

Agroforestry

(GPC 11 of the Afforestation Scheme)



Department of
**Agriculture,
Food and the Marine**

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**

Leaflet No. 9

Funded under the Forestry Programme 2014 - 2020

Introduction

Agroforestry is a land use system in which trees are grown in combination with agriculture on the same land. The system gives land owners the flexibility to graze and even cut silage and hay while growing trees for timber in the same field. With agroforestry it is possible to grow quality timber with little or no impact on existing agricultural production. This system is ideally suited to farmers who are interested in forestry but who also want to avoid taking their land out of agricultural production.

Benefits of agroforestry include the following;

- It provides a source of renewable energy, reducing the consumption of fossil fuels;
- There is potential to produce veneer quality timber;
- Agroforestry improves land drainage;
- Agroforestry can prevent nutrient runoff and reduce sedimentation of nearby water courses;
- Enhanced animal welfare;
- Improved biodiversity and habitats;
- Agroforestry can enhance the landscape.

Scheme Outline

Agroforestry will consider silvopastoral systems (pasture/grazing/silage/hay). Other systems may be considered on a site to site basis as long as the tree stocking rate is between 400-1000 trees per hectare, it is at least 0.5 of a hectare and at least 20 meters wide. The trees will be thinned out in time reducing numbers to between 160-250 trees per hectare, this will allow enough light to filter through the canopy enabling continued grass growth.

Acceptable tree species include oak, sycamore and cherry. Other broadleaves and conifers will be considered on a site to site basis. Fruit and nut species can account for up to 15% of the trees planted.

Trees must be protected against browsing animals with tree shelters, fencing or both. If the agroforestry plot is part of a larger plantation a fence must be included to prevent animals trespassing into neighbouring plots of trees. When the trees outgrow the shelters these are removed and a protective mesh is wrapped around the trees. Farmers must ensure that when silage and hay are being produced that appropriate machinery is used in order not to damage the trees.

Grant Rates

Grant rates and payment structure will be similar to the Afforestation Scheme, with GPC 11 applying. Premiums (again, GPC 11) will be paid for 5 years only and will cover the cost of maintenance. Once land is converted to agroforestry, it will be classified as forest land and the provisions of forest legislation will apply. Support for the establishment of demonstration plots for research purposes may also be considered under this scheme in the context of FORI and DAFM's research programme.

GPC	1st Grant €/ha	2nd Grant €/ha	Total €/ha	Additional Fencing Allocation €/ha IS436	Alternative Fencing Allocation €/ha Non IS436	Total Available Funding €/ha
11 - Agro forestry	2960	990	3950	500	450	4450

GPC	Annual premium / ha	Duration (years)
11 – Agroforestry	€260	5

Application Procedure

Applications for afforestation approval must be made through a registered forester to the Approvals Section of the Department's Forest Service in Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford.

Please note that work may only commence following written approval.

Where To Go For Further Information

This leaflet provides an outline of the scheme and must be read in conjunction with the relevant Scheme Document. Application forms and further information are available from:

Approvals Section,
Forest Service,
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine,
Johnstown Castle Estate,
Co. Wexford,
Y35 PN52.

Telephone 053 916 3400 or 1890 200 509 or see

www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests/service/grantsandpremiumschemes2015



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