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AGROFORESTRY INNOVATIONS NETWORKS

Multiple use of shelterbelts - make better use of the opportunities

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Despite their space requirement, shelterbelts are widely used for protecting fields, properties and livestock and improving productivity by altering wind flow and regulating climate. It is important to shape the structure to be suitable for the purpose of protection besides an appropriate orientation (ie. perpendicular to wind direction). Experiences show that it is unnecessary to plant 15 to 20 row-wide forest belts, since the first couple of rows of trees can break the strength of wind. However, some guidelines for the structure and choice of species must be taken into consideration during the installation, such as building gradual shape by using native or locally adapted tree and shrub species, higher trunk density on windward side and varied tree heights in the interior lines. Farmers explored that beyond the protection and ecological benefits ensured by these multistrata green structures, the diversity in species allows them to broaden the scope of utilization options: a diverse hedgerow can provide several high value products and services and thus improve the economy of the farm. Flowers and berries of trees and bushes can be sold raw or processed. A wide variety of species provides diverse pasture rich in food for bees while the farmer produces more fruit from pollination.

Woody material from summer pruning and waste wood is usable as supplementary feed for animals. Additionally a significant part of the fuel demand of the farm can be covered from thinning and cuttings.

See a good example of multifunctional use of windbreaks at Valaha Tanya, Hungary: http://www.eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/rains/agroforestry-action/Vmultifunctional_agroforestry_organic_farm_in_hungary

Figure 1. Mowed orchard (right) protected by windbreaks (left) - one of the several ways agroforestry is practiced at Valaha-Tanya, Vértesacsa, Hungary Photo by A. Vityi

Further information: http://www.eurafagroforestry.eu/files/pub/20190804_factsheet_36_en_web.pdf

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