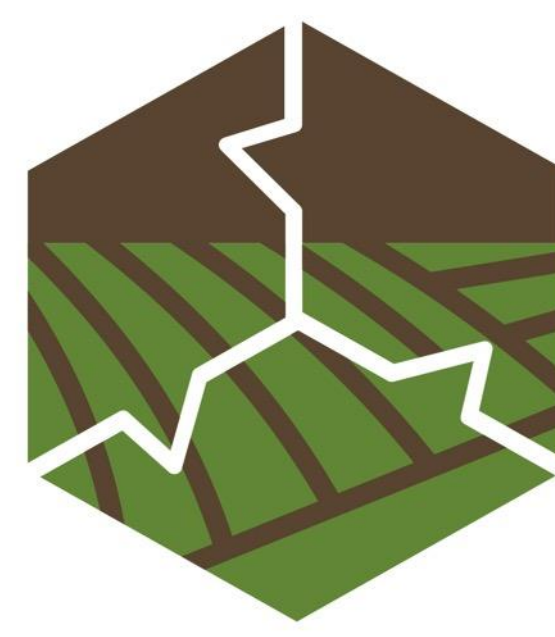




AGRIDEMO



FARMDEMO



PLAID

Country Report for Finland

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UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI



Grazing Day demo, by Koski Manor & SW Finland Cultural Landscapes Association. © T. Birge 2017

Topics of demonstration

Wide variety of demonstration occurs in Finland: Whole farm demo, semi-natural grazing (beef cattle, sheep, horses), heritage breeds, farmland nature management, dairy, on-farm energy production, exotic animals (ostrich, alpaca), berries, apples, wine, vegetables, pigs, ecovillage living, greencare...

Providers and purpose of demonstration

c. 105 farms identified: 59 certified organic, 5 certified biodynamic

Majority privately held family farms (86):

- Direct sales & farm tourism;
- Demo for school groups;
- Cooperation with external producer orgs, extension services, private companies, State bureaus, environmental orgs., vocational schools & universities
- Overlap of activities.

Share companies/partnerships/LLC's (8)

- Are usually partnerships between multiple farms;
- Similar profile as above.

Cooperatives (2); Foundations (3)

- e.g. Children's Garden of Helsinki; ecovillages

University and vocational schools

- Own farms/gardens for teaching, research, demo; Projects with farming community as part of teaching and research

State institutes (Under umbrella of Natural Resources Finland)

- Funding, leading demo projects; own research farms; cooperation & support

Producer & extension orgs.

- demo organizers/partners

Nature management orgs.

- Teaching, organizing

Private companies

- Consulting; showcasing; information dissemination

History

In 1892, a research station for agricultural production was established in Tikkurila, Vantaa by decree of Czar Nikolai III. This later became MTT Agrifood research Finland, which operates under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Teaching and spreading agricultural knowledge

Folk schools conducted agricultural demonstration with the aim of spreading practices and technologies to home farms. Later on, school gardens for children began to be established. The first school garden for children is thought to be the Arbetets Vänner ('Friends of Work') Association's school garden established in 1903.

The University of Helsinki took over Viikki farm in Helsinki as a research and teaching farm in 1931. Its aim was to develop a model farm for university-level teaching and research.



Navetan duunarit / Barn workers

7,690 views

25 0 SHARE

High Hills Dairy, Finland
Published on May 24, 2016

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Types of Demonstrations

Finland is a country of family farms. Thus, direct sales and farm tourism activities on private farms are the most common types of farm demonstration activities in Finland.

Official demonstration activities, including those on private farms, tend to target efficiency— for example , reducing nutrient run-off, dairy technology, energy efficiency, etc. Privately organized demonstration activities more frequently (but not exclusively) relate to organic farming, local food, uncommon crop varieties and heritage breeds, and nature and heritage biotope management.

On-farm energy production has a strong showing through 'E-farm', which showcases different types of on-farm energy production on at least 11 different farms. Palopuro Agroecology Symbiosis Is a unique project at Knehtilä Farm that is based on energy and nutrient self-sufficiency and seeks to improve the social capital of the village.

Hands-on demonstration is also carried out under the Finnish 'talkoot', or community volunteering. In addition to NGO organized 'talkoot', State owned Metsähallitus Parks and Wildlife Finland also facilitates 'talkoot' for heritage farmland on public lands.

Farmers with and without demonstration activities often give tours to local school classes at no cost, even if they otherwise charge for farm visits.

Access Issues

Southern Finland, with the highest population, has the most farm visit opportunities. Lapland has low population and less farming and, thus, fewer opportunities for on-farm demonstration.

Without data on the gender make up of demonstration providers and participants, it can be assumed that more men are involved in demonstration than women because men are overrepresented in agriculture generally. However, the question of whether women farmers have more representation in demonstration activities is highly interesting!

Distinguishing Characteristics

- From showcasing high-tech solutions like milking robots and energy self-sufficiency technologies to focusing on nature management, green care and agricultural production in the far north, Finland has a fascinating range of demonstration activities.
- 'Field days' – held annually and widely advertised – are important to farmers. In 2017, for example, an estimated 3,000 people attended the field day at Västankvarn farm in Southern Finland.



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