



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E612D

Adding food-producing trees and shrubs to existing plantings

Conservation Practice 612: Tree/Shrub Establishment

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual & Mixed); Crop (Perennial); Pasture; Range; Forest; Associated Ag Land; Farmstead

RESOURCE CONCERN: Plants

ENHANCEMENT 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 Tree/Shrub Establishment (Code 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.

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- 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.
- 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 NRCS CPS Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490).
- Selection of planting technique, type of planting stock, and timing will be appropriate for the site and soil conditions.



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- Refer to criteria in NRCS CPS Integrated Pest Management (Code 595) to assist with site-specific strategies for pest prevention, pest avoidance, pest monitoring, and pest suppression. Protect plantings from competition from invasive plants.
- 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.



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, prepare the planned acres for tree or shrub establishment. Refer to NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490). (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)
- Prior to implementation, select the required number and diversity of tree and shrub species (preference for native edible food plants) that will increase food and forage production for wildlife and humans. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Species	Note specific species characteristic(s)

- Prior to implementation, select planting technique, arrangement and spacing design, and timing appropriate for the site and soil conditions. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Planting Date	
Planting Technique	
Arrangement/Spacing	

- During implementation, use forms of erosion control as needed for the site. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)
- During implementation, notify NRCS of any planned changes to verify changes meet NRCS enhancement criteria.
- During implementation, protect the planting from plant and animal pests and fire.
- During implementation, maintain all erosion control needed for the site.

NRCS will:

- Prior to implementation, verify the enhancement is planned for the appropriate land use.



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- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490) as it relates to implementing this enhancement. Verify the enhancement is planned for acres that have been appropriately prepared for tree/shrub establishment.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Establishment (Code 612) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Integrated Pest Management (Code 595) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, verify no plants on the Federal or state noxious weeds list are included.
- As needed, prior to implementation, NRCS will provide technical assistance:
 - Planning site preparation meeting NRCS CPS Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490).
 - Selecting a combination of native and disease resistant tree and shrub species.
 - Selecting planting techniques, arrangement and spacing design, and timing appropriate for the site and soil conditions.
 - Planning the use of additional erosion control, as needed for the site.
 - Preparing specifications for applying this enhancement for each site using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.
- During implementation, evaluate any planned changes to verify they meet the enhancement criteria.
- After implementation, verify the planned native trees and shrub species were established to specifications developed for the site.
- After implementation, verify the planting is protected from pests and fire.
- After implementation, verify all erosion control needed for the site is functioning and is maintained to specifications developed for the site.



NRCS Documentation Review:

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

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Participant Name _____ Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____ Fiscal Year Completed _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature Date

