



Country Report for Lithuania

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Topics of demonstration

- Arable; Grasslands; Cereals
- Beef, Dairy cattle
- Sheep
- Pig
- Climate focus
- Horticulture
- Agroforestry
- Nature/biodiversity
- Soil
- Potatoes
- Organic crops

Providers and purpose of demonstration

In Lithuania, the majority of on-farm demonstrations are implemented in farms focused on experimental activities. The organisations also offer demonstration activities, in particular, animal husbandry.

Usually younger farmers and participants of different EU projects actively choose to host the demonstrations.

The purposes of the demonstrations are diverse, but often focus on increasing farmer profit.

Some demonstrations are undertaken to educate the society about agricultural activities, or highlight the issues in creation of environmental goods, preservation of environment, livestock welfare, etc. or to present the new technologies used in agricultural activities. Some demonstrators show ongoing research innovations developed under the framework of joint projects with universities.

Commercially available new products or management systems are also shown during the on-farm demonstration.

History

The precursor to Demonstration farms were experimental stations, starting in the beginning of the twentieth century. These stations were research experiments, demonstrating improvements in agricultural technologies with the focus on increasing productivity. The first experimental livestock farms were established after 1948. Meanwhile, the first Experimental farm of Horticulture was established in 1969. In ten years, the agricultural experimental activities expanded, laying the foundation for development of experimental farms and demonstration activities. Following this, the experimental station on the field was established at the Lithuanian Academy of Agriculture in 1978.

This good examples made the start for creation of demonstrations activities on the commercial farms. Over the last 40 years, the number of demonstrations on farms has been increasing.



Types of Demonstrations

- On-farm
- Workshops
- Hands on-off farm
- Field walk
- Field trials
- Discussion groups
- Focus groups
- Monitor farms
- Agricultural shows
- Agriculture Tech
- Oral presentations/seminars
- Videos

Access Issues

Gender: generally similar number of men and women are interested in the demonstration activities. Although the demonstration of agricultural equipment (such as tractors, harvesters, etc.) are mostly attended by men. Women are mostly interested in herbs, fruits and horticulture.

Age: fairly diverse ages observed. The younger generation is open to innovations, participation in EU projects and overall accumulation of the knowledge and improvement of the skills. The older generation has difficulties with implementation of new technologies and less inclined to participate in demonstration activities.

Geography: the demonstration activities are concentrated mainly in the centre of Lithuania, providing good logistics and ease of access for the visitors. Due to the lack of agricultural enterprises in other parts of Lithuania, those areas offer few demonstration activities.

Other Issues

Farmers and organizations are competing, not willing to cooperate and collaborate with each other. These barriers discourage exchange between communities and there is no sharing experience. There is a need for external facilitators, who could advice, educate and connect farmers and organizations to be more open and share their knowledge and skills with others.

Distinguishing Characteristics

- Interest in the demonstrations taking place on farms in Lithuania is increasing
- Farmers willingness to host their own demonstrations will be stronger with availability of funding
- The use of social media increases participation and attendance of farm demonstration activities
- Farmers and organisations need more information about the benefits of demonstration activities to attract more interest and willingness to participate
- Innovative use of new technology may help communities become involved into the demonstration events
- Farmers' participation in European partnership projects, demonstration projects and information activities increases their competences, competitiveness, viability and generates additional income.



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