



Farm Demo Policy Dialogue
event on

FARM DEMO NETWORKS FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

May 10th, 2022
Brussels, Belgium

Jointly organised by:



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FARM DEMO POLICY DIALOGUE EVENT

on Farm Demo networks for sustainable agriculture

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, thus significantly reducing pesticide use. 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.

Video reportage of the Farm Demo Brussels events,
10-11 May 2022:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3DhEU9VOp0>



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