



Small Scale Solutions for your Farm

Silvopasture



Do You Have Problems With:

- Lack of annual income while long-term forest stands are maturing
- Economic risk and lack of income diversity in your woodland or livestock operation
- Controlling weedy or invasive vegetation in your forest stands
- Providing shade or shelter for grazing livestock
- Provide additional grazing for livestock

Purposes and Benefits of Silvopasture

- Silvopasture means the production of trees, forages and livestock on the same acreage at the same time.
- Typically trees provide long-term returns, while forages and livestock generate an annual income.
- Economic risk is reduced because the system produces multiple products (trees, forage and livestock), which have an established market.
- Livestock grazing helps control vegetation under trees, reducing the need for chemical or mechanical treatment and the risk of fire.
- Trees provide shade and shelter that reduces stress on livestock.
- Tree thinning, spacing and a more open canopy can result in high-value saw timber.
- Plant diversity improves wildlife habitat and increases other recreational opportunities, such as hunting leases.

Silvopasture Maintenance

- Control competing vegetation until trees are established
- Prescribed grazing
- Fertilize for forage production according to soil test results
- Replant when stands do not meet production objectives
- Periodically thin trees



Silvopasture combines livestock, forage and tree production on the same acreage.



An example of Pine Silvopasture system.





Associated Costs

The cost to apply this practice will depend on if you are starting with pasture or a stand of trees, the type of trees or forage that will be established, and intensity of management. The major costs associated with establishing a silvopasture system are:

- Site Preparation
- Fertilizer
- Tree seedlings or forage seed/sprigs
- Pesticides
- Pruning Thinning
- Grazing management (Fencing, Watering Facilities, Rotation of cattle and forage management).

Technical and Financial Assistance

Whether you measure your farm in terms of feet or acres, your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office has experienced conservationists that can help you develop a Conservation Plan to conserve, maintain, and restore the natural resources on your land and improve the long-term health of your operation.

There is no charge for our assistance. Simply contact your local office to set up an appointment. You may also be eligible to receive financial assistance. Your NRCS office will explain any programs that are available so you can make the best decision for your operation. All NRCS programs and services are voluntary.

For More Information

Visit the Natural Resources Conservation Service or visit farmers.gov/service-locator to find your local NRCS office. You can also check with your local USDA Service Center, then make an appointment to determine next steps for your conservation goals.



NRCS partner assisting small scale farmer with developing a customized conservation plan.
Photo by Erica Quinlan.

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