. Periodic applications of nutrients may be needed to maintain plant vigor.

Common Associated Practices

Silvopasture (Code 381) is commonly applied with conservation practices such as Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490), Forest Stand Improvement (Code 666), Tree/Shrub Establishment (Code 612), Tree/Shrub Pruning (Code 660), Forage and Biomass Planting (Code 512), Range Planting (Code 550), Prescribed Grazing (Code 528), Grassed Waterway (Code 412), and Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (Code 645).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.