

# Hedgerow Planting...establishment of dense vegetation in a linear design to achieve a natural resource conservation purpose



Tree and shrub planting, photo courtesy USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Purposes

To provide at least one of the following functions:

- Food, cover, and corridors for terrestrial wildlife
- Food and cover for aquatic organisms that live in watercourses with bank-full width less than 5 feet
- Living fences
- Boundary delineation
- Contour guidelines

- Screens and barriers to noise and dust
- Improvement of landscape appearance

## Benefits

The grasses and other herbaceous vegetation associated with a hedgerow planting can have beneficial effects on erosion, movement of sediment, and filtering of potential pollutants. This is particularly significant when the hedgerows are installed on the contour.

## Applications

This practice applies wherever it will accomplish at least one of the purposes stated above.

## Design and Installation

Establish hedgerows using woody plants and/or perennial native bunch grasses that produce erect stems attaining average heights of at least three feet that persist through winter. Use native plants whenever possible.

When planning to establish woody vegetation, consult the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section II for information about woody species. Where food and cover for wildlife is the primary purpose, species will be selected from the FOTG Standard Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645). In addition, consult guidelines from the FOTG Standard Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) concerning site preparation, planting dates, planting stock size, and planting and storage guidelines. Additional assistance can be obtained by contacting a professional forester.

Prior to establishment, review all applicable easements on the hedgerow site such as property lines, fences, utilities, roads, or legal drains, and ensure that their integrity will not be compromised by the hedgerow.

## Maintenance

In order to establish woody vegetation, weed competition should be controlled during the first

three years of establishment. Additional years of weed control may be needed in some instances. When survival rates are too low to produce a continuous hedgerow, supplemental planting may be necessary.

In addition, be sure to protect vegetation from unwanted fire, grazing, and pests. Periodic nutrient applications may also be needed to maintain plant vigor.

Where food and cover for wildlife is one of the purposes, management practices and activities should not disturb cover during the primary nesting period March 1 – July 15.

## Relative Cost

**Installation**                      low ● ○ ○ ○ ○                      high

**Maintenance**                      low ● ○ ○ ○ ○                      high

## For Additional Information...

Visit the Indiana NRCS office online at <http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/>, see the Indiana Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) standard for (422) Hedgerow Planting, or contact your local USDA-NRCS office.

*Local USDA-NRCS office information*