

PATHWAY INTERCEPTION MEASURES

13. HEDGEROW ESTABLISHMENT

Hedgerows are very effective in reducing the risk of land-spread material moving over sloped ground during heavy weather or cloud bursts, if planted across the slope in an overland flow pathway. There are two options to this measure, planting a hedgerow with or without an earthen mound. The earthen mound increases water interception and storage at the base of the hedge.

Advisors should recommend this measure in the dominant flow pathways, i.e. the high and very high flow pathways as indicated on the EPA PIP P Flow Pathway Maps and verified by an ASSAP advisor and farmer on the ground. The earthen mound should be sufficiently long to intercept and slow the overland flow. Be mindful when applying for this measure that the flow won't be diverted elsewhere to create a new flow pathway.

Hedgerow establishment will also have co-benefits for flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, soil erosion and biodiversity.

REQUIREMENTS

1. This measure cannot be located within an ACRES area- based action to avoid dual funding risks.
2. Identify and agree on locations in collaboration with the farmer, using tools such as the EPA PIP Maps, particularly on sloped ground or in areas like large open fields where significant overland flow occurs during wet weather.
3. Determine the most suitable native hedgerow species for the area by observing which species are thriving locally. For example, whitethorn and holly do not tolerate very wet soils, and whitethorn is not well-suited for high elevations. Blackthorn, in contrast, thrives better in heavy soils and on coastal, exposed sites.
4. Plants must be of Irish Origin or Irish Provenance and purchased from DAFM registered professional operators. All plants must have accompanying plant passports.
5. To establish a mound, furrow or break the ground to loosen the soil, then build a low earthen mound at the base. The height of the mound will vary depending on the location, but it should generally be around 0.3 meters high (with heights over 0.15 meters still offering benefits), 1 meter wide at the base, and 0.4 meters wide at the crest. The slope of the bank should be as shallow as possible to blend into the landscape, especially on the downslope side, which could be prone to erosion if overtopped. Allow an additional 25% of material to account for soil settlement. Ensure proper compaction during the formation of the bank. Position the hedge just off the crest of the bank on the downslope side to prevent the trees from drying out. (Source: The Natural Flood Management Manual).
6. Plant whips in a double staggered row, 1ft between the whips and 1ft between the rows (minimum 5 plants per metre).
7. The use of pesticides or herbicides is not permitted within 1.5 metres of the hedge after planting, although spot treatment of noxious weeds is allowed. Biodegradable plastic can be used to suppress grass growth. If rabbits are an issue, consider using tree guards (preferably biodegradable) or a low electric fence for protection.
8. Failed or dead plants must be replaced during the following planting season.
9. The applicant must have control of and access to both sides of the new hedgerow to ensure proper maintenance.
10. Generally, the wider the hedge, the more effective it is at capturing water and sequestering carbon.
11. Identify if the farm meets the "space for nature" requirement for the Eco Scheme.
12. The newly planted hedge must be fenced off to protect it from livestock. For best practice, place the fence at least 1.5 metres away from the plants to prevent livestock from grazing on the young hedge.

13. Planting should be carried out between October & March.
14. It is recommended to prune whitethorn plants at planting, leaving them about 4 inches above ground level. Ideally, further pruning should be done in years 2, 3, and 4 to promote the growth of a dense, stock-proof hedgerow.
15. The new hedgerow must be maintained following best practices to ensure proper establishment and healthy growth.
16. Aim to allow the hedgerow to eventually establish to over 1.8m in height.

PAYMENT RATE

- 13A: Hedgerow establishment including earthen mound: €24.37/m
- 13B: Hedgerow establishment without earthen mound: €21.17/m
- Cumulative meters of hedgerow paid is 250m and can be made up of a combination of 13A & 13B e.g.: 50m of 13A plus 200m of 13B. Min of 10m required. Max of 250m.

VALIDATION

Relevant geotagged photo showing clearly the measure that has been applied for & proof of costs.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Speak to your advisor today or check out the Farming for Water website www.farmingforwater.ie for further information. Phone our office on **062 33063** - Office hours 9:00am - 4:30pm.