



The farm xxx is an organic mixed farm, situated in the eastern part of Flanders. Farming in balance with nature is a key objective for the farm. The farm combines arable production, with both beef cattle and sheep. In recent years, the farmer has invested significantly in agroforestry around his farm. Trees have been planted both in the meadows for grazing, and in the arable plots (alley cropping). The farm is very active in demonstrations, hosting around 50 demonstrations each year, for a diverse audience (schools, citizens, farmers, researchers, etc.).



Objectives

- Demonstration of alternative farming model (show what is possible)
- Knowledge exchange
- Promotion of on-farm product sales

Motivations

- Idealistic: continuous improvement of the farming sector
- Networking with other organic/agroecological farmers, but also researchers and advisors, to explore new approaches
- Surprise people, trigger critical reflection by participants

Topic selection

- Depending on the audience, and is discussed beforehand with the organizing party
- Whole farm approach – organic
- Agroforestry

Audience & participation

- Very diverse audience: farmers, students, families, researchers, ...
- Participation fee: depends on the audience, and if there is clear added value (knowledge) for the farmer

Demonstration set-up

- Bottom-up approach, demonstrations based on participants requests
- Farmer = part-time high school teacher, with good demonstration and storytelling skills
- Always combination of introduction (sometimes with ppt) & farm visit
- Set-up differs from demo to demo: ranging from 1-on-1 tours for colleague farmers, to tasting sessions of farm products for senior citizens
- There is no formal evaluation of the demonstration, but in most cases verbal feedback is sought from organizing party

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

- Diverse group of approx. 40 students, researchers, farmers (participants of EURAF conference)
- Presentation based on drivers and barriers for the implementation of agroforestry in practice
- Prior knowledge was not absolutely necessary for the demonstration
- Host farmer received valuable input through varied experience and expertise of (international) participants

- Farmer has very strong intrinsic motivation for hosting demonstrations. The farm offers an excellent example of the possibilities for an agro-ecological farming system.
- No real structural support in Flanders for farmers who have an interest in hosting demonstrations.
- One-man show: farmer is central in organizing and conducting the demonstration. He has excellent didactic skills, and has specific tools and tricks to trigger the participants' attention
- Continuity in demonstrations on his farm is enabled by the farmer's elaborate network and presence in both the local and the organic farming community.
- Key areas to explore: structural support for on-farm demonstrations (besides projects) – business model, creation of local networks, development of demonstrator skills

