

HEDGEROW MANAGEMENT



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Choose Appropriate Management for each Hedgerow Type:



1. Hedgerows with a dense base

Trim from a wide base with sloping sides to a triangular shape, leaving mature trees and new saplings, including thorns at irregular intervals.



2. 'Escaped' hedgerows which through lack of management have grown high and escaped, losing their dense base, but not yet becoming a line of mature trees with a full canopy. These hedgerows are typically thin at the base with gaps and no longer stockproof.

Allow grow into relict hedgerows (as below) or rejuvenate by laying or coppicing.



3. Relict hedgerows where the shrubs have grown to mature trees with a full canopy, while others have died out and have not been replaced, leaving large gaps.

Leave alone. The wildlife value of these relict hedgerows is in the canopy, which provides food, shelter, home and highway for bats, birds and other species. It is too risky to rejuvenate by laying or coppicing. Fencing off stock from both sides prolongs their life by preventing deterioration by stock tramping through the gaps.

Management Plan for Hedgerows

Hedgerows give the Irish landscape its distinctive character and field pattern. They provide an important wildlife habitat especially for woodland flora and fauna. Increasing the variety of hedgerow types in terms of height, width, shape and species mix promotes diversity in flora and fauna.

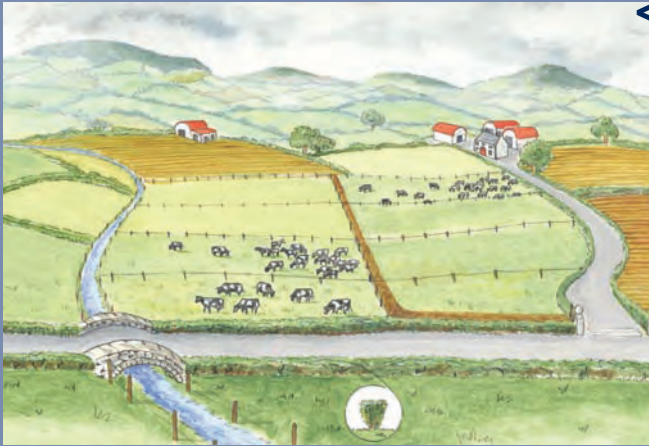
A variety is best. The quest for neatness should not take precedence over ecological and landscape considerations. No single method of management is appropriate for all. Consider the long-term effect of current management.

Draw up a management plan for all hedgerows on a farm. Decide on objectives for sections of hedgerows. Having a plan with objectives will prevent inappropriate management being carried out in the meantime.



Allow occasional whitethorn trees grow up and mature within hedgerows, providing spectacular displays of white blossom in late May and haws in autumn.





◀ Open bare landscape with few very low treeless hedgerows...



◀ Improved wildlife, shelter and scenic appearance, while continuing to farm efficiently

- Existing hedgerows trimmed with sloping sides from a wide base to a triangular shape, varying in height but allowed to grow as high as practical.
- Occasional saplings of all species including thorns, selected over time and allowed to grow to maturity, resulting in a range of ages of trees within hedgerows.
- Some hedgerows allowed to grow freely and escape.
- New hedgerows planted along existing permanent wire fences.

For further information contact your local Teagasc office or www.teagasc.ie.
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