

## Seeding cereals in wide rows (drill gaps)

### Goal

Support of wild herbs in the field  
Support of food supply and breeding grounds for field birds

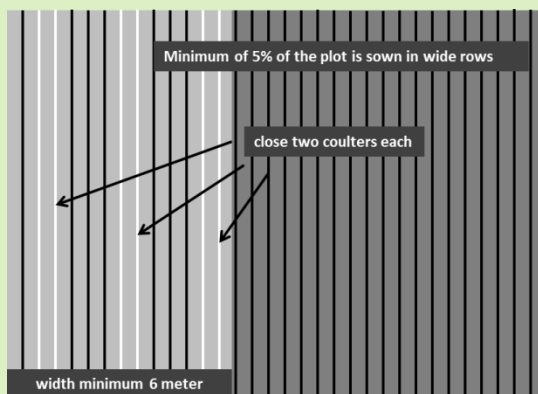
### Short description of the measure

At least 5 % of the cereal plot is sown in a wide row.  
Wide row means: two seeding rows remain unseeded, followed by three rows seeded normal. This results in a cereal distance of about 33–39 cm and about 11–13 cm. The area shall be at least 6 m wide and directed in the driving direction.

To promote growth of wild herbs, the farmer has to consider the following points in addition:

- No harrow, as this could destroy the wild herbs on the field and the nests of the field birds.
- No catch crop within the wide rows
- Grass herbicides should only be applied before March
- Usages of herbicides for broadleaf weeds should be avoided
- If possible, no N fertilizer application

A schematic illustration showing 5 % of the plot is sown in wide rows:





Schematic illustration adapted from a illustration of IP Suisse





(Source: [www.ipsuisse.ch/CMS/ModanFileHandler.axd?DateiGUID=16668391-cb00-443f-b81f-cfef5af3efc6](http://www.ipsuisse.ch/CMS/ModanFileHandler.axd?DateiGUID=16668391-cb00-443f-b81f-cfef5af3efc6))

### Timeframe

(When to start a measure and anticipated time for implementation)

When to start: with the sowing of winter or spring cereal until harvest

<p>How auditors can assess if the measure has been implemented in a good quality?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parts of the or whole plot seeded in wide rows (around 35cm, followed by 12cm)</li> </ul> <p>During vegetation period: presence of wild herbs (see also extra document where common wild herbs are illustrated)</p>  <p>Pic. 1: Picture is showing an example of wide rows at the beginning of the growth stage of the crop. If an audit takes place within this time period, only the row distance can be verified.</p>  <p>Pic. 2: Picture is showing a wide row with presents of wild herbs.</p>
<p>Additional information the auditor need for verification (if any)</p>	<p>None</p>

<b>Effects on biodiversity</b> (ecosystems, species, soil biodiversity)	 <p>Promotion of <b>light demanding wild herbs</b> (rare species are more common in winter crops): They have more light and less competition in the part of the area without sowing and can develop better there.</p>
	 <p>Promotion of the <b>field birds</b>: they avoid high growing and dense cultures. For breeding, they need light cereal stands with low height of vegetation. If wild field herbs will settle within the drill gaps then the birds will find food and can build their nests under the herbs.</p>
	 <p>Through a wider range of flowering plants, more <b>insects</b> will be present.</p>
	 <p>Promotion of <b>hare</b>: it likes to eat herbs and finds protection within the drill gaps.</p>
<b>Indicator/key data</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of rows with drill gaps</li> <li>▪ Total size of area (m<sup>2</sup>) with wide rows</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maßnahmen der IP-SUISSE zur Förderung der Artenvielfalt im Ackerbau, 2011; <a href="http://www.ipsuisse.ch">www.ipsuisse.ch</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.landwirtschaft-artenvielfalt.de">www.landwirtschaft-artenvielfalt.de</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="http://www.franz-projekt.de/massnahmen">www.franz-projekt.de/massnahmen</a></li> <li>▪ “Ackerwildkräuter erhalten und fördern” - Netzwerk Blühende Landschaften <a href="http://www.bluehende-landschaft.de/nbl/nbl.handlungsempfehlungen/nbl.landwirtschaft/index.html">www.bluehende-landschaft.de/nbl/nbl.handlungsempfehlungen/nbl.landwirtschaft/index.html</a></li> <li>▪ BUND Naturschutz in Bayern e.V. – Ackerwildkräuter fördern – Infos und Tipps für die landwirtschaftliche Praxis</li> <li>▪ BfN-Skript 351 – Ackerwildkrautschutz – Eine Bibliographie - <a href="http://www.schutzaecker.de">www.schutzaecker.de</a></li> <li>▪ Stiftung Rheinische Kulturlandschaft, DBU: Abschlussbericht Maßnahmen- und Artensteckbriefe zur Förderung der Vielfalt typischer Arten und Lebensräume der Agrarlandschaften, 2018</li> </ul>

## Further information: [Knowledge Pool](#)

This Action Fact Sheet belongs to the training package for auditors 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.

Editor: LIFE Food & Biodiversity; Lake Constance Foundation

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