

Planting Traditional Orchards 10 trees

Specification extract · Pages 34–37

What this document is

This is an extract of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) document “ACRES Co-operation Non-Productive Investments Specification”, Version 2.2, July 2026. It contains the pages covering the Planting Traditional Orchards 10 trees action (pages 34–37 of the full specification).

Because the specification runs each action straight into the next, the first and last pages of this extract may also show the end or beginning of a neighbouring action. The section for this action starts on page 34 (the printed page number matches the page number in the full document).

Always check the current version

DAFM updates the specification from time to time. The full document is the authoritative version and should be consulted before undertaking any work. It is available from:

Full specification (PDF, opens at this action):

https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/f8e2ccf8/NPI_specifications_July_2026_2.pdf#page=34

ACRES NPI page on gov.ie:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/f5a48-agri-climate-rural-environment-scheme-acres/#non-productive-investments>

About this action on the ACRES CP website

<https://acresireland.ie/action-projects/npi-planting-traditional-orchards-10-trees/>

Spindle (<i>Euonymous europaeus</i>)
Alder Buckthorn (<i>Frangula alnus</i>)

Table 5. Tree Species (0.6 -0.9 metres high)

Bird Cherry (<i>Prunus padus</i>)
Crab Apple (<i>Malus sylvestris</i>) If possible, Mc Griggors (Crab) Cavan Sweet (Crab) Lough Key (Crab)
Goat Willow (<i>Salix caprea</i>)
Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>)
Grey Willow (<i>Salix cinerea</i>)
Rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>)
Wild Cherry (<i>Prunus avium</i>)
Hawthorn/Whitethorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)
Irish Whitebeam (<i>Sorbus Hibernia</i>)
Sessile oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>)
Pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>)

Planting Traditional Orchards

Objective:

To support biodiversity and help ensure the survival of traditional Irish apple varieties.

Background:

While apple trees have been grown in Ireland for many centuries, the native genetic pool has been significantly altered to incorporate a number of modern varieties. This measure endeavours to conserve the authenticity of traditional apple tree varieties while also sustaining their heritage, by only growing trees that were once common to Irish soils.

Site Suitability

- This action can only be selected on parcels with an Eligible hectare > 0.
- This action is available on CP and Non-CP LPIS parcels that will be claimed by the participant for the remainder of the ACRES contract.
- On CP Parcels, this action can only be selected on fields with the following scorecards assigned or submitted: Grassland and Rough Grazing.
- This action cannot be selected within an archaeological monument buffer.

- In Non-CP parcels this action is not available on areas that are SAC/SPAs, NHAs, pNHAs, or Annex 1 Grasslands. **Allowed in Breeding Wader Hotspots but may fail screening in certain areas.**
- This action is not suitable on fields with more than 7 positive indicators on the scorecard.
- This action is not suitable for wet fields or peatland sites.
- Sites should be below 300m altitude.

Note 6: Where an investment has been grant aided under TAMS or any other National/EU funded Agri-environment or Capital investment Scheme from 01 January 2018, this cannot fulfil part of the requirement for this ACRES NPI action.

Fencing-Barbed Wire, Fencing- Permanent Electric or Fencing-Sheep Wire NPIs cannot be used to fulfil the fencing requirement of this ACRES NPI.

Requirements:

1. Create a new orchard of at least 0.05ha by planting 10 traditional fruit trees. Select at least 3 different varieties from Table 6.
2. The location of the orchard must be identified on the LPIS parcel selected and marked on the map submitted. Each orchard applied for is only eligible for one NPI payment and once claimed must be maintained for the remainder of the ACRES contract.
3. Trees should be supported with a suitable stake and secured with a suitable tie.
4. The orchard must be fenced off from livestock. The fencing must be stockproof, fit for purpose and be undertaken with permanent stakes and wire.
5. Grazing the orchard with sheep is permitted provided that no damage is caused to the trees. If damage is being caused by rabbits/hares, measures to prevent further damage must be taken by the erection of a rabbit-proof fence or tree guards.
6. Trees must be spaced at least 5 metres apart. Trees must not be planted in a single row.
7. All plants purchased for this action must have an accompanying plant passport and participants must ensure that they retain the plant passport(s) and receipts(s).
8. Plant Protection Products are not permitted except for the spot treatment of noxious and invasive weeds.
9. Grass and other competing vegetation must be controlled without Plant Protection Products, around the trees until they become established.
10. Failed or dead trees must be replaced during the next planting season.
11. Only one claim for payment is allowed per approved NPI-Annual Works Plan. This action can only be claimed for payment once delivered in accordance with NPI Specification.

Additional guidance:

- Apples should be grafted onto MM106 or MM111 rootstocks.
- Tying and staking must be monitored and adjusted when necessary to prevent the main stem twisting.
- To aid establishment, the root zone should be kept weed free (at least within a onemetre radius) for the remainder of the contract.
- The use of low nitrogen chemical or organic fertiliser is permitted at the time of planting.
- Apples require at least two compatible varieties for pollination purposes.

- Make a map showing where you planted each variety. It will be useful to know which tree is which in years to come.

Table 6: List of Heritage varieties for Planting Traditional Orchard

Aherne Beauty	Eight Square	Munster Tulip
An Cailin ban	Eves Apples of Ireland	Pêche Melba
Appletown Wonder	Farrell	Rawley's Seedling
April Queen	Finola Lee	Red Brandy
Ard Cairn Russet	Frank's Seedling	Reid's Seedling
Ballinora Pippin	Gibbon's Russet	Richardson
Ballyfatten	Gibby's Apple	Rose Hogan
Ballyvaughan Seedling	Glenstal Cooker	Ross Nonpareil
Bardsey Island	Golden Royal	Sam Young
Barnhill Pippin	Greasy Pippin	Scarlet Crofton
Beauty of Ballintaylor	Green Chisel	Sheep's Snout Red
Belvedere House	Harvest Eve (Culleton)	Sovereign
Blood of the Boyne	Honeyball	Strippy

Bloody Butcher	Horses Head	Sweet William
Brady	Irish Molly	Thompson's Apple
Brown Crofton	Irish Peach	Turkey Willouby
Buttermilk Russet	Irish Pitcher	Uncle John's Cooker
Cabbage Stalk	Keegan's Crab	Valentine
Cavan Rose	Kemp	White Crofton
Cavan Strawberry	Kerry Pippin	White Moss
Cavan Sugarcane	Kilkenny Pearmain	White Russet
CavanWine	Kiltoghert Blossom	Widow's Friend
Clearheart	Knights Templar	Yellow Clare
Councillor	Lady's Finger	Yellow Pitcher
Custard Scarlet	Leitrim Red	Crab Apples
Davy Apple	Leixlip	Cavan Sweet (Crab)
Dick Davies	Lough Tree of Wexford	Lough Key (Crab)
Dockney	Martins Seedling	Mc Griggors (Crab)
Ecklinville Seedling	Mrs Perry	

Planting Trees

Objective

To encourage the planting of native trees on farms where they will have multiple benefits while offering flexible planting options to suit the holding.

The planting of trees under this action does not contribute to the planting of trees as part of an Eco scheme for Pillar 1 payments.

Background

Planting trees on farms can sequester carbon, support biodiversity, help reduce soil erosion and sediment loss, and recover leached nutrients. They also contribute to increase water retention, provide shelter and shading for livestock when mature, and enhance the visual appearance of the farm landscape. This action includes two planting options Rows and Groups.

1. **Rows:** The row option is planting of native trees in rows at least 4m apart e.g., along a field boundary/farm passageway or along electric fence boundaries, within a pasture or arable field along a riverbank for stabilisation, or to provide dapple shade to rivers. The row option is available on peatland habitats but is restricted to low numbers and planting is not permitted in open heath or blanket bog habitats. Each point drawn on GLAM NPI-Annual Works plan represents an application for 3 trees. If planting in rows, leave adequate distance between each point to allow for the 4m spacing between individual trees.
2. **Groups:** The group option is planting native trees in small groups at desired locations on the farm maintaining at least 4m spacing. The group option is not available in peatland habitats.