



Country Report for Sweden

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Topics of demonstration

- Environmental issues
- Safe handling of pesticides
- Sustainable fertilisation
- Renewable energy
- Energy efficiency
- Nature preservation, biodiversity, pollinators
- Climate focus
- Arable; Grasslands; cereals; corn
- Potatoes, vegetables
- Beef; Dairy cattle, pig, sheep, poultry
- Soil preservation- avoiding soil compaction
- New varieties
- Best practices concerning growing

Providers and purpose of demonstration

In Sweden the majority of on-farm demonstrations are initiated by organizations, advice services from an advisory company or an adviser from the authorities. Also suppliers are initiating demonstration on farms showing the latest varieties, different fertilization strategies, new pesticides etc. The most common is that the farmer lead the demonstration on the farm himself/ herself. Advisors, suppliers or authority are often engaged to act as facilitators to ensure smooth running of the actual events. The purpose of the demonstrations are diverse. Suppliers initiate demonstrations that can increase the farmers profit. Advisory services and network is about environmental issues or how to increase productivity. The farm network Odling i Balans have had demonstrations for about 27 years, on their farms about environmental issues and best management practices. The largest advisory company "Hushållningssällskapet" (The Rural Economy and Agricultural Societies) arrange field walks and demonstrations on several places in Sweden. Borgeby field days are the biggest agricultural show in Europe with ≈10 000 visitors, organized by them. During that event several demonstrations are held.

History

Field trial and demonstration farms at the organization Hushållningssällskapen began in the early 1900s. Today, sixteen of them are still demonstration farms, and agricultural schools. The OIB network (Farming In Balance) started 1991 as an initiative from farmers, with the aim to get ecology and economy in balance. Today OIB consists of 17 demonstration farms. The voluntary advisory program Focus on nutrients started 2001. It is based on the OIB concept that when the farmer gets knowledge about how the production affect the environment, farmers take voluntary actions to protect the environment. OIB was part of The Baltic Deal project. A farm network with organizations around the Baltic Sea, with the aim to putting best agricultural practices into work. Future Farming are a demonstration network of 24 enterprises with the aim to show energy efficiency and production of renewable energy. The project Biodiversity on the plain is a project with ten farms.



A field walk at the Norregården farm in Skåne. It is an efficient way to share knowledge and experiences between farmers.



Data collection on the farms provides a good basis for discussion about improvements

Types of Demonstrations

- Field walks on-farm
- Youtube - examples
- Off-farm – data analysis
- Workshops – related to projects
- Hands on- off farm – i.e. saving energy during driving and field works
- Discussion groups – ERFA-groups
- Monitor farms Nutrient & energy efficiency
- Agricultural shows – Borgeby field day (10 000 visitors)
- Agriculture Technique shows – i.e. Elmia Lantbruk

Access Issues

Gender: Women are observed as underrepresented at meetings, especially for arable production and when it is technical issues. Woman tend to be more active when it is issues about environmental issues and animal welfare. There are more men to attend when there are machine exhibits

Age: Most farmers in Sweden are over 55 years old, like rest of Europe. That group is most representative on the demonstration activities. There is a great gender equality in Sweden. Most farmers are men and the take active part in the family and household. Therefore, many find it hard to allocate time to participate in demonstration activities at other farms.

Geography: The most intensive farm production areas in Sweden is in the south part from Scania to Mälardalen, with intensive arable production, vegetables and meat production. In the east part close to the coast in north of Sweden there are mainly milk and meat producers. Those areas are well suited for grass and clover production. There is common to have forest production at many farm enterprises. There have been more demonstrations in areas that have special commitments due to the nitrate directive. Distances between farms can be important, but farmers in the north with long distances between the farms are more used to travel so the distance will not always affect the farmer to travel.

Distinguishing Characteristics

- The education level of Swedish farmers is generally high.
- There have been a lot of demonstration activities on farms and ERFA-group events where farmers have exchange experiences.
- There is often a trust between farmers during the meetings and demonstration activities.
- There is a trust for authorities and advisers generally. Discussion are generally open and friendly.
- Farmers are happy to cooperate when it comes to environmental issues.
- Farmers are less likely to share how to increase production or increases profits. Such advice usually takes place individually



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