

## GRANTS FOR PLANTING HEDGES

**FFH 18**

Hedges are a structuring element of landscapes. They play an important role as a refuge and ecological corridor for wildlife. They also provide agronomic<sup>1</sup> and economic functions. In addition to the plantings carried out by public authorities and farmers (agri-environmental and climate measures)<sup>2</sup>, grants are awarded to private individuals to promote the planting of hedgerows.

### Nearly 66 km of hedgerows planted between 2014 and 2016

Grants for private individuals for planting hedgerows were introduced by the Walloon Government Decree of 09/02/1995. In 2016, around 23 km of hedgerows (one, two or three rows) were the subject of grants. These data were collected by eight external directorates of the Nature and Forests Department: Dinant, Namur, Neufchâteau, Marche-en-Famenne, Liège, Malmédy, Mons<sup>3</sup> and Arlon<sup>4</sup>. Nearly 8 km of hedgerows on the territory of the Directorate of Mons (one third of Wallonia) were the subject of grants, the rest being divided among the seven other directorates. Between 1999 and 2016, the success of the measure varied from year to year, with a peak observed in 2011 (approximately 33 km having received grants<sup>5</sup>). Between 1999 and 2016, nearly €1,096,000 in grants were awarded, of which €808,379 between 2009 and 2016. Despite an increase in premiums when planted in several rows, the majority of hedges are single-row, except in 2016.

### Conditions to be met

In order to qualify for the grant, various elements must be duly observed, including:

- diversity (at least three species) and the indigenous character of the species planted;
- compliance with the list of species annexed to the legislation;
- a minimum length of 100m in one or more sections of at least 20m (except in residential and rural areas where the minimum length is 50m for a school and 20m for other applicants);

- a ban on the use of herbicides;
- ensuring that the plantation is properly maintained for a period of 30 years.

### New decree

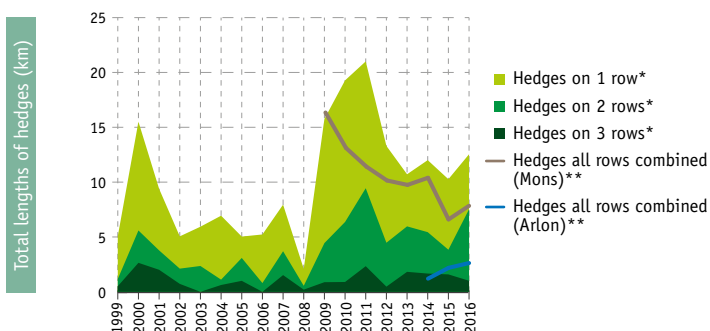
The Walloon Government Decree of 08/09/2016 increases the amounts granted for the planting of a live hedge, an orchard and rows of trees, and extends the measure to linear copses. The grants awarded for the maintenance of hedgerows have been abolished and replaced by subsidies for the maintenance of pollard trees. Reducing the minimum length to 20m for private individuals in rural and residential areas is one of the changes introduced by this new Walloon Government Decree.

### The tree week

Organised by the Rural Affairs and Water courses Department, The tree week is an annual celebration of a particular species or group of species. In this context, subsidies for planting hedgerows, rows of trees or ornamental trees are also granted. Four types of subsidised actions can be carried out by administrations, schools or associations: the distribution of seedlings to private individuals (*via* municipal administrations)<sup>6</sup>, planting in a public space, the development of public green spaces and the planting of country hedges. The annual budget for these actions ranged from €289,000 (2012) to €345,000 (2016).

<sup>[1]</sup> Protection against wind, prevention of soil erosion, water penetration into the soil, etc. | <sup>[2]</sup> → AGRI 10 | <sup>[3]</sup> Lack of detailed data by row from 2009 onwards | <sup>[4]</sup> No data between 2009 and 2013 and lack of detailed data by row between 2014 and 2016 | <sup>[5]</sup> Lack of data for Arlon in 2011 | <sup>[6]</sup> → FFH 17

Fig. FFH 18-1 Subsidised hedgerow plantings for private individuals in Wallonia



\* From 2009 onwards, data for 6 directorates only (Dinant, Liège, Malmédy, Marche-en-Famenne, Namur and Neufchâteau)

\*\* Lack of detailed data by row from 2009 onwards

\*\*\* No data between 2009 and 2013 and lack of detailed data by row between 2014 and 2016.

SOERW 2017 – Source: SPW – DG03 – DNF

Tab. FFH 18-1 Tree week

YEAR	NUMBER OF SEEDLINGS	PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES	HIGHLIGHTED SPECIES
2002	130,000	60	Chestnut tree
2003	120,000	60	Walnut
2004	120,000	51	Hazelnut tree
2005	120,000	49	Locust tree
2006	120,000	50	Dogwood
2007	120,000	50	Viburnum
2008	120,000	50	No specific species
2009	120,000	50	Beech
2010	120,000	50	Medlar tree
2011	120,000	50	Melliferous
2012	120,000	50	Holly
2013	120,000	50	Willow
2014	120,000	50	Rowan tree
2015	120,000	50	Hornbeam
2016	120,000	50	Maple

SOERW 2017 – Source: SPW – DG03 – DRCE