



Case study reports: Austria CS2



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1. Background

Network

In CS 2 the main network actors were BOKU (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna), FiBL Austria (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture), farmers, Bio Austria (umbrella organisation for organic farmers), the host farmer and AGES. The host farmer mentioned a strong interaction between all these actors.

Farm facts and location

The farmer, A, is located in Lower Austria. He stopped ploughing 25 years ago, and converted his farm (80ha arable land, 10ha grassland) to organic cultivation in 2006. Nutrient management is done only by crop rotation without any fertiliser (even no compost). In 2010 A co-founded a company producing organic fertilisers and peat-free organic soils. The research on his farm focuses on composting using earthworms, soil-health and agroforestry.

Details about the event

The organisation of the event was cooperation between FiBL, BOKU, Bio Austria and the host farmer. The scientific actors FiBL and BOKU provided basic scientific information for the farmers and the host farmer. The host farmer transfers practical knowledge e.g. trial results and experiences about the Roller crimper method to the participants. Farmer to farmer learning was mentioned as an indispensable basic for discussion between peers. Participants were recruited from the local work groups of Bio Austria and the host farmer himself.

2. Method

In line with the Methodological Guidelines, three main data sources are used: a background document and interviews at Programme and Farm level to analyse structural and functional characteristics, and event tools and surveys to analyse event level participation and learning, as follows:

1. A background document for every case study was completed by the AgriDemo-F2F partner who carried out the case study.
2. Interviews with representatives of programme/networks (level 1) and farm level interviews with demonstrators/hosts (Level 1) to reveal how the functional and structural characteristics enable learning. Analysis of these interviews is reported in Sections 3 and 4. Data is sourced from interviews with 2 Programme interviewees and 1 Farm level interviewee, the host farmer. The analysis followed 4 themes: (1) Coordinating effective recruitment of host farmers and participants, (2) Developing and coordinating appropriate interaction approaches, (3) Planning, designing and conducting appropriate demonstration processes, (4) Enabling learning appropriate to purpose, audience, context, (5) Follow-up activities.
3. Event tools and surveys (level 3) to reveal peer to peer learning processes. Event details and analysis is reported in Section 5. This data is sourced from 6 pre-demonstration participant surveys, 1 pre-demonstration facilitator survey and an event observation tool completed by an observing researcher. This data is mainly used for the analysis of learning processes and learning outcomes related to the specific event and overall comments on the effectiveness of the event.

Finally, workshops were organised in September 2018 with the aim to introduce the project Agri-Demo-F2F and the two Austrian case studies in detail to members of the agricultural chamber (WS 1) and to demonstrators and participants of the demo events as well as two external stakeholders (WS 2). Furthermore, the workshop participants, who have experiences in demonstration activities in their provinces, were asked to contribute to key structural/functional characteristics of effective on-farm demonstrations. Afterwards, they discussed about 'barriers' (issues/challenges) and 'drivers' of on-farm demonstrations in Austria and gave examples for best practices from their regions.

3. Structural Characteristics

T1: Programme/network level

1. The main organisations involved in the demonstration activities and their roles

Two associations with special interest on Organic farming are referred by the two Programme Interviewees: BioAustria (Austria's umbrella association for organic farming) with an executive board out of farmers and FiBL Austria, a non-profit association with an executive board and a managing director.

Bio Austria

Bio Austria as a network of organic farmers has several farmer work groups in all federal states, each one of which is coordinated and supported by a so called 'organisation farmer'. In total Lower Austria it has 80 work groups with one leader each (Programme Interviewee 1).

BioAustria is responsible for the organisation of field days. In general, the leader of a work group or an adviser from BioAustria is actively involved in demonstrations, while some actors may assume multiple roles.

I act as organisation farmer, adviser and demonstrator. (Programme Interviewee 1)

2. Main actors involved at Bio Austria and respective roles

'Organisation farmer' or working group leader's role

The organisation farmers often organise field days or meetings with the work groups and inform advisers concerning date and content of the field days. Working group leaders act also as demonstrators (Programme Interviewee 1).

Advisers

Advisers act as demonstrators, recruit new demonstrators from farmer work groups, decide on the suitability of a specific field for a demonstration, support and organise demonstration events and topics. Working as an intermediary, they suggest topics related to participants interests.

Advisers are the main players... [...]. It is up to the host farmer to offer which fields are visited during smaller field days. I have to decide if these experiments fit with the demonstration programme and I act as the demonstrator. The host farmer provides his fields for the event but does not necessarily have to be present. (Programme Interviewee 1)

We discuss about demo events at our adviser meetings. If drought was an issue for participants, for example we try to include this topic in the next field day. (Programme Interviewee 1)

Actors' collaboration

The selection of farmers to host demonstrations is a collaboration between a work group leader and an adviser.

First of all I arrange a meeting with a work group leader for discussing potential topics and targeting a date. According to that I ask suitable farmers. (Programme Interviewee 1)

The selection of demo goals and objectives are decided on different levels.

Namely, the executive board, the assembly of delegates, various adviser meetings and training courses in Austria's federal states as well as the agricultural chamber concerning education issues decides. Objectives may vary between adviser groups and federal states.

FiBl

FiBl staff, work closely with both the agricultural chamber of Lower Austria and BioAustria, organising and supporting field experiments and field days on farms.[..]. They are active in several phases, such as the event organisation and propagation, feedback through surveys, new farmer hosts recruitment etc.

The chamber and I (researcher) organise field experiments and field days on farms. We present the experiments, goals and results if already available. The farmer and owner of the farm presents the backstory. Sometimes also the leader of a BioAustria network group or an adviser from BioAustria is involved. (Programme Interviewee 2)

We refer to the network of the Bionet project where relevant information is available and we invite farmers to participate also further events. We also recruit them to become part of the Bionet network and as a further step intensify the collaboration. (Programme Interviewee 2)

Networking

Bio Austria and FiBL are well connected both nationally and internationally.

On international level we (Bio Austria) are well connected with other organisations, NGOs, retail chains and companies related to organic farming in the EU. For this issue we have a special department. On national level we cooperate with NGOs, retail companies, gastronomy, beekeepers, viticulturists, direct marketers etc. (Programme Interviewee 1)

We (FiBL) are very well connected to all kinds of advisory services in the field of agriculture, like the agricultural chamber or BioAustria. We also cooperate with research institutions like Boku* or Raumberg Gumpenstein. There is also a network of farmers in the Bionet and Biobo projects who are interested in conducting experiments on their own field. On the international level we are in particular connected to the FiBL institutes in Germany, Switzerland, France and Brussels. Furthermore FiBL Austria is in contact with organic farming associations in Germany and Switzerland. (Programme Interviewee 2)

*the Boku Vienna (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna)

Other actors

Host farmer

According to the Programme Interviewee 1, the host farmer's role in a demonstration may vary from some oral presentation to total absence. On the other hand Programme Interviewee 2, referred to a more actual role of host farmers.

Host farmers are involved in case of bigger events, when preparing a pit with a soil profile for example and giving some oral presentation. [...] It is up to the host farmer to offer which fields are visited during smaller field days. I have to decide if these experiments fit with the demonstration programme and I act as the demonstrator. The host farmer provides his fields for the event but does not necessarily have to be present. (Programme Interviewee 1)

Host farmers are involved in individual demo activities as well as in the overall demo programme. Concerning field days, host farmers present experiments from our project but they also present other topics that are relevant on their farm. This programme is planned beforehand with the host farmer. (Programme Interviewee 2)

Researchers, experts and companies

Both programme interviewees referred to the involvement of researchers, experts and/or companies in the preparation of a demonstration event and its content.

Researchers and companies are invited to meetings in the work groups for the content of the field days." [...] "In case of bigger events with presentations of researchers, links to further information are shared. (Programme Interviewee 1)

For field days with very special topics and experts we try to gain as much information as possible in advance in order to provide useful discussions during the event. (Programme Interviewee 2)

Target Audience

Both programme interviewees stated that the main participants/audience are organic growers and especially Bio Austria members, and farmers in transition to organic practices. Nevertheless, one of the two interviewees referred also to a wider stakeholder participation during demo events.

The main participants are the farmers of Bio Austria members. We also try to recruit interested farmers that have not converted to organic agriculture yet. My audience are always organic farmers. (Programme Interviewee 1)

First of all these are organic farmers but also other interested people, s, researchers and representatives from the public body with relation to agriculture. . [...] .The most effective way is tapping into already existing networks from projects or from the work groups of BioAustria... [...] Some demo activities focus more on newcomers that have recently converted to organic farming, others especially focus on women in agriculture. (Programme Interviewee 2).

T2: Farm (event) level

The host farmer of this case study has a strong affinity to research and he cooperates with universities by implementing research on his farm and transferring knowledge since 15 years. The host farmer has referred to the following actors and respective roles.

1. Host farmer role

The case study host farmer is always involved as demonstrator. However his involvement varies according to who organises the event.

Sometimes other institutions organise demonstrations on our farm. Then, organisation and advertisement is up to them but I'm still involved as demonstrator. [...] If partner organisations organise a field day on my farm they give the main presentation but I'm always involved at least as demonstrator. Researchers and advisers are the organisers of the demo events. (Farmer)

Our workers are involved in preparing field days or excursions. Besides mainly I am involved. I have to prepare information material or presentations, take time for the events and think about the programme depending on the weather. (Farmer)

The host farmer is also involved in demo topics selection, usually in collaboration with the institutes who organise the event.

Topics are selected by the organisation team, including the members from my cooperation institutions and myself. I usually don't organise demo events on my own. (Farmer)

In this specific demo the host farmer, acted as both a host, demonstrator and a facilitator of the event (Observation Tool).

2. Participants – target audience

The target is generally farmers and mainly organic farmers. Nevertheless a wide variety of stakeholders has been reported to attend the farm's events. Apart from the host, farmers are not involved in the overall development of the demonstrations.

On the one hand these are farmers, but due to our holistic approach also pupils, students, kindergartners. [...] .Nevertheless, according to these institutions' ethos the focus group are organic farmers as well as students who focus on organic agriculture. [...] I have a broad audience from kindergartners to international researchers. (Farmer)

In general farmers as participants are not involved, except the host farmer. (Farmer)

3. Networks

The case study demonstration farm is not part of a programme or a wider network nor is connected to other demo farms. However, the host farmer is well connected to research and project boards and in that way he has the opportunity to use this kind of networking. Many of the institution he collaborates with are networks or work with networks.

Hitherto our farm has not been connected to other demo farms but we are cooperating with research institutions or BioAustria. For example the next IFOAM conference takes place in Vienna in September. In the course of this BioAustria organises a demo event on our farm. Fibl organises excursions on flowering strips, Bioforschung Austria on agroforestry or Boku on roller crimper. We are also cooperating with schools, some of them (agricultural schools in lower Austria and Salzburg) visit our farms regularly. (Farmer)

I'm in the consortium of a project and involved in another project as farmer. In case of the latter one I organised a conference that also included demo activities, with 120 participants from 15 countries on our farm last year.[...]. I'm glad to have access to research, e.g. EIP-AGRI and as member in 3 focus groups (organic farming, soil borne diseases, carbon sequestration).

As these two associations, Bio Austria and Fibl, have a big geographic coverage all over Austria, through this collaboration the farmer gains attendance and support. Both associations work with pre-existing locally based initiatives, groups and networks to host demos as well as for outreach and recruitment/attendance.

4. Resources, finances and incentives

The case study demonstration farmer is not funded for his demo services, but aims at some funding arrangement in the near future.

Till now there are no funding arrangements but due to our increasing demo events we will have to organise them more professionally and also ask for funding arrangements. (Farmer)

However when collaborating with some institutions or associations like Bio Austria and Fibl or a funding programme, he has the opportunity of some kind of compensation.

There are funding programmes from the ministry, the federal states or the European Union with a term of 3 to 5 years. [...]Yes, financial support is possible, because demo events can be part of a funding programme. (Programme Interviewee 1)

Funding is only on projects, without any core funding. Fibl in cooperation with the agricultural chamber or BioAustria supports with the organisation of the field day. Farmers get a small financial compensation. (Programme Interviewee 2)

5. Location and layout

The Farm is an average size farm located in Lower Austria, cultivating cash crops, which are sold through national product dealers. The farmer applies stockless farming and crop rotation: lucerne (2 years)-wheat-maize-hemp-soja-rye-mixed crops- and also catch crops (Post host farmer Interview).

The design of the demo/test area includes flower test strip, field experiment for roller-crimper with 4 replicates of each treatment. The farm has comparative layouts for the replicated field experiment plus several fields are managed by no-tillage (observation tool).

Travel time of farmers to reach the demo farm ranged from 15 to 35 minutes, with an average time close to 25 minutes. Most participants have rated their travel effort to participate as rather easy.

6. Frequency, duration and special offers of the event

The specific event, occurred in July 2018, in collaboration with the advisory service of BioAustria (post survey demonstrator interview). The event was designed within the framework of a scientific project (pre survey demonstrator interview). Its duration was 4 hours (from 15.00 to 19.00).

In general, the host farmer holds one-off events at his farm, but depending on the topic, a series of events can be also organised. Overall, 20 to 30 events are organised at his farm per year (Farmer).

The farmer offers some minor arrangements when holding an event, which he plans to expand and organise better in the future.

I offer water in small glass bottles. For the future we are planning a sitting together after the events in a restaurant close to our farm. (Post host farmer interview)

4. Functional characteristics

T1: Coordinating effective recruitment of host farmers and participants

1. Incentives

The Farmer claimed to receive no funding for demonstration activities, although he noted that the increasing demand for demonstration events and the professional standards they were expected to deliver them, meant they were going to ask for funding arrangements.

Till now there are no funding arrangements but due to our increasing demo events we will have to organise them more professionally and also ask for funding arrangements. (Farmer)

Whilst the Programme Interviewee recognised that financial support was available through funding programmes, he also noted that in receiving funding, demonstration events became more formal and required much more structure. He therefore expressed a preference for more informal approaches.

Yes, financial support is possible, because demo events can be part of a funding programme. But for this purpose some organisational effort like invitations or attendance lists are necessary. That's why I prefer the more flexible way with email and SMS. (Programme Interviewee 1)

2. Motivations for host farmers

The interviewees listed a variety of motivations for hosts. The Farmer was motivated by learning and supporting other farmers in learning about specific topics and accessing the cutting-edge research on specific topic areas.

The aim of these 3 main topics is supporting farmers with research by investing in soil health and providing efficient methods for gaining higher gross margins for example. But conducting research on climate protection, pollution prevention or promoting biodiversity is equally important. (Farmer)

The Farmer also talked about wanting to respond to the challenge of knowledge transfer within the agricultural community as being a key motivation for him.

The main reason is that knowledge transfer is difficult in the field of agriculture [...]. That's why knowledge transfer is my main motivation. (Farmer)

The Programme Interviewee also described **a range of motivations for farmers**. In the first instance, he mentioned how farmers were simply motivated by a desire to learn new things, including recommendations and advice on things – in particular, things that had gone wrong. He also talked about how some farmers were motivated by being selected to be demonstrators; this is seen as an honour and privilege in the farming community and should not be underestimated.

Some farmers like to host events because they know that they will learn new things. Some are recruited by myself and maybe feel honoured. Host farmers like to show best practise examples or also failed experiments in order to get recommendations for improvement. Discussing with other farmers and problem solving is an important point. Furthermore I try to avoid possibly arising costs for the host farmer. (Programme Interviewee 1)

3. Motivations for participants

The range of motivations for participants tended to be **oriented around learning and the benefits to their own farm practice**. On a more practical note, Programme Interviewee 1 suggested that access to machinery was often a key motivation for participants.

Most of them try to benefit from demo events, in the term of gaining new ideas, working more efficiently, having higher gross margins or coming up to environment-related goals. (Farmer)

Participants want to see and learn something new. Further trigger factors are the attendance of researchers or companies with machinery exhibitions. (Programme Interviewee 1)

Participants themselves stated as main reasons to attend: get to know something new; personal interest; I'm also cooperating with the host farmer in another project; exchange of experiences, get to know new cultivation methods; interest in mulch seeding; new technologies; interest in no-till technology.

4. Advertising and recruitment

In terms of advertising, the Farmer noted how advertising was the responsibility of the Programme level.

I don't have much experience in this field because most advertisement is done by my cooperation institutions but in my opinion email is the best way. (Farmer)

At the Programme level, a range of approaches were used to advertise events as to target the widest possible audience. However, the interviewee was aware that the type of advertising needed to fit the particular event; he suggested that bigger events were best advertised in the members journal, where smaller events required a more personal approach (e.g. email and text message).

Bigger events with researchers as speakers are advertised via our member journal and newsletter some time in advance to address a wide audience. SMS and email are more effective for smaller events like field days and allow planning on a short-term basis. (Programme Interviewee 1)

T2: Appropriate demonstration and interaction approaches

1. The nature of interaction

The Farmer felt his approach to demonstrating was 'Mostly top down' – because discussion was limited to the specific topic area or question to be addressed. There was some disagreement amongst the two Programme Interviewees, who conversely stated the approach was 'Entirely top down' and 'Entirely bottom-up', however, they both agreed that the approach differed 'depending on the approach of each adviser'. (Programme Interviewee 1).

2. Involving farmers in the learning process and the demonstration programme

Despite this lack of consensus about the nature of interaction, Programme Interviewee 2 told us how the programme was *informally open* to input from hosts and participants. He described a 'multi-stage process' that involved multiple stakeholders to agree on potential topics.

Hosts and participants are involved in the selection directly and indirectly due to discussions and always having a sympathetic ear for the farmers/advisers and their concerns. (Programme Interviewee 2)

Although, host farmers had more *formal opportunity* to have input to and steer demonstrations and the demonstration programme.

Host farmers are involved in individual demo activities as well as in the overall demo programme. Concerning field days, host farmers present experiments from our project but they also present other topics that are relevant on their farm. This programme is planned beforehand with the host farmer. (Programme Interviewee 2)

3. Focus and Design

The Farmer and both Programme Interviewees described the network as 'in between' a 'Whole farm' and 'Single focus' approach.

There was disagreement amongst those interviewed regarding the nature of the design of the programme; the Farmer felt the approach was 'a mixture' between an experimental and exemplary design, Programme Interviewee 2 felt the design was 'exemplary' whilst the Programme Interviewee 3 felt the design was 'experimental' in nature. All had a preference for a mixed approach to programme design, which was rooted in a desire to apply specific research findings to a broader farming context:

We present single experiments but my approach as a researcher is to stay on top of things, bring the information on a broader basis and give a linkage to other research experiments on the same topic. Of course there is this experimental approach when presenting an experiment on a field day but we also give further exemplary information on relevant research topics. (Programme Interviewee 2)

The Farmer and two out of three Programme Interviewees felt the network approach was also 'a mixture' between an experimental and exemplary design. However, the Farmer felt that a more 'experimental' approach would better fit his farming ethos. All Programme Interviewees recognised the importance of the Farmers' ethos and own preferences in shaping the delivery of demonstrations.

4. Ideal group size

There was a strong consensus across the Farm and Programme levels that optimum group sizes should be kept to around or under 20 persons. This allowed for better communication (without the need for a microphone) and allowed more/better access to activities, tools or machines. It was also felt to allow discussion between participants.

20 persons per group are most effective because this group size is optimal to handle without a microphone. Moreover no sub groups emerge but still a good group dynamic is ensured. (Farmer)

20 persons is an optimal size. In case of more participants acoustic becomes an issue and not everyone can try out hands on or multisensory tools. A group of less than 20 participants diminishes lively discussions due to lacking knowledge exchange. (Programme Interviewee 2)

T3: Enabling learning appropriate to purpose, audience, context

1. Facilitating interaction and learning: structure, content and techniques

The Farm and Programme level interviews revealed the importance of 'doing' and 'seeing' as part of a *varied* day.

Looking in a soil pit is always part of our events, sometimes we also have machinery exhibitions. They are very effective for attracting participants' attention. (Farmer)

A technical presentation in combination with a field walk, no matter in which order, is a good solution. Presenting some outlandish issues is effective too. (Programme Interviewee 1)

Giving a short overview and some explanations on what will be presented should be the beginning. Usually a field walk follows. In the end there should be enough time for discussion with the participants. (Programme Interviewee 2)

The Farmer and one of Programme Interviewees listed the ability to support or prompt 'Problem solving' as the most important factor in delivering demonstrations.

Problem solving is the most important aspect [...] because this is exactly what my work as adviser is all about. Farmers contact me because of having problems and I try to give advice.
(Programme Interviewee 1)

The additional Programme Interviewee stated it was having opportunity for 'Participants to ask questions and talk openly' which he felt was a precursor to being able to problem solve.

2. Taking into account variation in learning

The Farmer talked in detail of how he adapted his approach to fit different learning styles and levels of prior knowledge. By using prior knowledge of the group, he adapted his presentations according to their skills and backgrounds. He also ensured he could account for differences in prior knowledge by starting at a low baseline. Although this is effective, there is scope to develop this approach to differentiation given the Farmer is so receptive to this idea.

Programme Interviewee 2 expressed a similar level of understanding of accounting for variation in learning and accommodated it in a similarly efficient but low-level way. There was no mention of the way that different participants might prefer to learn. Variation in learning needs is an important theme amongst demonstration programmes that target or cater for farmers converting to organic as there is arguably more learning to do.

In case of many newcomers in the field of organic agriculture we try to present more basic information [...]. The breaks in between the presentations as well as the discussions after the event are used for question time for those participants that are on a lower knowledge level.
(Programme Interviewee 2)

T4: Effective follow-up activities

1. Follow-up activities and materials

The Farmer did not continue to engage with participants after the event, claiming he 'didn't want to push anybody' to continue their involvement.

At the Programme level, the Programme Interviewee described an ongoing process of engagement, where farmers are referred to the Bionet project network, part of which, they are invited to participate in future events.

They may even be invited to participate in future research and collaborate with them.
(Programme Interviewee 2)

A range of follow-up materials were available. These included basic materials such as brochures, but more complex and specialists' results – particularly regarding the research project – were available on request.

Yes, to some extent but only upon request, for example if participants ask for special results regarding some scientific study that I have mentioned. Information is provided per email.
(Farmer)

We point towards our Bionet brochure which provides information on the presented topics but also additional information. (Programme Interviewee 2)

Programme Interviewee 1 suggested that the types of materials available was linked to the size of the event. Only at larger events were materials such as host presentations or research data made available.

In case of bigger events with presentations of researchers, links to further information are shared. We also point participants out to our newsletter and education programme. At smaller events usually no follow-up materials are made available. (Programme Interviewee 1)

2. Assessing impact

The Farmer did not assess the impact of his demonstration events.

At the Programme level, assessment was sometimes conducted. It was sometimes informal, i.e. 'Sometimes when visiting the event location again we ask what has been going on since our last demo event' (Programme Interviewee 1) but is also conducted on a more formal basis at the start of subsequent events.

As indicator we use feedback from participants when we meet again at field days and reflect about former events. (Programme Interviewee 2)

5. Event analysis: effective peer learning characteristics

Event details

Only 8 farmers participated, which were all men who worked in the local area. There were only 8 presumably due to the fact that this field day was right in the middle of harvest time. All of them completed the pre and post survey.

	n° survey participants	farmer	farmer/pensioner	pensioner
<i>occupations</i>	8	6	1	1
<i>age</i>	8			
18-30				
31-40	1	1		
41-50				
51-60	3	3		
60+	4	2	1	1

T1: Learning processes

1. Communication initiation by participants

The event consisted of a very small group in which discussions were easy. More than 50% of the participants had no problem sharing their knowledge and/or experiences related to the topic. There was a lot of time for questions and a lot (>10) of questions were asked. A lot of participants, but not all of them, had no problem formulating their points of view regarding the topic during the event.

	participant answers				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
I had the feeling that I could share my own knowledge as relevant information.	0	1/8	6/8	1/8	0
I asked at least one question during the demonstration .	7/8 yes				
I shared my own point of view at least once during the demonstration.	5/6 yes				
I felt encouraged to ask questions during the demonstration.	0	0	4/8	3/8	1/8
When there were any discussions, I felt comfortable sharing my opinion.	0	1/8	1/8	5/8	0

	demonstrator answers				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
I asked participants to share some of their own background knowledge during the demo.	1/2	1/2	0	0	0
I encouraged the participants to formulate their own point of view during the demonstration.	0	1/2	1/2	0	0
I encouraged the participants to formulate questions during the demonstration.	0	0	2/2	0	0

2. Interactive knowledge creation

Hands-on opportunities

No hands-on activity was demonstrated or could be carried out by the participants.

Other multisensorial experiences

The participants could smell the compost and they could feel it with their hands. It was possible to see the flower strips and field experiment up close.

Discussion opportunities and negotiating conflicting points of view

The farmer was both a host, demonstrator and a facilitator.

Open discussions were stimulated and given a lot of time. Most participants were involved. Shared critical points of view were clarified/rephrased so more people could understand.

	participant answers				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
In my opinion, there were interesting discussions during the demonstration.	0	0	6/8	2/8	0
If participants didn't agree with each other during discussions, somebody (demonstrator/other participant) tried to reach a consensus between them.	0	0	1/7	3/7	3/7

	demonstrator answers				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
In my opinion, there were interesting discussions during the demonstration.	0	0	1/2	1/2	0
If participants didn't agree with each other during discussions , somebody (me or somebody else) tried to reach consensus between them.	0	1/2	1/2	0	0

3. Engagement during the event

Participants all seem to know each other well, but are not close friends. Demonstrators act open and friendly, but not as close friends with the participants.

	participant answers				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
I felt actively involved during the whole demonstration process.	0	1/8	5/8	2/8	0
I felt like the demonstration increased my ability to rely on myself as a farmer.	0	0	6/8	2/8	0
I could relate well to other participants (because they have an agricultural background similar to mine).	0	0	4/7	3/7	0
A lot of the other participants are part of the same farmer network as me.	0	0	6/8	2/8	0
I felt like I could trust the knowledge of (most of) the other participants.	0	0	5/8	2/8	1/8
The demonstration felt like an informal activity to me.	0	0	3/7	4/7	0
I thought the host farm was comparable enough to my own farm.	1/7	1/7	3/7	2/7	0
I had the feeling the demonstrator was like one of us.	0	0	5/8	3/8	0
I had the feeling I could trust the demonstrators knowledge.	0	0	2/8	6/8	0
I got along very well with the demonstrator.	0	0	3/8	5/8	0

	demonstrator answers				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
Were participants (farmers, advisers, researchers etc.) involved in the overall development of this demonstration? If yes, how?	1 said no. The other one said yes, because of the coordination with the advice service of BioAustria.				
Most of the participants were well known to me.	0	1/2	1/2	0	0
A lot of the participants are part of the same network as me.	0	1/2	1/2	0	0
The demonstration felt like an informal activity to me.	0	0	1/2	1/2	0
I think the host farm was well suited for this demo.	0	0	1/2	1/2	0
I got along well with the participants.	0	0	1/2	1/2	0

T2: Learning outcomes

Explained knowledge was sufficiently understandable. Practical skills were not sufficiently addressed to foster maximum uptake by participants. Common methods or ways of thinking on farming and thinking on learning were questioned and alternatives were shortly elaborated on in group. Many aspects of organic farming were discussed.

	participant answers				
What would you ideally like to learn today?	new production methods; seeds inoculation with compost tea; expertise in the roller crimper method; new knowledge and socialising; putting the no till technology into practice				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
The demonstration met my expectations regarding what I wanted to learn.	0	0	4/8	4/8	0
The demonstration exceeded my expectations.	0	2/8	4/8	2/8	0
I felt surprised at some point(s) during the demonstration.	0	1/8	5/8	2/8	0
I obtained a clearer understanding of the topic(s) demonstrated.	0	0	5/8	3/8	0
I have the feeling I learned something new (knowledge, skill, practice, etc.).	0	1/8	4/8	3/8	0
I thought about how I could implement some of the ideas and practices on my own farm.	0	0	4/8	4/8	0
I reflected on my own point of view at some point during the demonstration.	0	0	5/8	3/8	0
I learnt about the principles underlying a practice.	1/8	1/8	4/8	2/8	0
I thought about how we learn something new on demonstrations (e.g.: teaching methods).	1/7	0	4/7	1/7	1/7
I thought about why I want to learn about the topic(s) of this demonstration.	1/8	2/8	3/8	1/8	1/8

	demonstrator answers				
what do you intend for the participants to learn today?	being aware of alternative management tools; information concerning new cultivation methods				
	strongly disagreed	disagreed	agreed	strongly agreed	not applicable
I think participants have learnt what I intended them to learn.	0	0	2/2	0	0
I tried to surprise participants with uncommon/new knowledge/new skill.	0	1/2	0	1/2	0
I felt surprised at some point(s) myself during the demonstration (e.g. by a question or discussion).	0	1/2	1/2	0	0
I obtained a clearer understanding of the topic(s) myself.	0	0	2/2	0	0
I have the feeling I learned something new during this demo (from participants, discussion...).	0	0	2/2	0	0
I reflected on my own point of view myself at some point during the demo.	0	1/2	1/2	0	0
I encouraged participants to reflect on their own point of view during this demo.	0	2/2	0	0	0
I encouraged participants to reflect on their own situation sometime during this demo.	0	2/2	0	0	0
I encouraged participants to reflect on how we learn something new on demonstrations.	0	1/2	1/2	0	0
I encouraged participants to reflect on why we are trying to learn about the topic of this demonstration	0	0	2/2	0	0

T3: Overall comments on the effectiveness of the event

Participants:

With an average of 4,5 on 5, participants rated the event overall as very effective. They would all recommend the event. They stated as most effective characteristics of the event: explanation of the tea-bag method; open performance; practical experience; topic; presentation of innovative cultivation methods and relation to practice and region.

Most had no suggestions for improvement. Only three commented with: stick to the time schedule; advertise event earlier; event should be continued in the following years.

Demonstrator:

The demonstrators reported as most effective characteristics: the participants and knowledge exchange between science and practice, transferring knowledge on current scientific results.

As points of improvement, the demonstrators stated: better scheduling and preparing and handing out information material.

Observed main strong points of the event:

The host farmer holds a research farm and strongly focuses on knowledge exchange. He cooperates with many national and international research institutions and is very keen on innovative agricultural approaches like the Roller-Crimper method. It was a small group which was great for discussion. More or less all participants joined discussions on the field and asked questions. All of them would recommend the event to others.

Observed main improvements:

Sticking to the time-schedule was mentioned by one of the demonstrators and the participants. Hands-on experiences could have been made possible in the context of this event and dissemination materials could have been provided.