

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATION GUIDE SHEET**

**WINDBREAK/SHELTERBELT ESTABLISHMENT**

(FEET)

**CODE 380**

This specification includes specific guidelines for site preparation, planting and maintenance that is unique to establishing field windbreaks and shelterbelts around farms and feedlots. For general guidelines on site preparation and planting see both Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490) and Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) Practice Specification guide sheets.

**SITE PREPARATION**

Control any competing or invasive vegetation when planting or as maintenance of established windbreaks.

Prepare planting site by scalping sod or by plowing, harrowing, or rototilling the area to be planted only, if at all possible.

**ESTABLISHMENT**

Select species which are adapted to the site. Some trees and shrubs suited to Maine are:

<u>Trees</u>	<u>Shrubs</u>
White Spruce	Highbush Cranberry
Red Spruce	Gray Dogwood
Red Pine	Nannyberry Viburnum
White Pine	Arrowwood Viburnum
Northern White-Cedar	Willow spp.
Eastern Redcedar	Dogwood spp.
Eastern Hemlock	
American Mountainash	

Other trees and shrubs can be considered to fit special situations. Refer to Conservation Tree and Shrub Database in eFOTG, Section I,

Reference File, Plant Materials, for more species and their attributes.

Consideration will be given to choosing tree and shrub species that are beneficial to wildlife or provide ornamental beauty.

Where the windbreak is around the homestead, the inner rows may be planted to ornamentals such as lilacs, azaleas, rhododendrons, highbush blueberry, or dwarf fruit trees.

Plant at right angles to source of damaging winds. Locate and plan windbreaks with care, as they may become a hazard if not properly located. Locate to protect two or three sides of farmstead or feedlot. Extend at least 100 feet beyond area to be protected, if possible. Leave at least 100 feet and not over 300 feet between the windbreak and the building or feedlot.

Do not fertilize trees and shrubs during planting.

If possible, plant on the contour or across the slope.

Single or multiple rows may be planted. If two or more rows are planted, staggering of plants in rows is desirable.

Spacing shall be approximately as follows:

Trees - within rows about 6 to 12 feet apart, between rows 12 to 16 feet

Shrubs -- within and between rows about 4 feet apart

Spacing may be varied to meet unusual conditions. If trees and shrubs are used in a multiple row windbreak, tall growing shrubs should be next to the trees, grading down to low growing shrubs in edge rows. Shrubs or shorter growing trees are planted on the windward side

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service. Contact Sally Butler at [sally.butler@me.usda.gov](mailto:sally.butler@me.usda.gov) or phone 207-990-9557.

or can be on both sides of taller tree rows.  
Planting time: Spring plantings preferred - April  
1 to June 1.

Maintenance will consist of replacing tree or  
shrub species, pruning, and fertilizing as needed  
to obtain desired protection.

Protect from livestock.

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## **DOCUMENTATION**

The following design information is required:

1. Landowner and Design Preparer  
name and address
2. Property Location, including town and  
county, and NRCS Field Office
3. Practice name, code, justification,  
amount, estimated cost, and time  
schedule.
4. Description of specific work to be  
performed and its location and size, as  
well as written instructions for contractor  
and /or owner.
5. Maps of property and practice  
locations, including a lat/long for  
boundary corners and practices.
6. Legal obligations, including property  
tax status and required permits if  
needed.

Windbreak practice design, installation and  
checkout shall include detailed written  
description, map and practice layout,  
modifications and as-builts including:

1. Location of area(s) where planting is  
proposed and actually planted  
(Lat./Long.)
2. Total length, width, and acreage to be  
planted and actually planted
3. Windbreak design specifications,  
modifications, and as-builts including  
species scientific name and amounts,  
stock type, spacing, and method of site  
preparation, planting, and maintenance.
4. Specifications for the protection of  
other natural resources including but not  
limited to water, soil, wildlife, and non-  
target plants.