

Windbreaks pay off

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
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Larry Lively isn't a stranger to conservation. In fact, he won an award for his fencing project not too long ago, he said.

This year, he's being recognized for his windbreaks, which he said he planted in the spring of 2008.

Standing about 5 to 6 feet tall, the trees make a quarter circle around his home off the Dresdon Road, about six miles east of Oberlin and five miles south.

"I have two different ones," he said, "one in the pasture for cattle, and the other is a four-row windbreak for the farmstead. It took almost 500 trees to do the whole project. I couldn't tell you how much it cost; I don't remember.

"This last year they didn't grow very much on account of the weather, of course. I had a drip system on it for three years, but the rodents ravaged it — they chewed the pipe in two. It's a plastic thing, and real soft. And it's not the first time that's happened; it's been quite a few times. Even when you're using it you have to keep an eye out and watch it."

Mr. Lively said that he planted another windbreak at a previous home, in the early 90s, so this one wasn't an intimidating project.

"Eventually those trees will get 20 to 25 feet tall," he said, "and that takes about 15 years. It's not a quick deal; it takes a long time. I have four rows for the break on the farmstead and two rows for the pasture, and it's probably a good quarter

mile long. This one on the farmstead is probably 300 yards long.

"Windbreaks also aid the wildlife by providing a habitat. There's rabbits and pheasants out there. The one on the farmstead I keep mowed all the time, so there's not much for them but the trees. It's a hard time keeping the deer out of there for the first few years, because they like to eat it."

Indeed, some of the trees in Mr. Lively's windbreak are a little gnarled from chewing, but the sturdy evergreens kept on growing, and quickly straightened out.

"The first year I planted," he said, "I lost about 60 or 70 trees. You have to go back and replace them, and even then I lost about 10, but they'll fill in. There's deer and bugs and everything, all kinds of challenges. There's all kinds of things that can happen on top of the drought."

Though of course, Mr. Lively said, water is the main challenge — the water and the weather. To help deal with both, he planted diversely: incorporating Cedars, Colorado Junipers, Lace Bark Elm and Sumac shrubs into the mix.

And as for that second award?

"Well, it'll be fine anyhow," he said. "It shows that they recognize for what you've done. My advice is to take advantage of whatever the government wants to put out there. They give you money for these projects, but you have to put up the money to start with. Go through the conservation service, that's how it's done."



LARRY LIVELY planted his award-winning windbreaks in spring of 2008. He said that eventually, they'll grow to be as high as 25 feet tall.

- Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp



THE WINDBREAKS on the Lively farm faced some tough challenges when they were first planted, including hungry deer. But thanks to an ever-watchful eye, they're now all between 5 and 6 feet tall.

- Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp

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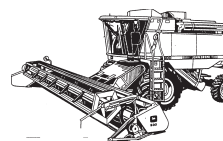
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