Option Name:	**Creation of pollinator margin – 10 metre width – annual wildflower**

Option Code:	**WFM**

Option Payment:	Year 1: £2530.00/ha Year 2 – 5: £2530.00/ha each year

Option Aim(s):	To create wildflower rich areas on cultivated land that will provide a food source for a range of nectar-feeding insects, including butterflies and bumblebees.

Scheme Applicability:	Wider – EFS(W)	✓	Higher – EFS(H)	✓	Group – EFS(G)	✓
This option is made up of:	Annual Management requirements	✓	NPI (capital items)			
This option is:	Permanent		Rotational	✓		

Option Description and Outcome:	This Option is an annual management Option and does not contain essential non-productive investments (referred to as capital works). For EFS(H) sites 'Creation of pollinator margin – 10 metre width – annual wildflower' Option is eligible where it will maintain and enhance the biodiversity value of these sites and is included in the site specific Remedial Management Plan (ssRMP). A 10 metre wide annual wildflower margin is created each year. Re-establishing each year will create an annual flower-rich habitat.
Choice of site:	The ideal location is improved, arable and temporary grassland (sown to grass for less than five years). It must not be sited on Permanent Grassland Sensitive (PGS) fields. It should not be established on wet or shaded areas or adjacent to semi-natural or species-rich grassland. Choose sheltered sites that receive plenty of sunlight, often the south side of hedges. This is a rotational option. This means that it can be moved around the farm in the normal rotation, but the claimed area must be planted and maintained each year of the agreement.
Essential capital works:	This Option does not contain an essential capital works element.

Additional optional capital works available for this Option:	None.

Area Permitted:	**Minimum**	0.10 ha	**Maximum**	As per max agreement value*

* DAERA reserves the right to limit a Higher Level agreement value where it considers appropriate to ensure value for money.

Requirements and Controls:

Code	Annual management requirements	Control type(1)		
		Admin	CwRS	OTSC
WFM1M	Complete the claimed area of 'Creation of pollinator margin – 10 metre width – annual wildflower' each year of the EFS.	✓		✓
WFM2M	Establish, retain and manage the claimed area of 'Creation of pollinator margin – 10 metre width – annual wildflower' each year period for the duration of the EFS agreement.		✓	✓
WFM3M	An average of 10 square metres of wildflower margin per 1 metre length of margin must be established.		✓	✓
WFM4M	Sow a 100% wildflower mix containing at least five native annual wildflower species.	✓		✓
WFM5M	Sow at a minimum seed rate of 10 kg/ha.	✓		
WFM6M	Do not include game cover crop seed or grass seed in the wildflower mix.	✓		
WFM7M	Retain the established area of 'Creation of pollinator margin – 10 metre width – annual wildflower' until 15th August each year period.		✓	✓
WFM8M	Exclude livestock from sowing to 15th August.		✓	✓
WFM9M	Keep and provide on request to DAERA evidence of the annual wildflower mix used (labels, invoices detailing mix contents and quantity supplied).	✓		

Code	Annual management requirements	Control type(1)		
		Admin	CwRS	OTSC
WFM10M	The 'Creation of pollinator margin – 10 metre width – annual wildflower' must be established, retained and managed as detailed in the ssRMP for EFS(H) sites.		✓	✓
WFM11M	Field records must be kept detailing area established each year, location, date(s) completed, wildflower seed mix used and all Management Requirements including Integrated Pest Management (IPM) requirements.	✓		

(1) The possible control types for each requirement may be:
'Admin' – administrative checks, 'CwRS' – Control with Remote Sensing, 'OTSC' – On-the-Spot Check.

EFS(W) agreements started 1st July 2017 - 12 month and 18 month payment requirements

This Option is unaffected by the 18 month payment as it cannot be established during the period July – December in any given year due to seasonal limitations and Cross-Compliance restrictions. This EFS Option is eligible for a 12 month management payment only.

Further Advice:

Site

This Option may be grown as a plot or as a crop margin. Choose lower yielding sheltered sites with a sunny aspect that receive a lot of sunlight (often the south or south-southwest side of hedges and field corners). Avoid planting under overhanging trees, next to tall hedges, in wet sites or on land facing north or east. Avoid sowing adjacent to semi-natural or species-rich grassland sites as there is potential for contamination of natural plant communities with the sown species.

Recommended seed mix

Use native Irish seed where possible. Select a mix containing at least five wildflower species. The recommended sowing rate is 10 - 20 kg/ha.

Establishment

Sow the crop in March to May. After ploughing and creation of the seed bed, it is useful to wait and recultivate the fresh flush of weeds (stale seed bed technique) before sowing the seed mixture into a fine firm seedbed. Wildflower seed should be broadcast (by hand may be best). Roll after sowing to ensure good seed/soil contact.

Post -establishment management

a. Chemical and nutrients

Nutrients and approved herbicides/pesticides may only be applied after sowing or to control noxious weeds and invasive species by spot spraying of an approved herbicide if justified as part of the implementation of IPM.

Take care if applying chemicals or nutrients to adjacent crops or grassland to avoid 'drift' onto the wildflower Option.

b. Avoid damage

Leave access to surrounding crops to allow for management. Livestock must be excluded from the sown wildflower area from sowing to 15th August. Use protective fencing if necessary. This fencing is not eligible for grant aid.

Preparing for re-establishment

After 15th August, the area of sown annual wildflowers can be removed. Alternatively it is preferable to retain the area over winter. This Option can be moved annually on improved, usually arable, land. A flail-type topper or conventional topper can be used to pulverise stems and clear brash before ploughing. Livestock can be used to graze the area between16th August and re-sowing. Remember to retain the margin until at least 31 December in Year 5 of your EFS agreement.