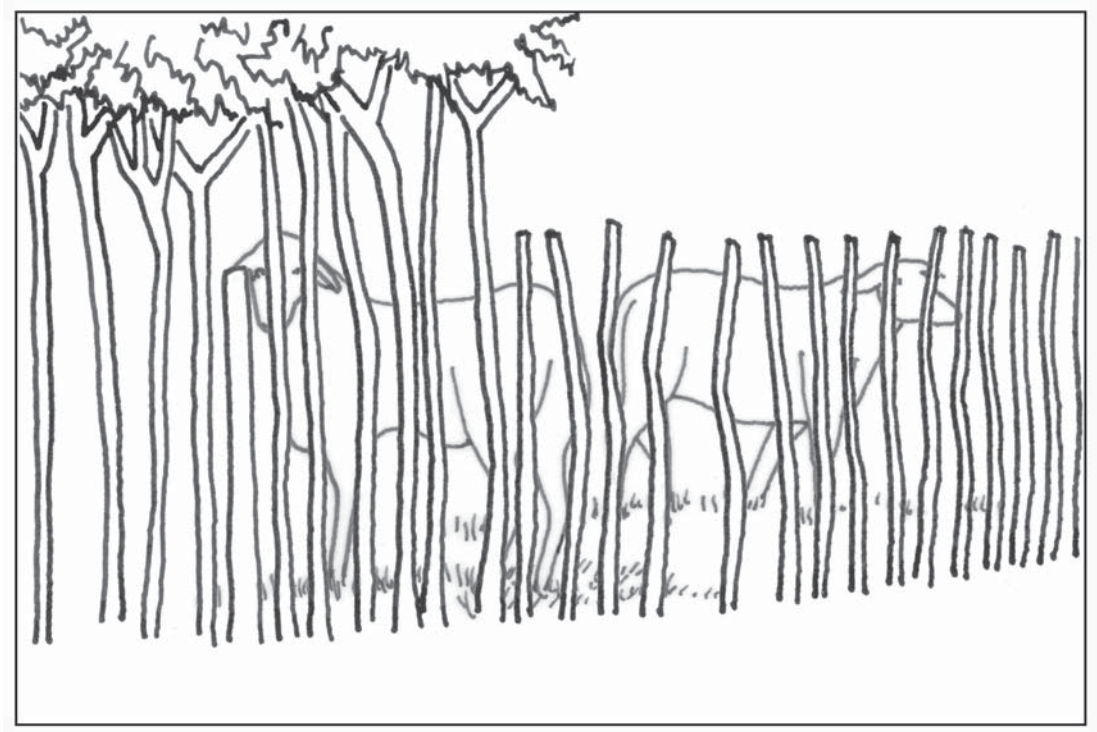
Fencing
on Pacific Island Farms
USDA NRCS Practice (382)



Use fencing to protect crops from damage, to manage grazing animals, and to keep livestock away from certain areas of the farm.

What is fencing?
Pacific Island farmers often use **fencing** to protect crops from damage, to manage grazing animals, and to keep livestock away from certain areas on the farm.

Why use fencing?
Pacific Island farmers can benefit from using fencing on their farm. Using this practice can:

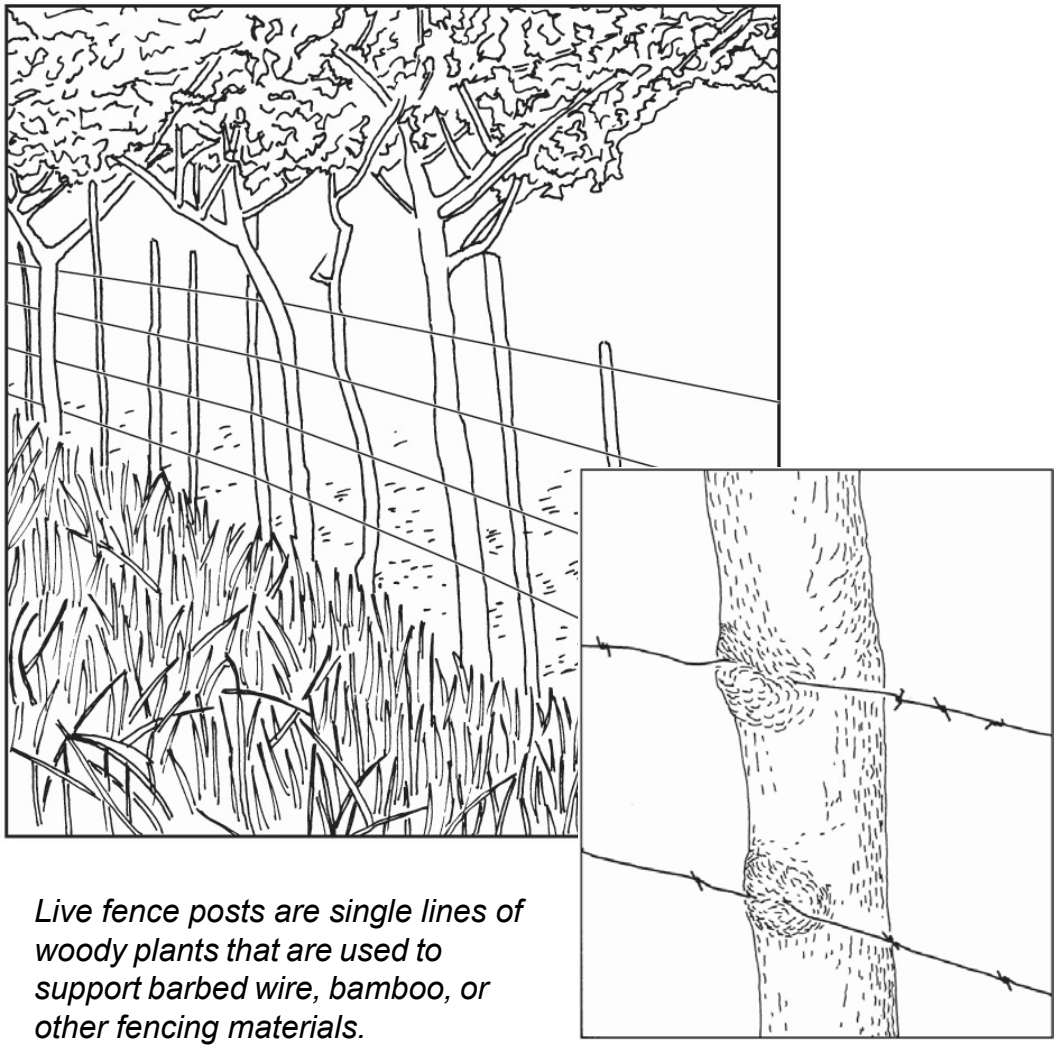
- manage the location of grazing livestock in a pasture (with prescribed grazing).
- prevent livestock from polluting streams (with their manure and urine).
- prevent livestock from causing erosion (on streambanks from their hooves).
- prevent animals (deer, pigs, etc.) from grazing and trampling on croplands and orchards.
- keep predators from attacking your livestock.
- keep people and livestock out of danger (away from highways, steep slopes, poisonous plants).
- protect conservation areas on the farm (streams, endangered plants and animals, drinking wells).

Types of Fencing

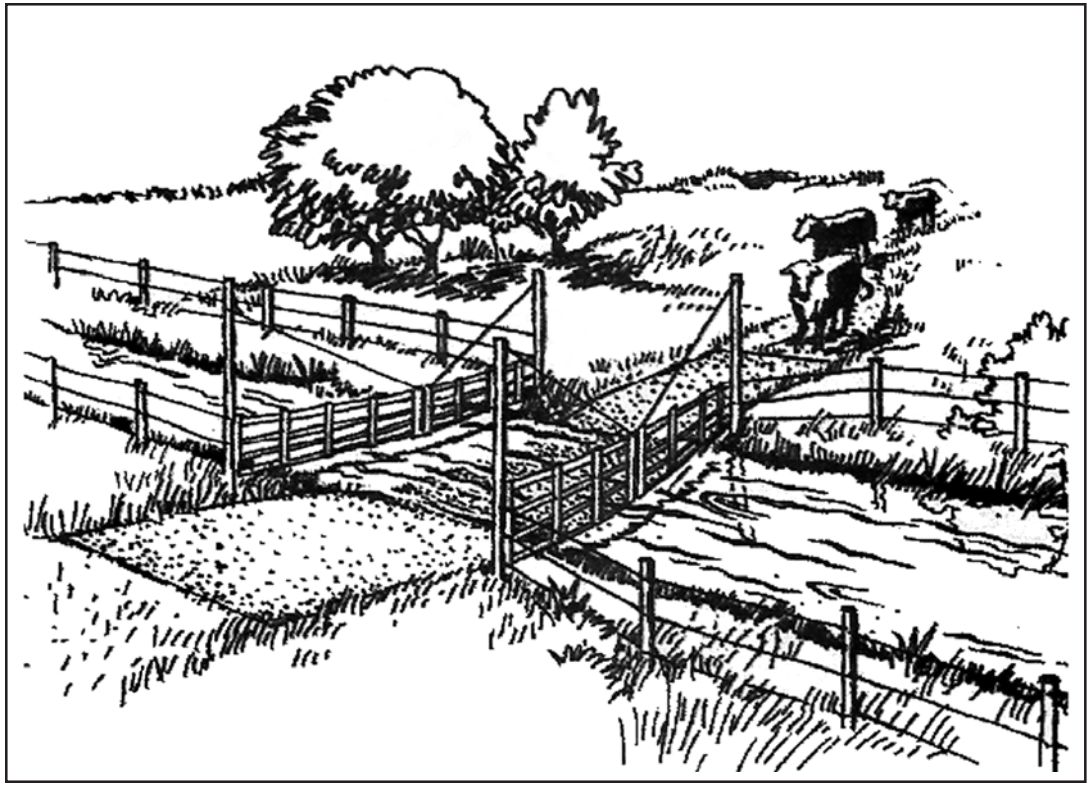
The most common types of fences used by Pacific Island farmers are living fences (where woody shrubs and plants are grown), standard wire fencing (made with barbed, smooth, or woven wire), and electric fencing (made with wire with an electric current running through it).

Living fences: There are two types of live fence systems.
(1) Live fence posts: single lines of woody plants are used to support barbed wire, bamboo, or other fencing materials.
(2) Hedgerows: thick, densely-spaced rows of woody shrubs and plants are grown to provide a barrier for animals or humans.

Living fences are beneficial to plant along streams. Farm animals can damage streams by eating down the plants along the stream's edge, leaving nothing to hold the soil. Their hooves can trample the ground, leaving bare spots that wash soil downstream. They can contaminate the water with their manure and urine. Fencing keeps farm animals from damaging streams. Living fences can be easily



Live fence posts are single lines of woody plants that are used to support barbed wire, bamboo, or other fencing materials.



One use of fencing is to prevent livestock from polluting streams and causing erosion.

grown along streams and will help keep water clean and cool. In addition, living fences can provide fuel wood, high quality forage for livestock, nutrient-rich mulch, food, future fencing material, as well as erosion control and land stabilization. Gliricidia (*Gliricidia sepium*) is often grown as a living fence.

Standard wire fence: Strands of barbed, smooth, and woven wire are attached to wooden or metal posts to make these common fences. Farmers use many different combinations of wire, post materials, and fence heights.

Some Pacific Island farmers have problems with wildlife eating their crops. There are many types of fences suitable for controlling wildlife. One example is an 8 foot (2.5 meters) high woven wire fence topped with 2 strands of barbed or smooth wire. This fence keeps out Mouflon sheep, Axis deer, and feral goats. Add a strand of barbed wire at the base to control feral pigs.

Electric Fence: Using a small power source (battery or solar), an electric current is run through wire fencing to shock livestock or predators away. These fences don't have to be as strong as barbed wire because animals learn to be afraid of them. There are many forms of portable electric fencing available.

Temporary, portable electric fencing is useful for **prescribed grazing** systems. This type of grazing is done by dividing the farm into paddocks with fencing, and then moving livestock through the paddocks to graze for a short period of time (1-14 days). This method of grazing avoids build up of manure and urine and often makes manure management much easier. It also helps the farmer to control animal traffic. Areas near the water and mineral sources, under shade trees, and along trails and walkways tend to get damaged by animal traffic. By moving water sources and changing fencing location, these animal traffic patterns can be changed.

Your local NRCS Field office can provide information that will help you design and install the right kind of fence to meet your needs.

For the best results, combine **fencing** with other conservation practices:

- **Prescribed Grazing** (528)**:** use grazing animals to control plant growth
- **Hedgerow Planting** (422)**:** growing hedges of bushes and trees

Additional information is available from your local USDA Service Center or at **www.pb.nrcs.usda.gov** and **www.hi.nrcs.usda.gov**.

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