Why support farmer to farmer learning?

Farming needs to become more knowledge-based to meet the multiple expectations emerging from society and to tackle the challenges of food security, food safety, quality, sustainability and climate change in Europe. Such complex challenges make it more important than ever that farmers have opportunities to learn from their colleagues across Europe. Farmers tend to be most influenced by proof of successful farming methods by their peers, and consistently identify other farmers as important sources of information. As a result, demonstration activities hosted by professional farmers at their own farm or on research farms can prove very useful in supporting farmer-to-farmer learning.

Agridemo-F2F

The overall aim of AgriDemo-F2F is to enhance peer-to-peer learning within the commercial farming community. The project will utilize the experience of different actors and involve practitioner partners throughout the project to deepen understanding of effective on farm demonstration activities (multi-actor approach).

In a first step and together with our sister project PLAID, we will construct a Europe-wide inventory of farms undertaking demonstration activities, detailing sectors, themes and topics. Next to this, a set of cases will be selected for in-depth analysis to deepen our understanding. Case studies will be described, analysed and compared on their network structure (actors, roles and governance characteristics), and the mechanisms and tools used for recruitment, interaction and learning. Furthermore, effectiveness of the different approaches within the case-studies will be assessed through an evaluation of the extent and nature of learning. Building on this understanding, evidence and tools for organizing effective farmer-to-farmer learning approaches will be synthesized and made available to end users.

Both regional and international multi-actor meetings will use the results of the case study analysis to identify a set of best practical approaches for demonstration activities and recommendations for AKIS governance and policies on how to support effective on farm demonstration activities. The empowerment of both the commercial farming and policy community to uptake these best practices will occur through structuring the project results and farm demo showcases on the FarmDemo-Hub. The Hub will include the searchable inventory, next to farm demonstration show cases, best practice examples, videos, etc.. Furthermore, evidence, tools and best practices will feed the follow-up project NEFERTITI, this project will establish 10 interactive networks of demo-farmers and involved actors. NEFERTITI will carry-on and empower our activities to boost cross-fertilisation and innovation uptake.

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