



The xxx cereal farm entered organic conversion in 2004, with full organic status for the land and produce being achieved in 2006. Initially grain was grown and sold into the animal feed market. With fluctuating grain prices, they looked at other ways of selling grain. They decided to grow wheat and then rye and spelt for flour and make their own flour to sell direct to consumers. The farm walk was used to showcase the farming and processing practices implemented.



Objectives

- Initial objective: showcase organic farming.
- Secondary objective: showcase on-farm processing.
- Tertiary objective: promote direct selling.

Motivations

- Only 2% of the land area in Ireland is considered organic. Therefore, such organic walks are used to increase the uptake of organic agriculture.
- For the landowner, personal interest, pride and financial support are important drivers
- For the advisor, the open personality of the landowner and willingness to engage are essential tools in the extension effort

Topic selection

- Organic crop rotation, weed control, crop varieties, on-farm processing, direct selling.

Audience & participation

- Informing landowners of different organic practices.
- Consumers
- Those interested in selling direct to consumers.
- No participation fee.

Demonstration set-up

- Initially top-down (led by extension), but open discussion encouraged.
- Advocacy contribution by the farm owner is considered the most important by advisor.
- Demonstrations for different levels of audience knowledge.
- Certification bodies provided with opportunity to disseminate information.

Evaluation peer-to-peer learning environment (May, 2018)

- Those who attended the farm walk were offered to offer their input at any point throughout.
- Attendees cited knowledge exchange as being a pivotal reason for attending the event.
- Participants would recommend the event to others

- This farm walk is part of a series of 12 annual organic farm walks that take place throughout Ireland.
- Demonstrates how to engage efficiently with farmers who vary in their experience, profession, and sector.
- Demonstrates how to engage with the general public who have an active interest in organic farming and short food supply chains.



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PLAID and AgriDemo-F2F have received funding from the the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and innovation program under grant agreement N° 727388 (PLAID) and N° 728061 (AgriDemo-F2F)