

Protected plots for wild herbs

Goal	Support of wild herbs
Target group	Farmers who grow any kind of arable crop, especially cereal
Description of the measure	<p>A protected plot for wild herbs is a plot that shows an outstanding species inventory of wild herbs which needs to be protected on long term in order to conserve the plant association by contractual agreement or legal framework. The plots should be protected as long as possible; at least 10 years or even better around 25 years.</p> <p>A combination of measures is needed to sustain a species rich area or to support rare species of wild herbs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No harrow on at least 50 % of the field. ▪ Minor crop density or drill gaps on at least 20 % of the field. ▪ Moderate fertilization: on clay or moderate soils a maximum application of 150 kg N/ha within 5 years. ▪ No root crops in the crop rotation (with exceptions depending on the target species). ▪ At least 2 years of winter cereal in 5 years without catch crop. ▪ Maximum 2 years without conventional tillage. ▪ Sufficient time periods with stubbles. <p>To verify if the implemented measures are fruitful and in order not to lose floristic value of the area it is recommend to carry out a monitoring of the wild herbs.</p>
Suitable sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sites with already recognized occurrence of threatened wild herb inventory ▪ Soils with minor yields ▪ Sites with distinct relief (tips and dips)
How a good implementation looks like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presence of threatened wild herbs ▪ Conservation and increase of species within present plant association
Effects on biodiversity (ecosystems, species, soil biodiversity)	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <p>Large scale support of rare, endangered wild herbs</p> </div>
	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <p>Insects and field birds are benefiting from an increased herb flora likewise</p> </div>
Other positive effects/benefit for the farmer	

Indicator/key data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Surface of protected wild herb plots (ha)
Risk and further recommendations	<p><u>Funding</u></p> <p>The measure needs to be funded in order to ensure protection and long-term extensive management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding by agri-environmental schemes or contractual nature conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E.g. for the promotion of wild herbs beyond the measure of greening and cross compliance within the second pillar of the EU-framework ▪ Production-integrated compensation (German: PIK-Maßnahmen) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I.e. after the interference in (semi-)natural habitats a farmer can compensate the destruction/degradation by extensification of arable land ▪ May also be financed by the standard organization you are certified by or the company you are delivering to which established a fund that can compromise financially the additional afford/yield losses <p><u>Combination of measures</u></p> <p>This measure is ideally combined with the cultivation of old crop varieties. Especially old cereal varieties provide with its light stands and low concurrence ideal conditions for wild herbs. Otherwise, winter crops such as rye is an advisable crop as it has minor nutrient requirements compared to others like winter barley or canola. Not suitable are root crops as they have high nutrient requirements in the early state.</p>
Timeframe (When to start a measure and anticipated time for implementation)	To establish a species-rich flora of wild herbs on big scale, plots are protected and financed for 10–25 years.
Additional special resources/equipment/skills needed	None
Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ www.schutzaecker.de ▪ www.lal-bw.de/pb/,Lde/Startseite/Unsere+Themen/Ackerwildkrautaecker ▪ www.bluehende-landschaft.de/fix/doc/NBL-40-Ackerwildkr%E4uter-1113.pdf ▪ BUND Naturschutz in Bayern e.V. – Ackerwildkräuter fördern – Infos und Tipps für die landwirtschaftliche Praxis ▪ BfN-Skript 351 – Ackerwildkrautschutz – Eine Bibliographie

Further information: [Knowledge Pool](#)

This Action Fact Sheet belongs to the training package for advisors of standard organisations and companies and was developed within the project LIFE Food & Biodiversity (Biodiversity in Standards and Labels of for the Food Industry). The main objective of the project is to improve the biodiversity performance of standards and sourcing requirements in the food industry by helping standard organisations to integrate efficient biodiversity criteria into their schemes and motivating food processing companies and retailers to include comprehensive biodiversity criteria into their sourcing guidelines.

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