

NEFERTITI

Networking European Farms to Enhance Cross Fertilisation and Innovation Uptake through Demonstration

Deliverable 6.3: Networking meetings between region sub-networks and NEFERTITI networks



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D6.3 Networking meetings between region sub-networks and NEFERTITI networks



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D2.5: Networking meetings between region sub-networks and NEFERTITI networks



Document Summary

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Abstract

NEFERTITI promotes the creation of interactive thematic networks related to the agriculture sector to promote knowledge, learning and the adoption of innovative techniques through the exchange of information between different actors and live demonstrations.

Deliverable 6.3. gives a general overview on the networking meetings, seminars, cross-visits and other related offline or online networking meetings that have been organized in the frame of NEFERTITI WP6. During these events the project has included policy dialogues and dialogues between policy makers, research institutions, farmers, and entrepreneurs, to both share and collect information and recommendations, support innovativeness and networking, and exchange best practices thus ensuring networks sustainability and compiling policy recommendations (D6.4). Chapter II includes reports of the events:

1. “The role of Demo Farms in the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems: a policy perspective”, European Week of Regions and Cities 2021
2. Field Visits on the NEFERTITI’s 5th Annual Meeting, the Netherlands
3. Farm demo policy dialogue event in the frame of the “Farm Demo Conference : sharing innovation for sustainable agriculture”, Brussels
4. Study Visit to the Public DEMO FARM of Cesa, Tuscany, Italy
5. Study visit to The American Farm School of Thessaloniki, ERIAFF conference 2022

Chapter III includes conclusion and policy recommendations as a result of these events.

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I. Networking Meetings

In the frame of the NEFERTITI project activities, WP6 has the responsibility of organising seminars and visits to Demo Farms in different settings, having policy makers as a main target of the activity. In this chapter we will present the events that have been organised. Each meeting was concluded with a policy dialogue. The input obtained during these events leads to an overarching number of recommendations that we include in our deliverable on policy recommendations.

1. “The role of Demo Farms in the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems: a policy perspective”, European Week of Regions and Cities 2021

ON 12.10.2021 DURING THE 19TH EDITION OF EU REGIONS WEEK NEFERTITI PROJECT ORGANIZED ONLINE WORKSHOP ON THE ROLE OF DEMO FARMS IN AKIS

The 19th edition of EU Regions Week ‘Together for Recovery’ with its 300 sessions and side events was held virtually from 10th to 14th of October 2021. The European Week of Regions and Cities is an annual four-day event during which cities and regions showcase their capacity to create growth and jobs, implement European Union cohesion policy, and prove the importance of the local and regional level for good European governance.

During the Event NEFERTITI project jointly with other partners organized an online workshop on “The role of demo farms in the Agricultural knowledge and innovation systems: a policy perspective” on October 12, 2021. The other organizers were Municipality of Westland (NL), South Ostrobothnia (FI), Tuscany (IT), Zuid-Holland (NL), Noord Holland (NL), Northeast Romania (RO), Pays de la Loire (FR) and Central Macedonia (GR).

The main moderator of workshop was Mr. Adrien Guichaoua – NEFERTITI project coordinator. He was supported by Mr. Fabio Boscaleri - deputy leader of NEFERTITI working package 6 Policy dialogue and network sustainability.

The participants’ input (at least 72 participants were counted) was gathered also by online tool. As participants’ typology, the results were:

- Farmer or Demo Farm representatives 6 %
- ERDN or National Rural Networks expert 2 %
- Representative from National or Regional administration or Rural Development Managing Authority 34 %
- Expert from National/Regional AKIS systems 17 %
- Partner or stakeholder of the NEFERTITI project 23 %
- Other 17 %

The welcome speech on behalf of consortium of the partner regions was done by Mr. Bouke Arends - Mayor municipality of Westland.

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19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES 11-14 OCT 2021 Together for Recovery

Welcome by Mr. Guichaoua Adrien, Moderator and NEFERTITI project coordinator

#EURegionsWeek

19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES 11-14 OCT 2021 Together for Recovery

Welcome by Mr. Arends, Mayor of Westland, on behalf of the consortium of partner regions

#EURegionsWeek

For the NEFERTITI project the policy dialogue and network sustainability are very important aspect. Very close cooperation with policy makers is set up under the project. Policy makers are being invited to NEFERTITI demo events. Also, 53 European Regions are part of NEFERTITI Network.

19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES 11-14 OCT 2021 Together for Recovery

Mr. Boscaleri Fabio, Moderator introducing Adrien Guichaoua, who will introduce the NEFERTITI project, and the video that will introduce the project.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZZkSXGgZEs>

#EURegionsWeek

19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES 11-14 OCT 2021 Together for Recovery

Highlight on Relationship with Policy makers:

- Network of **53 European Regions** to learn from their and disseminate our findings and activities. (all policymakers are targeted)
- We produced a **Policy Brief for Policy makers** as an advocacy for demonstrations!
- **All NEFERTITI Demo Hubs** must invite **Policy makers** time a year to exchange with farmers and other actors during on-farm demonstrations.

#EURegionsWeek

The speakers in Online workshop were also Mr. Gerben Bierman (Head of Unit Nature and Land Use, Province of Noord-Holland, The Netherlands), Mr. Roberto Scalacci (Director of Agricultural and Rural Development at Tuscany Region at Tuscany), Mr. Alfred Grand (Demo Organic Farmer and Member of the Mission Board for Soil Health and Food, Austria) and Mrs. Vicky Kristallidou (Deputy Director General, American Farm School, Greece). Mrs. Elsi Katainen (Member of the European Parliament and Vice Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development) made a video testimony.

19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES 11-14 OCT 2021 Together for Recovery

Mr Biermann Gerben on behalf of Ilse Zaal, Regional Minister province of Noord-Holland

The importance of the role of the regions

- Connect knowledge and partners in the chain
- Strike the right balance
- Encourage connection between green education and labour market
- ERIAFF network
- Plants working group

#EURegionsWeek

19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES 11-14 OCT 2021 Together for Recovery

Public demo farms managed by Ente Terre Regionali Toscane

Tenuta di Suvignano

Tenuta di Alberese

Tenuta di Cesa

#EURegionsWeek

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19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES  **Together for Recovery** 

Exchange of ideas
Mr. Guichaoua Adrien, moderator

Speakers:

- **Mr. Grand, Alfred, Demo-Farmer and member of the Mission Board on "soil health & food system" (Austria)**

#EURegionsWeek 



The Online workshop emphasized the importance of peer-to-peer learning in agri-food innovation uptake, building on the experience of the NEFERTITI project. On-Farm demonstrations and peer-to-peer learning are essential to ensure new and innovative solutions and are widely deployed and adopted by farmers and the farming sector. With a strong commitment under the new Green Deal, European Farmers and the farming sector at large face ambitious environmental and sustainability targets. The workshop provided contribution to the improvement and broader adoption of policy tools related to demo events at the national and regional levels.

Also, the workshop provided relevant opportunities for Regional and Local policymakers to understand the importance of, and the need to support Demo Farms, providing interactive discussion with some outstanding hands-on examples from the practice.

19th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES  **Together for Recovery** 

Round table
Mr. Guichaoua Adrien, moderator

Speakers:

- Mr. Biermann Gerben, head of unit Nature and Land Use, Noord-Holland
- Mrs. Kristallidou Vicky, director general on strategic project management office of the American Farm School, Greece
- Mr. Scalacci Robert, Director for Agriculture and Rural Development, Tuscany
- Mr. Grand Alfred, Demo-Farmer and member of the Mission Board on "soil health & food system", Austria

#EURegionsWeek 

The participants indicated, that for supporting peer to peer farm demonstrations, EAFRD-funding was seen most potential. Also ERDF and other regional and national policies were seen as valuable tools.

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2. Funding issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most participants had the idea that the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development is the most important funding system for demo farm activities.• Funding has a key role as the support from the public polices
3. Position in the AKIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Demonstrations are important to make innovations adopted by the farmers.• Peer-to-peer learning is effective and important.• Networks and connections between AKIS networks are valuable.
4. Public and Private Demo Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All sort of demonstrations and all sort of demo farms (public, private and experimental farms) are important for the whole agriculture system. It depends on the sort of farming and the environment or country. For instance, pests make it more difficult for groups to visit livestock stables and greenhouses.

The full video of the webinar is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1D4mvNOqYQ> and <https://eu.app.swapcard.com/event/eu-regions-week/planning/UGxhbm5pbmdfNjMxMjE2>



2. Field Visits on the NEFERTITI's 5th Annual Meeting, the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, in the frame of the Annual Meeting, on April 6, 3 field visits were organised:

Arable excursion

(coordination by Jan Kamp)

Visit to the arable farm of Cornelis Mosselman (Altekleinsedijk 5, 3257 MA Ooltgensplaat) . Cornelis recently started with a mixed cropping system and fixed traffic lanes. He joins a project of Wageningen Plant Sciences

<https://www.proeftuinprecisielandbouw.nl/deelnemer/cornelis-mosselman/>



Dairy excursion

(coordination by Herman Schoorlemmer)

Go to dairy farm of Marinus and Anja de Vries (Benedenheulsegweg 31, 2821 LV Stolwijk) Its a farm with 130 cows on wet peat soil. A key element of their challenge is mineral management and integration of nature.

They participate in a project of our colleagues of Wageningen Livestock Research on sustainability <https://www.koeienkansen.nl/nl/koeien-kansen-1/Deelnemers/Marinus-en-Arja-de-Vries-16.htm>



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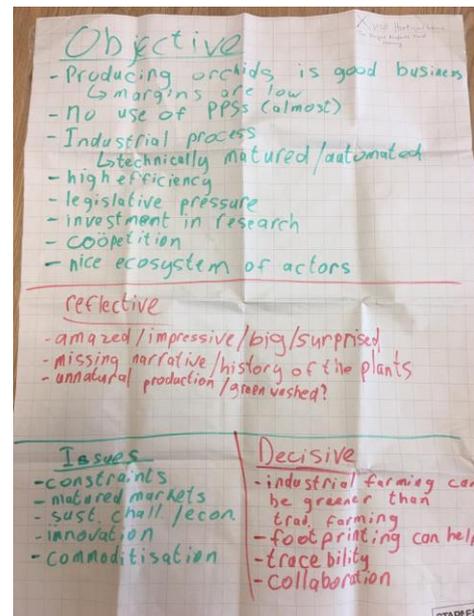
Horticulture excursion

(Coordinated by Jim van Ruyven)

Visit to the phalenopsis grower Maarel orchids

Lange Kruisweg 77 2676BP Maasdijk

<https://www.maarelorchids.nl/>



(Coordinated by Marga Vintges)



After this visit the World Horti Center, a knowledge centre with a vocational school, a meeting center and an experimental Horti farm, was visited.

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The Field visits were evaluated via the ORID Method: Objective; Reflective; Interpretive; Decision.

ORID exercise Farm Visit Cornelis Mosselman

(Laure Triste and Ellen Bulten)

Objective:

Cronelis is a very enthusiastic farmer with a good story. Participants called him a brave farmer, who thinks very differently. Participants saw worms playing a key role in the approach of the farmer. There was a lot of interaction between participants and the farmer. Cornelis was interested in the questions of the participants.

Reflective:

All participants had a very positive feeling about what they have seen. The nature-based mindset is very inspiring. The constant adaptation the farmer makes is very impressive. Cornelis is farming how it should be done according to the participants. Some participants were a bit puzzled about the fact that he didn't want to use organic fertilizers.

Interpretive/Issues:

The participants stated that farmers can invest much more in machinery to replace labour. Also the selling of land to raise money to make the transition to regenerative farming inspired the participants. The story of Cornelis also showed that some secrets and knowledge should not be shared and/or even sold. Cornelis invested a lot of his time to build his knowledge and is now thinking about how he can exploit this financially, to regain the costs for the transition. Some participants were inspired by the long-term planning of the farmer: where do I want to be in 10years?

Decision/Decisive:

Visits can provide a very inspirational example that can be used during demos and events at home, or during lectures for students. Also videos on YouTube will be used.

When organising events, organisers should search for such a good storyteller and a farmers that is really believing in what he/she is doing.

ORID exercise Farm Visit of the dairy farm of Marinus and Anja de Vries

(Jan Kamp)

Objective:

About the housing and the farm:

- High costs for sand bedding
- Dense grassland
- Manure management system
- New building
- Good light and healthy air

About the herd:

- Crossbreed farm
- Healthy animals

About the farmer:

- Trust between advisor and farmer
- International oriented

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- Demo farmer

Hard working and humble people

Reflective:

About the housing and the farm:

- Connection between bedding and health
- Animal welfare: ventilation, building, brushes...

About the farmer:

- A real innovator, who cares about environment and cows
- Open farmers, willing to share
- A farmer who adapts his farm to continue the farming activity
- Two generations working together

About the environment:

- Lots of regulation
- The grass is the same in Germany
- Role of the dairy in this system: Incentives to have changed being made on the farm → monopolistic

Interpretive/Issues:

About the innovative process:

- Bottom-up innovation
- Not being afraid of testing things
- Dairy farmers network dealing with regulations

About the advisor's role:

- Big flexibility in the job as an advisor
- Quality and free advice which benefits to the demo farms

About the farm system:

- Grassland and water management: not afraid of high level
- High yield in cross breeding
- Link between sand bedding and quality of milk
- Clarify the sand bedding cost

Decision/Decisive:

About the innovative process:

- Taking more attention to embedding material
- Farmers have to be more open minded and conscious of regulations, it can be helpful for the future

About the farm and the visit:

- Sheds: reflect on air circulation
- A nice welcoming to get better feedback (coffee, nice room)

ORID exercise Farm Visit of the phalenopsis grower Maarel orchids

(Cynthia Giagnocavo)

Objective:

- Producing orchids is good business but margins are small.
- Almost no use of PPSS in protected cultivation
- Industrial production: technical and automated
- High efficient

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- Legislative pressure
- Investments in research
- Cooperation: nice ecosystem of actors

Reflective:

- Amazing, impressive, big, surprising
- Missing the narrative and history of plants
- Unnatural/greenwashed

Interpretive/Issues:

- Constraints
- Matured markets
- Sustainable and economical challenges
- Innovation
- Commoditization

Decision/Decisive:

- Industrial farming can be greener than traditional farming
- Foot printing measuring can help
- Traceability
- Collaboration

The follow up discussion resulted in the following agreed statements:

1. Role of Policy-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visits can provide a very inspirational example that can be used during demos and events at home, or during lectures for students. Also videos on YouTube will be used. Policymakers can use it to make farmers using for instant more sustainable methods.• When organising events, organisers should search for such a good storyteller and a farmers that is really believing in what he/she is doing.• Taking more attention to embedding material• Discussing with Farmers that they have to be more open minded and conscious of regulations, can be helpful for the future• Collaboration in all kind of ways is important: in the ecosystem and value chain; in the Triple or Quadruple Helix, between governments within a country and over borders.
2. Funding issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploring the knowledge of new innovations via demonstrations can be sold for, if the innovation is worth it.
3. Position in the AKIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the Greenhouse you could see how knowledge that was coming from university research (Wageningen UR) was shown in a private Greenhouse to other growers.
4. Public and Private Demo Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Field visit in the Greenhouse was in a private company. It could be visited because it was a plant grower (orchids) and not a grower of vegetables.• An Experimental farm can be used, for instant by policymakers, how to work with new methods that meet the new regulations.• The Field visit on the Dairy Farm was also on a Private Farm• The Field visit on the Arable Farm was the Visit of a Public Farm of the Wageningen University.



3. Farm demo policy dialogue event in the frame of the “Farm Demo Conference : sharing innovation for sustainable agriculture”, Brussels.

The three H2020 projects NEFERTITI, IPMWORKS and IPM Decisions jointly organized a Policy Dialogue event in Brussels on the afternoon of May 10th, 2022. Presentations and discussions were combined with a visit to a demonstration farm that implements holistic Integrated Pest Management. This event took place on the day before the 2nd Farm Demo Conference (Brussels, May 11th, 2022).

The objectives of this Policy Dialogue event were (i) to inform relevant policy makers about the projects' networks, methods, and tools, and (ii) to discuss the longer-term sustainability and possible extension of the Farm Demo networks and tools. In the programme, the participants had the opportunity for field visits. At the first field site, Farmer M. Lemaire-Taelemans gave the presentation of the farm (part 1) & farming system, and Franky Coopman (Inagro) shared the highlights of IPM in the farm. In the other field, hosting a trial of wheat cultivars and resistance to diseases, the participants heard Lieve De Smit (Flemish authorities), farmer and Franky Coopman about the research and demo activities and IPM implementation. The questions and discussions considered technical issues of IPM, but also emphasized the importance of advisory services independent from commercial institution making profit from trade in plant protection products. Also the challenge of rental fields on short contracts was brought up because that lowers the investing in the quality of the land.



At the farm premises, after the presentation of the farm (part 2), there was the testimony of a hub coach by Jolien Claerbout (Inagro) describing the activities of hubs and hub coaches within the Farm Demo projects, which aim to create a cohesive community, learning from each other, and solving challenges together. The Round table discussion about “The future of Demo farms to promote sustainable agriculture: what support from public authorities? was introduced by Nicolas Munier-Jolain, followed up with the French experience: supporting knowledge sharing for more sustainable agriculture through networks of demo farms by Philippe Delval (ACTA), as well as the Dutch example of funding demo farms through a completely new funding instrument by the Ministry of Agriculture. This new instrument was launched this year, aiming at demonstrating proven best practices with the possibility to underpin this best practice by data analysis, a reward for the farmer becoming a demo farm (Richard Hondebrink).

In France, the demo activities are coordinated with hubs of ca. 10 farmers. The activities that are starting in the Netherlands are based on funding applied by the farmer himself and on demo activities done on farmers' own initiative. Both felt it necessary to support demo activities and strongly believed in peer-to-peer learning in developing agricultural operations. The discussions highlighted bottom-up development, farmer-orientated approach, which also increases farmer engagement. There were discussions about the needs of different farmers and how to connect them, how to raise their awareness about farming sustainability issues, including the need to reduce the use of pesticides through the implementation of all components of IPM. Cross visits had been perceived to be very useful, and the importance of peer-to-peer learning was highlighted. In the discussions about the role of demo farms to promote agricultural sustainability, and how it could be supported by the policies, were involved the representatives from DG AGRI and DG Sante of the European Commission, EIP-AGRI, Ministries of Agriculture, regional governments and research and development organisations around Europe.



Summing up the event, EU Young Farmers representative Anne Catherine Dalcq (CEJA European Council of Young Farmers) emphasized that she was fully convinced of demo activities. It is important to provide farmers with information in an appropriate format and to establish a link between research, development and innovation activities and farmers. She highlighted that cooperation, lifelong learning and innovation among farmers was interesting and attracting for the new generation, but resources for that are needed in the middle of everyday haste and stress.

The representative of the EU Commission, Gisela Quaglia (DG AGRI) cited the upcoming big Horizon Europe project, “Climate Farm Demo“, where demo farmers are needed. Networks of demo farms have proven to be an effective model for promoting information sharing within the farming community. Gordon Rennick (DG SANTE) highlighted the importance of demo farms combined with operational tools (DSS) for the efficient implementation of the SUD directive across Europe.

The results support and give input for the policy recommendations process of NEFERTITI WP6 and IPMWORKS WP7, and hopefully support the future demo farm activities for sustainable agriculture by the participants themselves.

The follow up discussion resulted in the following agreed statements:

1. Role of Policy-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide resources for the farmers to be able to invest in cooperation, lifelong learning and innovation among farmers, in the middle of everyday haste and stress
2. Funding issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn and adapt the good examples of national/regional funding for demo farms/hubs
3. Position in the AKIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide farmers with information in an appropriate format and to establish a link between research, development and innovation activities and farmers To acknowledge the importance of advisory services’ independency from commercial institutions Seeing the role and activities of hubs and hub coaches within the Farm Demo projects, which aim to create a cohesive community, learning from each other, and solving challenges together
4. Public and Private Demo Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasizing bottom-up development, farmer-orientated approach, which also increases farmer engagement Importance of peer-to-peer learning



4. Study Visit to the Public DEMO FARM of Cesa, Tuscany, Italy

On 31 May 2022 a study visit to the Public DEMO FARM of Cesa was organised to the benefit of a small delegation of regional policy makers with a background in agricultural innovation policies. The group was selected through a public expression of interest, that was addressed to the ERIAFF Network (a broad Network of Regions with more than 90 partners). The group had representatives from national and regional agricultural offices, technology provider, agricultural machinery association and universities.

On 30 May afternoon an introductory workshop to prepare the visit was organised in Florence. A total of 26 experts took part to the meeting. Besides sharing relevant information about the visit on the following day, the workshop offered the opportunity to inform about NEFERTITI project and present some other relevant initiatives related with demo farm activities and concepts. The overall activity was supported by the following WP6 members: Alessandra Gemmiti, Fabio Boscaleri and Soila Huhtaluhta.

Main outcomes from the Field Visit with a focus on research activity and knowledge transfer dedicated to the Agricultural Technical High schools of Tuscany

During the field visit to the Demo farm of Cesa, participants had the opportunity to follow an educational demo day for students coming from six different Agricultural Technical Institutes (secondary school) in Tuscany. It was an opportunity to observe a public demo farm in action, dealing with a target group that is different from the conventional one generally observed in Nefertiti (farmers).

The visit was organised with three different observation points:

1. **Viticulture** – Focusing on solutions developed with the project "*Applications of precision viticulture for the estimation of yield and quality of grapes with non-destructive methods of proximal and remote monitoring*" by CNR - Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche and CREA - Consiglio per la ricerca in agricoltura e l'analisi dell'economia agrarian.



2. **Agroforestry and climate change** – Visiting a long-term study site on sustainability and resilience to climate change operated through the MA4SURE PRIMA Project by the Università degli Studi di Firenze;





3. **Safety in Agriculture** – With an introduction about the training site devoted to safety for agricultural machinery operators in open fields operated by ETRT with the scientific and technical support of the University of Florence.

After visiting the three observation points, the NEFERTITI group concluded the visit with a follow up **brainstorming on future perspectives and policies for Demo Farms**.

Fabio Boscaleri prepared the ground for discussion by presenting WP6 and the state of play, and short introduction of the policy recommendations process, to which the discussion was also expected to feed. The main topics of discussion were:

1. The actual role of policy-makers in supporting Demo farms;
2. Funding demo farms, considering multiple aspects (eg. infrastructure, projects, skills)
3. Position and role of the demo farms in AKIS, how are they connected and, more importantly, what is their active role in AKIS.



4. The role of Public and Private Demo Farms.

The follow up discussion resulted in the following agreed statements:

<p>1. Role of Policy-makers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate participatory approaches and public-private quadruple helix partnerships to select concrete topics and challenges which can steer more focus on the need for knowledge transfer and demonstration, matching and focusing on specific policy targets. • Facilitate cross-sectorial approaches that are open to interregional cooperation and connection with the Smart Specialization Strategies. • Set up public strategies to capitalise on project results and best practices from the agricultural sectors (eg. Strategy on Carbon Storage). • Promote the integration of training policies with demo farm practical approaches, pursuing missing/new curricula strategies with industry. Example of life-long learning systems and micro-credentials¹.
<p>2. Funding issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting specific Public-Private Partnership funding schemes that may trigger co-investments and co-ownership of results. • Committing the private sector to develop economically viable solutions with direct investments supported by targeted instruments (eg. innovation actions funded via ERDF require economic sustainability of tested solutions and technologies).

¹ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/micro-credentials>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying funding instruments which are less known by the agricultural sector and that could support demo farms as knowledge transfer infrastructures (eg FI_compass, Alliance for Innovation and ESFRI). • Long term outlook on the future is necessary to define better demonstration and knowledge transfer infrastructures and facilities.
<p>3. Position in the AKIS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demo farms should be acknowledged for pedagogical approaches that may vary depending on local cultural approaches and entrepreneurial mindset. The demo farm model has to be adapted to the context and needs for innovation and knowledge transfer. • Demo Farms are important places to educate future professionals and to prepare operator to the use of new solutions coming from the industry.
<p>4. Public and Private Demo Farms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important role of public demo farms is to be out of the comfort zone, where the commercial farms can't stay. For instance, public demo farms can afford longer term testing that are normally required for tree crops, agroforestry and any other plurennial crop. • Public bodies can show the failures more easily than private/commercial ones. • Independency of public can be an asset

The discussion provided useful elements for the development of relevant policy recommendations within NEFERTITI WP6 activities.

The event ended with a lunch with products from the demo farm, including the opportunity for the participants to compare the quality of two wines produced adopting the quality measurement in the viticulture project.

The event all in all was an effective way to bring the policy makers and AKIS actors to see the demo farm activities personally and collect their inputs for the NEFERTITI project and supporting future demo farm activities.



The meeting was also an occasion to publish an article on the Italian Academy of the Georgofili website, which is a relevant national initiative devoted to high level academic personalities from the agricultural and rural development research areas:

<https://www.georgofili.info/contenuti/il-trasferimento-dellinnovazione-attraverso-le-demofarm/21098>

Videos and interviews from the initiative are also available on the Ente Terre Regionali Toscane facebook profile:

<https://www.facebook.com/100064918080908/videos/5723793814316388>

<https://www.facebook.com/enteterretoscane>

All the presentations are available for download at the following link:

<https://securedrive.servizi.tix.it/index.php/s/XPOWKelo8GQfMor>



5. BStudy visit to The American Farm School of Thessaloniki, ERIAFF conference 2022

In cooperation with ERIAFF conference 2022 in Thessaloniki, Greece, NEFERTITI WP6 organized a study visit to The American Farm School of Thessaloniki on the 16th June 2022. The visit included meeting with relevant AKIS actors and a final policy dialogue to discuss the importance of regional and national support tools for demo farm activities. It was targeted especially to policy makers, managing authorities and experts around Europe, participating the ERIAFF conference.

The meeting also complemented the earlier events in involving policy makers to exchange on best practices regarding support and financing demo-activities and peer-to-peer learning to boost innovation uptake and to gather and analyse the future possibilities as well as political willingness to carry on demo-activities in order to boost the competitiveness and sustainability of the farming sector across EU regions. The events also had an important input for compiling the policy recommendations on demo-farming governance and financing and raising awareness about the key aspects of learning and knowledge exchanges to support innovativeness and networking.

After the ERIAFF conference programme, the 34 participants headed to the American Farm School premises. We were presented the different practical educational fields, activities and demonstrational opportunities in practice.



After networking lunch, we had the opportunity to hear and discuss with the key local actors: Entrepreneurs by vineyard farmers, wine producers and president of a cooperative from Goumenissa, region of Central Macedonia; Research Institute by Dr Parthenopi Ralli, Researcher ELGO Demeter, and the demonstration farm by innovation facilitator Ilias Kalfas, Senior Project Leader SPMO.

The panelists discussed among other things about the cooperation of research and farming, the expectations and needs of the farmers, experiences in triple helix projects and peer-to-peer learning. Values, policies, and the role of the farmer as a businessman and the effects of political decisions and legislations were discussed. The farmers also emphasized the local, national, and international networks, sharing opinions and knowhow with peers. The most valuable asset is information, but time is always very limited. Openness to innovation and connecting with other farmers was seen important. Concrete benefits in innovation uptake were found in cooperation with the American Farm School as a demo farm as well. The farmers embraced the access to a lot of information through the public demo farm, e.g., introducing new technologies, sensors etc, which enable the farmers to take actions on time and make better performance. The demo farm was seen as an open book of critical information, that the farmers read with pleasure.



For the policy recommendations, the panelists and the audience were introduced by Fabio Boscaleri to the NEFERTITI objectives and WP6 approach. They were invited to share their experiences and ideas about the following aspects: funding and different infrastructure of demo farms; the role of policy makers in developing demo farm activities; how the demo farm should be positioned in AKIS; and the role of public, experimental and private demo farms.

In the discussion the role of the farmers who do the demonstrations was emphasized. They are front runners in innovations, and hardly get payment of their time at the moment, so financial motivation for this would be important. This was compared to the research funding of universities, and the policy makers were encouraged to support programmes specifically targeted to farmers for sharing their knowledge.

A marketplace for peer-to-peer learning was introduced by Filippou Papadopoulos, where farmers could earn and use tokens by organizing and visiting demo events.

Also international cooperation between farmers was seen important, and more cross collaboration opportunities would be warmly welcomed, e.g. “Erasmus for farmers”. Rural development and CAP can be usable for some of this, but they are short term and regional tools.

Role of hub coaches was brought up as well, since they often work as a key link between farmers, advisors and other stakeholders.

The audience also raised a concern about the continuity of the Farm Demo platform and network after the NEFERTITI project. They were introduced to the new projects and plans that keep alive part of the activities, but for the long-term sustainability of the demo farm activities, the policy makers role is central. As an example, the region of East Netherlands mentioned the new initiative “Fruit Tech Campus” a public demo-farm and education centre that is financed via a “Region Deal”. This initiative makes new persons interested in the Fruit sector. The province of Overijssel supports the VKON, which also organise demonstration.

The input was also given that farmers should have good incentives to be a demo-farmer. If possible, for a longer period.

Discussions were seen valuable with concrete tools and ideas for the future. Again, the participating audience of policy makers and other stakeholders agreed to the importance of the topic and the need for support.

The follow up discussion resulted in the following agreed statements:

1. Role of Policy-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging the values and the role of the farmer as a businessman, and the effects of political decisions and legislations • For the long-term sustainability of the demo farm activities, the policy makers role is central
2. Funding issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support programmes specifically targeted to farmers for sharing their knowledge, compared to the research funding of universities

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enabling more international cooperation between farmers and more cross collaboration opportunities, e.g. “Erasmus for farmers”. Rural development and CAP can be usable for some of this, but they are short term and regional tools• Emphasizing the role of the farmers who do the demonstrations: the front runners in innovations, and addressing financial motivation for this
3. Position in the AKIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Importance of cooperation of research and farming• Understanding the expectations and needs of the farmers• Peer-to-peer learning is effective and important• Role of hub coaches is important, since they often work as a key link between farmers, advisors and other stakeholders
4. Public and Private Demo Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasizing the local, national, and international networks, sharing opinions and knowhow with peers• Embracing the access to a lot of information through public demo farms, e.g., introducing new technologies, sensors etc., which enable the farmers to take actions on time and make better performance. Seeing the demo farm as an open book of critical information• Emphasizing the role of the farmers who do the demonstrations: the front runners in innovations, and addressing financial motivation for this

Video of the visit available at: <https://youtu.be/C6DnymOiuqs> and photos: <https://eriaffthessaloniki2022.gr/gallery/>



II. Recommendations Conclusion and policy

The input obtained during these events and policy dialogues leads to an overarching number of recommendations that we include in our deliverable 6.4 with policy recommendations. As conclusion of the needs, highlights and recommendations, there are the following statements in the themes of Role of Policy-makers; Funding issues; Position in the AKIS; Public and Private Demo Farms (in the table below).

The most emphasized points in all the discussions combined, were connected to the effectiveness of peer-to-peer learning and importance of farmer-orientated approach; value of the networks and connections between AKIS system; benefits of different types of demo farms (public, private and experimental farms) and the very important role of the policy makers in enabling the demonstration activities.

Conclusions:

<p>1. Role of Policy-makers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the long-term sustainability of the demo farm activities, the policy makers role cannot be underestimated and is essential • Providing resources for the farmers to be able to invest in cooperation, lifelong learning and innovation among farmers, in the middle of everyday haste and stress is important • Facilitate participatory approaches and public-private quadruple helix partnerships to select concrete topics and challenges which can steer more focus on the need for knowledge transfer and demonstration, matching and focusing on specific policy targets • Facilitate cross-sectorial approaches that are open to interregional cooperation and connection with the Smart Specialization Strategies. • Set up public strategies to capitalise on project results and best practices from the agricultural sectors • Promote the integration of training policies with demo farm practical approaches, pursuing missing/new curricula strategies with industry. Example of life-long learning systems and micro-credentials • Acknowledging the values and the role of the farmer as a businessman, and the effects of political decisions and legislations • Collaboration in all kind of ways is important: in the ecosystem and value chain; in the Triple or Quadruple Helix, in national and international scale
<p>2. Funding issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding has a key role as the support from the public polices • Long term outlook on the future is necessary to define better demonstration and knowledge transfer infrastructures and facilities • Emphasizing the role of the farmers who do the demonstrations: the front runners in innovations, and addressing financial motivation for this • To support programmes specifically targeted to farmers for sharing their knowledge, compared to the research funding of universities • Need to learn and adapt the good examples of national/regional funding for demo farms/hubs • Setting specific Public-Private Partnership funding schemes that may trigger co-investments and co-ownership of results • Enabling more international cooperation between farmers and more cross collaboration opportunities • Committing the private sector to develop economically viable solutions with direct investments supported by targeted instruments • Identifying funding instruments which are less known by the agricultural sector and that could support demo farms as knowledge transfer infrastructures



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging the role of demonstrations as an effective way of exploring the knowledge of new innovations
<p>3. Position in the AKIS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer-to-peer learning is effective and important, and demonstrations are in a key role in adopting innovations by the farmers. • It's critical to provide farmers with information in an appropriate format and to establish a link between research, development and innovation activities and farmers • Networks and connections between AKIS network are very valuable • Acknowledging the importance of advisory services' independency from commercial institutions • Acknowledging the role and activities of hubs and hub coaches within the Farm Demo projects, which aim to create a cohesive community, learning from each other, and solving challenges together • Role of hub coaches is important also as a key link between farmers, advisors and other stakeholders • Demo farms should be acknowledged for pedagogical approaches that may vary depending on local cultural approaches and entrepreneurial mindset. The demo farm model has to be adapted to the context and needs for innovation and knowledge transfer • Demo Farms are important places to educate future professionals and to prepare operator to the use of new solutions coming from the industry • Understanding the expectations and needs of the farmers in the AKIS network
<p>4. Public and Private Demo Farms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sort of demonstrations and all sort of demo farms (public, private and experimental farms) are important for the whole agricultural system. The emphasis depends on the sort of farming, the objectives of the demonstrations and the environment or country • Important role of public demo farms is to be out of the comfort zone, where the commercial farms cannot stay • Public bodies can test and show the failures more easily than private/commercial ones • Independency of public demo farms can be an asset • Embracing the access to a lot of information through public demo farms, e.g., introducing new technologies, sensors etc., which enable the farmers to take actions on time and make better performance. Seeing the demo farm as an open book of critical information • Importance of peer-to-peer learning • Emphasizing bottom-up development, farmer-orientated approach, which also increases farmer engagement • Emphasizing the role of the farmers who do the demonstrations: the front runners in innovations, and addressing financial motivation for these private demo farmers • Emphasizing the local, national, and international networks, sharing opinions and knowhow with peers

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