Cultivation of traditional and less intensive varieties

Goal	Support of agrobiodiversity
Short description of the measure	Traditional crop species and varieties support the genetic diversity. Those and the use of less intensive varieties improve the habitat quality of wild flora and fauna as they are mostly less yielding and provide diverse structured, lighter stands. ▪ Cultivation of endangered crop varieties, such as "Einkorn" wheat, Amelcorn (in Germany), spelt, kamut (in Spain) ▪ Cultivation of new breeds of less intensive cereal varieties
Timeframe (When to start a measure and anticipated time for implementation)	When to start: with sowing of the crop or the establishment of a new plantation in case of permanent cultures
How auditors can assess if the measure has been implemented in a good quality?	▪ Presence of any traditional crop species and varieties therefrom and less intensive varieties on the farm  Einkorn Wheat (Triticum monococcum)  Emmer (Triticum dicoccum)
Additional information the auditor need for verification (if any)	This measure may be restricted by market demands. Regionally, there are different initiatives, which offer seeding material for old varieties (e.g. cereal). For Austria e.g., Arche Noah (www.arche-noah.at/sortenerhaltung) and Germany Pro Species Rara (www.prospecierara.de/de/home). Auditors may verify whether targeted crop species are sown by checking the receipt of the seeding material. Mapama has an official register where varieties can be found in Spanish www.mapama.gob.es/app/regVar/default.aspx). Old varieties of permanent crops are usually available from specialised nurseries.
Effects on biodiversity (ecosystems, species, soil biodiversity)	Improved development of **wild herbs** because of lighter cultivation A diverse structured and light cultivation **benefits field birds and hare**: more space let them move easier, higher stalks provide resting sports for birds

Indicator/key data	▪ Total size of area (ha) with traditional/less intensive crop varieties ▪ Amount of different varieties
Reference	▪ www.landwirtschaft-artenvielfalt.de ▪ www.agroecologia.net/recursos/publicaciones/actas/cd-actas-xcongresoseae/actas/comunicaciones/44-recuperacion-gonzalez.pdf

Further information: Knowledge Pool

This Action Fact Sheet belongs to the training package for auditors of standard organisations and companies and was developed within the project LIFE Food & Biodiversity (Biodiversity in Standards and Labels of for the Food Industry). The main objective of the project is to improve the biodiversity performance of standards and sourcing requirements in the food industry by helping standard organisations to integrate efficient biodiversity criteria into their schemes and motivating food processing companies and retailers to include comprehensive biodiversity criteria into their sourcing guidelines.

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