

AGROFORESTRY REFERENCE SHEET

Agroforestry is the intentional combination of trees and shrubs into crop and livestock farming systems to create economic, environmental, and social benefits. The five most common types of agroforestry used in the United States are 1) windbreaks/shelterbelts/hedgerows, 2) silvopasture, 3) riparian forest buffers, 4) alley cropping/intercropping and 5) forest farming/multi-story cropping. Below are pictures and definitions for each agroforestry practice.

Windbreaks, Shelterbelts and Hedgerows: are rows of trees and shrubs often designed to slow wind, which creates a more favorable environment for soils, crops, livestock, wildlife, and people. These practices also function in ways not related to wind reduction, including visual screening, odor control, shade for livestock/buildings/people, enhancing pollination, field/property borders, etc.



Silvopasture: Grazing livestock on a site with trees is considered **silvopasture** if all three components of the system (livestock, trees, and forage) are deliberately integrated and managed. Some examples of silvopasture include:

- ▶ woodland, forest, or forest edge that is managed to produce forage, livestock and trees simultaneously
- ▶ grazing land where trees were added to pasture
- ▶ orchards where livestock are integrated
- ▶ grazing natural savannas



Riparian Forest Buffer: Is an area adjacent to a stream, river, lake or wetland that contains a combination of trees and shrubs and is often used for erosion control, bank stabilization, and nutrient runoff mitigation. They are also called: **stream management zones, vegetated buffer strips, woody riparian buffers, and riparian forest corridors.**



Alley Cropping/Intercropping: **Alley cropping** involves the planting of rows of trees and/or shrubs to create alleys within which agricultural or horticultural crops are grown. **Orchards** are considered an alley cropping system if crops/forages are harvested from between the trees/shrubs. **Intercropping** is the deliberate cultivation of trees with crops on the same field but does not need to be in distinct or defined rows and alleys.



Forest Farming / Multi-story Cropping: involves the cultivation of crops under a canopy of trees and/or shrubs. This canopy is intentionally modified or maintained to provide levels of light that favor growth and enhanced production of these crops. Crops may include edibles (fruits, vegetables, nuts, mushrooms, syrups/saps, etc.) nursery or landscaping plants, woodland medicinal plants and decorative products.

