

Extract from the Bio Suisse Standards

## **Areas dedicated to the enhancement of biodiversity (ADEB)**

Based on part II, section 2.3

Bio Suisse certified producers manage their whole farming operation in a manner that protects the environment and its plants, animals and microorganisms to the greatest extent. They endeavour to maintain as diverse an operation as possible, where there is room for a variety of organisms and habitats both on and beyond areas of production.

The farm operations manager is obliged to maintain, enlarge or create near-natural habitats (areas dedicated to the enhancement of biodiversity, ADEB) and to care for them in a professional manner. ADEB must constitute at least 7% of a farming operation's utilized agricultural area. ADEB are natural landscaping elements that serve to nurture flora and fauna.

### **Landscaping elements that may be counted include:**

- unfertilized, species-rich permanent meadows and pastures
- species-rich strips sown in wildflowers and herbs for at least 18 months of the year (Strips sown in wildflowers and herbs are uncultivated rotational areas where natural or sown species-rich plant communities grow.)
- conservation headlands: unfertilized, species-rich strips at least 3 m in width along the edge of fields, parallel to the furrows
- areas with natural communities of indigenous plants (species-rich ground vegetation in extensively cultivated orchards or vineyards may be counted as such)
- single indigenous trees suited to the location (each tree counts as 1 are) and tree-lined avenues
- hedges, copses and riparian trees
- ditches, pools, ponds and moorland. Ponds that were installed for irrigation purposes may be counted if the banks were planted with indigenous plants.
- ruderal areas and ruins of buildings
- dry stone walls, stone mounds and embankments
- unpaved natural paths with at least 1/3 cover
- species-rich woodland, except for intensively managed plantations with little biodiversity value (e.g., eucalyptus or poplar)

### **Rules for derogations**

If the following criteria are met, then the 7% ADEB need not involve the operational acreage of the farming operation nor its usual cultivation area:

- The vicinity of the farming operation is still in its natural state (woodland, desert, steppe directly adjoining at least 30% of the farming operation's perimeter); or
- Dedicating 7% of the UAA to the enhancement of biodiversity would not significantly increase its diversity since the agricultural system and farming structure are already highly diversified (e.g., agroforestry systems); or
- The operational acreage of a producer group collectively applying for certification according to Bio Suisse standards has been consolidated. The 7% ADEB will be calculated on the basis of the total operational acreage farmed by the group.

### **Requirements regarding the quality of ADEB**

- Uncultivated, species-rich strips of at least 6 m width must be maintained around natural stretches of surface water (e.g., rivers, streams and lakes).
- The destruction of 'high conservation value areas' is prohibited (as per section 1.5).
- At least 2 of the following quality standards must be met:
  1. The ADEB are established or maintained in such a way that they are well distributed throughout the operational acreage and are connected.
  2. The ADEB exceed 20% of the operational acreage.
  3. At least 5 of the landscaping elements listed under part V, section 2.2.3.1 are present on the farming operation.
  4. At least 3 bee colonies are kept on the farming operation throughout the entire vegetation period.
  5. Endangered crop species or varieties (such as khorasan wheat, linseed, and varieties of heirloom vegetables, fruit or grapes) are cultivated on at least 0.5 ha.