

Biodiversity-promoting measures in arable farming



Flowering headland

Description of the measure

Cultivation of flowering seed mixtures on the headland.

Location

Plots with rare arable weeds or with potential risk of problem weeds are not suitable.

Sowing

- Annual flowering mixtures with regional seeds or legume mixtures of at least 4 species.
- Before sowing prepare a fine-grained but firm seedbed
- A combined or simple seeder or fertiliser spreader can be used for sowing
- The area must not be sown too densely so that the light-demanding species can germinate
- Rolling on the seeds improves soil contact and leads to improved germination
- Sowing in spring (end of April - middle of May) in the entire width of the headland (approx. 6 - 15 m).
- No application of fertiliser or pesticides
- In root crop fields, sowing should take place directly after tilling or after weed control, so that the fields are not driven on for some time.

Management

- During normal cultivation of the plot, the headland can be driven on.
- Only mow the plot if the weeds are too high. In the case of legume mixtures, the area can be mown or mulched after flowering (!). The interval between maintenance work on ditches and water bodies should be at least 8 weeks.
- The flowering mixture in the headland should be left in place for as long as possible, ideally beyond the crop harvest until spring.
- The flowering headland can also be left standing for several years, in which case it is advisable to sow perennial flowering mixtures, more on this in the "Flowering strips and areas" fact sheet.

Effects on biodiversity

- Provision of flowers, nectar and pollen for wild bees, bumblebees and other insects
- Retreat for wildlife/insects during agricultural work
- Field birds and amphibians can also use the flowering headland as a feeding area and benefit from the absence of pesticides.

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Other positive effects

- Contribution to biotope connectivity if the area is designed to connect forest edges, field edge structures and meadows with each other
- Soil improvement and humus build-up are favoured in the headland
 - o In species-rich mixtures, the different root formation and rooting depths, as well as the excretion of different root extracts, contribute to a promotion of soil life
- Better water storage capacity of the soil on the headland
- Optical highlight

Further recommendations

If a legume mixture is used, the measure can be registered as an ecological priority area in greening (nitrogen-fixing plants). In this case, the area should be at least 0.1 ha and remain on the land from at least 15th May to 15th August in the application year.

Further reading

https://www.franz-projekt.de/uploads/Downloads/Massnahmen/Ma%C3%9Fnahmenblatt_Bl%C3%BChendes%20Vorgewende_mit%20Bild.pdf

Sources

<https://naturschutzbund.at/files/NATUR%20VERBINDET/Bluehstreifen1.pdf>

<https://bluehende-landschaft.de/handlungsempfehlung/insektenfreundliche-bluehstreifen/>

<https://www.wildackersaaten.de/bluehstreifen-anlegen-pflegen/>

Coordinator

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