

Benefits of Planting Trees

By diversifying the landscape with trees, farms become more resilient to extreme weather events and changing climate conditions. The trees provide multiple benefits, making the farm ecosystem more adaptable and reducing risks associated with unpredictable weather patterns. Here are some of the key advantages:

- **Windbreaks and Protection from Weather Extremes** - trees can reduce wind speed, protecting crops from wind damage and moisture loss. In addition, trees provide shade that helps mitigate the effects of extreme heat during summer, reducing plant stress and conserving water. This can improve crop yields in challenging climates.
- **Soil Erosion Prevention** - trees help reduce soil erosion by stabilizing the soil with their root systems. Their roots bind the soil, preventing it from being washed or blown away by wind or rain. This is especially important in areas prone to erosion, ensuring that valuable topsoil stays intact for crops to thrive.
- **Enhanced Soil Fertility** - the organic matter from trees, such as fallen leaves, fruits, and branches, contributes to the soil's nutrient content. As this material decomposes, it adds valuable nutrients to the soil, improving its fertility and promoting healthier crop growth. This organic matter also increases soil's water-holding capacity.
- **Biodiversity and Pest Control** - trees foster biodiversity by attracting beneficial insects, birds, and pollinators. These organisms contribute to natural pest control and improve pollination, which enhances crop productivity. By reducing reliance on chemical pesticides, trees promote a healthier and more sustainable farming environment.
- **Water Management** - tree roots absorb excess water during heavy rains, reducing the risk of flooding and runoff. In drier periods, tree canopy cover helps reduce soil moisture evaporation, helping crops retain water for longer periods.

The ALUS Vermilion River program can help you plant trees around your farm or ranch operation. This eco-buffer was planted in 2017 and by 2024 it's starting to look like a natural forest that is providing all of these functions and more. Contact Chris Elder at 780-853-7844 or celder@county24.com to get more information on tree planting with ALUS.

