



East Turlock Subbasin GSA Hedgerow Factsheet



What is a hedgerow?

A hedgerow is a linear planting of shrubs, trees, perennial grasses, forbs, and other plants that forms a border or barrier.

The ETSGSA Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program requires that hedgerows are installed on the perimeter of fallowed land. They can optionally be installed on orchard swales.

Benefits

Hedgerows on California agricultural lands provide multiple biodiversity benefits. They provide habitat for wildlife, beneficial insects, and native bees.

Hedgerows can improve soil health and drainage, filter surface runoff, and conserve water compared to agricultural or non-native species. They also sequester carbon in woody biomass and roots, an important climate mitigation strategy.

Hedgerows can reduce pesticide drift in agricultural areas, reduce wind erosion, reduce weed pressure, and provide an aesthetic benefit.

Find out more: [Research Brief: Hedgerow benefits align with food production.](#)



Consideration for Installation

The specifications of your hedgerow will depend to a certain extent on your management goals.

Refer to the [USDA NRCS Conservation Practice Standard: Hedgerow Planting \(422\)](#) for more information on design considerations.

Plant Species Selection

Consider choosing California native plants for your hedgerow. Native plants provide multiple benefits, such as native pollinator and wildlife habitat, drought tolerance, and low-to-no irrigation requirements once established. Most of the guidance on this factsheet is for native plant hedgerows.

[CalScape](#) is an fantastic, free resource for California native plants. You can filter plants by soil drainage, water use, region, and more. You can also include your location to find nurseries near you.

If your hedgerow will be planted in an area that is prone to flooding, choose native plants that tolerate wet conditions.

Including multiple native species with different blooming periods supports beneficial pollinators and insects throughout the year. Including different plant sizes and types (e.g. woody shrubs, bunch grasses, and forbs) is recommended.

Some easy-to-establish, hardy, and beautiful San Joaquin Valley species include [Black Sage](#), [Buckbrush](#), [California Wildrose](#), [Deergrass](#), [Blue Elderberry](#), and [Coyote Bush](#). See the [Xerces Society San Joaquin Valley Hedgerow](#) guide for more ideas.

Timing

Most hedgerow plants, especially native plants, should be installed in the late fall through early spring, with a preference for the fall. Native plants require cool soil and deep soaking rain to become well established.



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Site Preparation and Installation

Weeds should be managed at the site prior to planting. Consider sheet mulching, flame-weeding, mowing, or applying an herbicide cautiously. Herbicide use should be stopped before transplanting.

Although native plants do not require fertilization and are generally adapted to low nitrogen environments, applying a small amount of compost can help at establishment. A helpful rule of thumb is 0.25 cubic yards of compost for every 100 feet of hedgerow.

To plant your native plants, dig a hole larger than the nursery pot. If you are choosing to use compost, place a few shovelfuls of compost in the hole and mix with the soil. Thoroughly soak the hole, plant the plant in the hole, and soak the plant again.

Though spacing requirements depend on the species you select, most woody shrubs can be spaced on 6 - 12 ft centers, and herbaceous shrubs and bunch grasses on 3 - 5 ft centers. Measure and stage the area with your plants before planting. Refer to the [Xerces Society Pollinator Hedgerow Planting Guide](#) or the [UCANR Establishing Hedgerows on Farms in California](#) for more information on plant spacing and other installation parameters.

Cost

Native plants can have a higher up-front cost compared to typical nursery plants, but cost are minimal once they are established.

1-gallon plants are usually the most cost effective option for native plant installation. A 1-gallon California native plant typically costs between \$10 and \$20.

The Xeres Society estimates the unit cost of site preparation, planting, and 3 years of maintenance at approximately \$220 per 100 linear feet of 10 foot-wide hedgerow. This assumes that farmers already have irrigation and installation materials on hand. See the [Xerces Society Estimated Costs to Establish Pollinator Hedgerows](#) for more information.

Considerations for Maintenance

Establishment Irrigation

After planting, water should be applied periodically in deep, soaking events for at least the first year, and ideally for the first three years. If you plant during a dry winter, extra irrigation may be necessary. Any form of irrigation is fine, though drip irrigation is likely the easiest to adapt with on-farm materials.

Overwatering native plants, particularly after establishment, can be detrimental. Daily, shallow irrigation can lead to failure of native plants. Avoid letting the rootball of native plants dry out in the first three months after planting.

Refer to the [California Native Plant Society Native Plant Watering Guide](#) for more information.

Ongoing Maintenance

Woody species can be pruned periodically to meet management goals. Hedgerows containing annual native forbs (e.g. California poppies) may need to be reseeded periodically. Weed the hedgerow area as necessary. Use herbicides cautiously as they can harm or kill native plants. Avoid the use of fertilizers or pesticides once plants are established.



Native Plant Nurseries in the ETSGSA Area

[Mariposa Native Plants](#)

(Mariposa, CA)

[In Season Market & Nursery](#)

(Stockton, CA)

[Devil Mountain Wholesale Nursery](#)

(Farmington, CA)

[Blossom Hill Natives](#)

(Oakdale, CA)

[Cornflower Farms](#)

(Elk Grove, CA)