



# Good Practices on Valuing Farmers' Wider Contributions to Society

Output of Thematic Group on Valuing Farmers' Wider  
Contributions to Society

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# Table of Content

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Farmers' interactions with the public</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Afterwork at the farm	2
2.2 Farm visits on a cycling route	3
2.3 Organic beef farm providing home delivery	4
2.4 Open Farm Days	5
2.5 Farmers' communication guide	6
2.6 Local market for community engagement	7
<b>3. Educational initiatives</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 Farm Facts on social media	8
3.2 Farm visits for young generation	9
3.3 Educational film about organic farming	10
3.4 Demonstration farms	11
3.5 Project ACOS+	12
3.6 International film festival AGROFILM	13
<b>4. Communication and awareness-raising actions</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1 Farmfluencers	14
4.2 Civic campaign 'I know my farmer'	15
4.3 Promotional videos about new entrants to farming	16
4.4 Social Media Campaign 'There's more to the story...'	17
4.5 Annual Social farming awareness week	18
4.6 De BoerenBoom (The Farmers Tree)	19



# 1. Introduction

This briefing presents 18 initiatives shared by members of the EU CAP Networks' Thematic Group (TG) on [Valuing Farmers' Wider Contributions to Society](#).

The overall aim of the TG was to explore existing and innovative ways to raise awareness and recognise the wider societal contributions of farmers, as well as how to attach greater importance to the profile of the farming profession and attract new people into farming.

The TG was comprised of 40 members, representing 19 Member States and the EU across a range of organisations, including farmers and farmers' organisations, European and national non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Managing Authorities, National Networks, agricultural education institutions, researchers, and agricultural journalists.

The **purpose of this briefing** is to give a flavour of the range of activities that are happening in different parts of the EU to provide inspiration to others - it is by no means a comprehensive list. The initiatives are funded from a range of sources, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), private and national funding.

Good practices have been organised into three categories: (1) farmers' interactions with the public, (2) educational initiatives, and (3) communication and awareness-raising actions. These categories reflect the diverse strategies used to increase public understanding of the essential roles that farmers play beyond food production. From engaging directly with citizens, sharing personal experiences, and building farmers' communication skills, to delivering educational programmes and running targeted campaigns, each category demonstrates a different way of making farmers' contributions more visible and valued by society.



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## 2. Farmers' interactions with the public

### 2.1. Afterwork at the farm



**Austria**

**Date:** 2018 - ongoing

**Funding:** CAP

<https://www.afterwork-am-bauernhof.at/>  
(available only in German)

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

#### Description of the project

Afterwork am Bauernhof (Afterwork at the farm) is an initiative designed to bring people - particularly from urban areas - directly onto farms to learn about Austrian agriculture firsthand. Guided tours are organised in collaboration with farmers and trained tour guides, offering participants insights into both general agricultural practices in Austria and the specific characteristics of the farms visited.

The service is tailored primarily for companies, particularly those based in urban centres such as Vienna, seeking meaningful and educational team-building activities for their employees. However, the tours are also open to individuals who wish to participate independently. A variety of thematic focuses are available, such as regional vegetables, dairy production, apiculture (honey), and green care.

#### Aims and objectives of the project

The main objective is to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of agriculture among the general public by facilitating direct contact with farms and farmers. By promoting awareness and knowledge, the initiative aims to build stronger connections between consumers and agricultural producers, ultimately contributing to greater recognition of the value of farming and its products.

#### Activities carried out, results and benefits

Activities:

- Identification and recruitment of farms willing to participate in the programme;
- Planning and coordination of tour logistics, including transportation and scheduling;
- Delivery of guided farm visits, with project representatives accompanying participants and providing contextual information;
- Promotional activities to attract corporate clients and individual participants.



© AfterWork am Bauernhof



## 2.2. Farm visits on a cycling route



**Flanders (Belgium)**

**Date:** July 2021 - June 2023

**Funding:** CAP / EAFRD

<https://www.vlaamsruraalnetwerk.be/themas/leader-en-samenwerking/goede-voorbeelden/artikels/de-boer-op-de-westhoek> (available only in Dutch)

<https://www.poperinge.be/boerzktbank> (available only in Dutch)

### Description of the project

'Boer zkt Bank' is a LEADER project initiated by the city of Poperinge and the Local Action Group Westhoek to bridge the gap between farmers and citizens. It features a cycling route through the Westhoek region, allowing participants to visit various farms.

At each stop, a bench and a QR code provide information through videos in which farmers share insights about their work, favourite animals, and environmental efforts. This initiative promotes the role of local farmers as food providers, shows the beauty of agricultural landscapes, and highlights the diversity in agriculture.

### Aims and objectives of the project

- Enhance public understanding of the agricultural sector;
- Improve the connection between the community and farmers;
- Highlight the diversity and seasonal aspects of farming activities;
- Encourage tourism focusing on agriculture, rurality and short chains;
- Encourage a younger generation to eat local and seasonal.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

- A 40-km cycling route with stops at participating farms, each featuring a bench and QR code linking to farmer videos;
- 'Hero bags' for children containing assignments to complete during the tour;
- Distribution of project information and cycling maps through local tourism channels, B&Bs and hotels.

The project benefits include increased public engagement with agriculture, educational opportunities for children, and enhanced tourism in the region.



© Stad Poperinge



## 2.3. Organic beef farm providing home delivery



**Czechia**

**Date:** Since 2015

**Funding:** Private

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

### Description of the project

The project focuses on the direct delivery of locally-produced organic beef from a farm located in a remote area on the Czech-Austrian border. By offering a home-delivery service using a refrigerated vehicle, the farm ensures that high-quality organic beef reaches local customers efficiently, while significantly shortening the supply chain.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The primary objective of the project is to make organic beef from the farm accessible to customers in the surrounding region, despite the farm's remote location. By delivering directly to homes, workplaces, or other convenient locations, the initiative aims to:

- Strengthen the connection between producer and consumer;
- Support the local economy by keeping added value on the farm;
- Promote organic and sustainable farming practices;
- Offer a fair and transparent pricing model without intermediaries.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

#### Activities:

- Establishment of a direct-to-consumer delivery model for organic beef using a cooled delivery van;
- Communication and marketing to build awareness and trust among local consumers.

#### Results:

- A loyal customer base built over ten years;
- Strengthened relationships with local consumers;
- Increased public awareness of sustainable and organic farming methods.

#### Benefits:

- Higher value retention by eliminating intermediaries;
- Improved profitability of the farm business;
- Direct interaction with consumers, fostering trust and appreciation for local, organic products;
- Greater visibility and promotion of organic farming in a rural region.



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## 2.4. Open Farm Days

### Estonia

**Date:** Ongoing since 2015

**Funding:** CAP / EAFRD

<https://avatudtalud.ee/> (available only in Estonian)

[https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/organising-open-farm-day-estonia\\_en](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/organising-open-farm-day-estonia_en)

### Description of the project

Since 2015, the Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture, in cooperation with the Centre of Estonian Rural Research and Knowledge, has organised the Open Farm Days. This is a nationwide initiative held annually in July that invites the public to visit farms and agricultural and rural businesses across Estonia.

The event typically spans a weekend and showcases the diversity of rural life in Estonia. Farms of all types, from traditional dairy operations to beekeepers, open their doors to offer visitors a behind-the-scenes look at agricultural practices, food production and country living.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The Estonian Open Farm Days aim to strengthen the connection between people and the origins of their food. A key goal is to promote local food by encouraging visitors to value and choose Estonian produce. By showing how food is grown and processed, the event introduces the realities of food production and highlights the benefits of supporting local producers.

Another important aim is to create direct connections between farmers and consumers, helping to build trust and awareness. These personal encounters foster a deeper appreciation of the work behind the food on our tables and support a stronger local food economy.

The project also focuses on educating children, giving them hands-on experiences that show how food reaches the table and why local agriculture matters.

Finally, Open Farm Days showcase the diversity of rural life, from farming and sustainability to rural culture and traditions, offering a well-rounded view of Estonia's countryside.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

Open Farm Days offers a rich programme of activities that bring visitors closer to Estonian rural life. Guided farm tours allow guests to explore daily routines, learn about crop cultivation, and observe animals up close. Many farms also offer interactive workshops, where visitors can try traditional activities like butter churning or bread baking.

Local food is a highlight of the event, with tastings and small markets showcasing a wide range of farm products, from cheese and honey to wine and handmade goods. For families there are child-friendly activities such as petting zoos, pony rides, and games that make learning about farming fun and accessible.

The results have been positive. Participation has grown steadily, with hundreds of farms involved and thousands of visitors attending each year. The event has raised public awareness of food production, fostered stronger consumer-producer relationships, and supported local economies through increased visibility and direct sales. Perhaps most importantly, it has helped bridge the gap between urban and rural communities, reinforcing pride in Estonia's agricultural heritage.



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## 2.5. Farmers' communication guide



Finland

Date: 2023-2024

Funding: CAP / EAFRD; Other - Satakunta ELY Centre

<https://satakunta.mtk.fi/-/maatalousyrittajan-viestintaopas>  
(Farmers' Communication Guide – available only in Finnish)

<https://satakunta.mtk.fi/muutosvoimaa-tulevaan>

### Description of the project

The Farmers' communication guide (Maatalousyrittäjän viestintäopas) is tailored for individual farmers and farm businesses, empowering them to act as communicators and advocates for their work in agriculture. The initiative was carried out by MTK-Satakunta, a regional farmers' association.

The guide is a practical tool designed for farmers to enhance their communication skills, in particular with regard to social media. It emphasises the importance of farmers as food producers, environmental stewards, and community builders, highlighting how open and honest communication can help bridge the gap between rural areas and consumers, dispel misconceptions, and increase appreciation for agriculture. By encouraging farmers to share authentic stories, their daily on-farm life, and their expertise through social media, the guide promotes transparency, understanding, and a positive image of modern farming in society.



MUUTOSVOIMAA  
TULEVAAN



Euroopan maaseudun  
kehittämisen maatalousrahoitus:  
Eurooppa investoi maaseutualueisiin

© MTK-Satakunta

### Aims and objectives of the project

#### Aims:

- To empower farmers as communicators and advocates for their own work;
- To correct misconceptions about modern agriculture and promote a positive image of Finnish food production;
- To provide practical tools for social media communication, including creating content, planning posts, and engaging with audiences;
- To support farmers in marketing their products, building networks, and exploring additional income streams through social media;
- To ensure safe and ethical social media use by addressing issues such as data privacy, disinformation, and online harassment.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

#### Activities carried out:

- Development of a comprehensive guide tailored for farmers, including step-by-step instructions on communication, content creation, and social media strategies;
- Practical advice on selecting social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, etc.) and creating engaging content such as photos, videos, and posts about farm life;
- Tips for using hashtags, emojis, and storytelling to improve reach and engagement;
- Safety guidelines for secure and respectful social media use;
- A list of creative content ideas, such as sharing farm stories, educational posts, and interactive campaigns (e.g. naming a calf).

#### Results and benefits:

- Farmers are better equipped to communicate their daily work and its importance to society;
- Increased transparency and trust between farmers and consumers;
- Enhanced understanding of modern agriculture, animal welfare, and environmental stewardship;
- Improved marketing and visibility for local farm products;
- Opportunities for farmers to build communities, network with peers, and even earn additional income through social media activities.

The Farmer's Communication Guide was created as part of the 'Power for Future Change' project (Muutosvoimaa tulevaan) (2023-2024), and it is distributed free of charge to farmers at various events. In addition to the printed version, the guide is also available for download on the MTK-Satakunta website.



## 2.6. Local market for community engagement



### Romania

**Date:** Since September 2021, every Saturday

**Funding:** Not specified

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/18vDiQYTng/>

### Description of the project

The local market 'Din drag de Bucovina' is a flagship initiative organised by the engineers and specialists of the Suceava County Directorate for Agriculture (DAJ Suceava), a public institution under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR). This project is designed to provide local farmers and producers with a dedicated space to sell their seasonal and processed products directly to consumers, fostering a strong connection between rural producers and the local community, strengthening the local economy, preserving traditional agricultural practices, and fostering a sustainable food system.

The local market 'Din drag de Bucovina' is a pioneering initiative that showcases the essential contributions of farmers as food providers, environmental stewards, and key players in community development. It stands as a replicable model for other regions aiming to promote local agriculture, sustainability, and direct farmer-consumer engagement.

### Aims and objectives of the project

'Din drag de Bucovina' aims to support local farmers by providing them with a dedicated marketplace where they can sell their products directly to consumers.

#### The key objectives of the market include:

- Facilitating direct farmer-consumer interaction: eliminating intermediaries allows farmers to receive fair compensation for their products while ensuring consumers have access to fresh, locally sourced, and high-quality goods;
- Strengthening rural communities and small producers: by offering an affordable and accessible sales platform, the initiative helps small farmers sustain their businesses, preserve local agricultural traditions, and contribute to regional economic development;
- Encouraging healthier food choices: by making seasonal, natural, and minimally-processed foods more accessible, the market supports a healthier diet for the local population;
- Ensuring affordability and accessibility for producers: the voluntary and cost-effective model, supported by DAJ Suceava, minimises participation costs for farmers, making it easier for them to engage in direct sales.

Through these objectives, the local market 'Din drag de Bucovina' serves as an innovative model for promoting local agriculture, sustainability, and a stronger connection between farmers and society.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

#### Activities:

The local market 'Din drag de Bucovina' provides a platform for local producers to directly engage with consumers in a dedicated marketplace. The market is organised with the help of specialists from the Suceava County Directorate for Agriculture (DAJ Suceava) and is designed to showcase a wide array of locally produced goods. This initiative focuses on promoting seasonal and processed products in a setting that encourages direct exchanges, free from intermediaries.

#### Results:

The initiative has been successful in fostering a direct, transparent relationship between producers and consumers, which has led to increased sales for local farmers. It has also contributed to raising awareness of the benefits of locally produced, fresh, and sustainable food. The market's alignment with European sustainability and agricultural policies has reinforced its role in promoting responsible consumption and reducing waste.

#### Benefits:

The market offers a low-cost entry for producers, with no participation fees and free parking, which helps small farmers reach a wider audience. It also strengthens the community's engagement with local agriculture by offering products that are fresher and more diverse than those typically offered in conventional retail outlets. Additionally, the market supports environmental goals by reducing food miles and highlighting eco-friendly agricultural practices. Ultimately, it helps preserve traditional farming methods while creating a sense of community around local food production.



© Asociația Gustă din Bucovina



## 3. Educational initiatives

### 3.1. Farm Facts on social media



#### Flanders (Belgium)

**Date:** 2023 - Ongoing

**Funding:** Private

<https://www.boerenverstand.vlaanderen/> (available only in Dutch)

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Boerenfeiten/61556191712319/>

#### Description of the project

An independent group of 6 young Limburg farmers decided to set up the non-profit organisation Boer&Verstand (Farmer & Understanding) to bring a fresh voice to the social debate and to provide an answer to the negative and often incorrect reporting about the agricultural sector.

#### Aims and objectives of the project

Since its creation, Boer&Verstand has expanded its active membership across Flanders, and its mission is to provide an objective and substantiated response to misleading information through collaboration with investigative journalists, recognised research institutions, and/or independent experts. In this way, it provides tools to citizens who are less familiar with the agricultural sector and who wish to gather independent and scientifically-validated information.

The non-profit organisation also aims to empower farmers by providing them with background information on complex issues such as nitrogen regulations, manure action plans, and so on. As farmers are often confronted with questions or criticism in their personal living environment, they need reliable information themselves to be able to give a correct answer.

Boer&Verstand wants to limit its activities to providing information and therefore stays away from lobbying and unionism.

#### Activities carried out, results and benefits

Posting on the Facebook account '[Boerenfeiten](#)' ([Farm Facts](#)). The posts explain in a simple way small things about farming, to inform the public as effectively as possible. For example, from time to time, they post things such as: "Winter spinach is almost ready to harvest! 🌱 But did you know that there is also spring spinach that is only harvested in the autumn? Learn even more about this delicious source of vitamins from our Info sheet!"

The posting includes also info-fiches with information about agricultural crops and products.

In addition, in early 2023 the group released a [podcast](#) on the theme 'Nitrogen Unearthed'.



© Boer&Verstand



## 3.2. Farm visits for young generation

 Hungary

**Date:** Since 2015

**Funding:** Private

[Maszliktej.hu](http://Maszliktej.hu) (available only in Hungarian)

### Description of the project

Maszlik Family Farm operates in the Nograd region of Hungary. It is active in arable crop production (mainly fodder), cattle breeding, milk production and processing, and the production of dairy products.

It serves as a bridge between social groups that are detached from farming, and those who make a living from agricultural activities.

It organises educational visits, entirely at its own expense, for young people ranging from kindergarten pupils to university students. These visits provide insights into the full food value chain, allowing participants to see firsthand how milk is produced and transformed into dairy products, 'from grass to cheese'.

### Aims and objectives of the project

- › To reconnect consumers with agriculture from an early age;
- › To provide accurate knowledge about milk production and livestock farming;
- › To demonstrate that modern, digitised farming is viable even in less-developed regions;
- › To present farming as an attractive, future-oriented profession.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

The programme begins with a guided tour of the farm's fields, meadows and pastures, followed by a visit to the livestock facilities where participants can observe and interact with the animals. Visitors also gain an overview of the dairy processing plant from a designated corridor, concluding the tour with a tasting session of the farm's milk and dairy products and a Q&A session.

Thanks to school farm visits, many students have returned to the farm with their parents, and many pay attention to what products they choose in the store when buying dairy products.

According to the experience of the owner, Zoltán Maszlik, dairy work and farming are also more attractive to the younger generations who grow up with smartphones if they see that today it is not necessarily about rubber boots and manure, but that a lot of work processes have been digitised. The Maszlik Family Farm is known to use modern agricultural practices, and has no problems when hiring a workforce since, based on its reputation, many people want to work there.



© Maszlik Családi Gazdaság



### 3.3. Educational film about organic farming



**Luxembourg**

**Date:** 2023-2024

**Funding:** National fund

<https://biobauzen.lu/> (available only in Luxembourgish)

#### Description of the project

This film showcases organic farmers in Luxembourg, highlighting their sustainable practices, support for biodiversity, and role in fostering local community connections. It inspires greater appreciation for their contributions.

#### Aims and objectives of the project

The aim is to educate people about the work of farmers, emphasising their importance in sustainable food production and environmental stewardship.

Additionally, the objective is to use the film as a teaching tool in classrooms to engage students and inspire future generations to appreciate and support farming.

#### Activities carried out, results and benefits

The film presents various protagonists who have embarked on organic farming and continue to stand behind this idea with conviction. They show and tell how extensive the development in production, marketing and research in this area of agriculture has been in recent years.

The activities included screening in schools, municipalities and a local cinema, followed by interactive Q&A sessions with the audience. These efforts increased the awareness of farmers' contributions, fostered community engagement, and inspired meaningful discussions about sustainability and agriculture.



© BioBauzen



## 3.4. Demonstration farms



### The Netherlands

**Date:** 2025 - 2026

**Funding:** CAP

<https://www.rvo.nl/subsidies-financiering/sabe> (available only in Dutch)

### Description of the project

The project, based on three farms collaborating, demonstrates farming practices to the wider public. The core focus is to showcase how interaction between farmers and the public delivers additional ecosystem services beyond primary productivity, while also remaining economically sustainable.

### Aims and objectives of the project

Sharing knowledge on sustainable farming systems with a wide group of societal stakeholders.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

The project provides financial support to the farm for the development of facilities designed to host visiting groups, as well as compensation for the time invested in organising and conducting outreach activities. In return, the farm organises multiple events over a two-year period, targeting a diverse range of stakeholder groups. These events are documented through vlogs and written articles, which are disseminated via social media channels and the farms' websites.

The aim is to raise awareness about the role of on-farm public engagement in fostering a more sustainable food system. By sharing practical experiences and insights, the initiative seeks to inspire other farmers to adopt similar models that incorporate citizen interaction as part of their approach to farming.

An example of practical implementation of this measure is [de Biesterhof Farm](#).



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## 3.5. Project ACOS+



Portugal

**Date:** Ongoing (yearly)

**Funding:** Private

<https://www.acos.pt/servicos/formacao-profissional/sobre/projeto-acos> (available only in Portuguese)

### Description of the project

ACOS+ is an educational initiative developed by the agricultural association ACOS, aiming to raise awareness among children about the role of agriculture in food production and environmental stewardship. Targeted at primary school students (ages 6-12), the programme combines workshops, interactive learning activities, and guided discussions to present key aspects of farming and its relevance to society.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The main objective is to promote interest in agriculture among young people and to demonstrate its vital contribution to society and the environment. A core component of the initiative is fostering engagement with schools from both rural and urban areas, which has been essential to the success of the activities implemented to date.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

The activities are held over five days during the annual Ovibeja agricultural fair, organised by ACOS ([www.ovibeja.pt](http://www.ovibeja.pt)), and actively engage technicians, farmers, and teachers, who work directly with students. Typical activities include learning about the water cycle, the role of forests, farm animals and their products, bread-making, and the preparation of meat for various meals.



© ACOS



## 3.6. International film festival AGROFILM



**Slovakia**

**Date:** Organised annually, 41<sup>st</sup> edition in 2025

**Funding:** National

[www.agrofilm.sk](http://www.agrofilm.sk) (available in Slovak and English)

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

### Description of the project

Agrofilm is an international film festival with the priority theme of agriculture and rural development. Around 100 films from around the world are presented at each edition. Agrofilm is organised by the National Agricultural and Food Centre, which is under the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, in cooperation with *Farmers' Review*, a regular weekly show on Slovak public TV, featuring news and interesting facts from the field of agriculture.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The aim of the festival is to introduce the broad professional and lay public, in audiovisual form, to the latest knowledge of science, research, development and practice in the field of agriculture, food and forestry, nutrition, rural issues and rural life, protection of natural resources and the bioeconomy, and improving the quality of life in rural areas.

Agrofilm aims to discuss and present examples of good practice, to create a space for discussion between researchers, experts and the general public.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

The festival consists of several programme elements: international film competition; non-competitive, non-commercial screening of selected films entered into the festival; online screening and online discussion forum; and professional and accompanying events.

Films included in the competitive screening are evaluated by an international jury including film directors, researchers, academics, and World Health Organisation representatives. The Main Prize of the festival and another 13 prizes are awarded at the final ceremony.

The official languages of the festival are Slovak, Czech and English.



© Agrofilm



## 4. Communication and awareness-raising actions

### 4.1. Farmfluencers



**Austria**

**Date:** Since 2022

**Funding:** Not defined

<https://wirtschaftenamland.at/farmfluencer/> (available only in German)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4fhTK52ZLRY>

[https://www.instagram.com/farmfluencer\\_at/?hl=de](https://www.instagram.com/farmfluencer_at/?hl=de)

#### Description of the project

Farmfluencers are young farmers who provide authentic insights into agriculture via social media, highlighting not only the positive aspects of their profession but also the real challenges of their everyday lives. Currently, the Farmfluencer network includes 25 young farmers from across Austria who are active and forward-thinking. Together, they raise awareness of rural life and local agriculture.

#### Aims and objectives of the project

The Farmfluencers are ambassadors for Austrian agriculture – whether on social media, in television and radio appearances, newspaper articles, school visits, trade fair appearances, or lectures. Farmfluencers provide deeper insights into the daily lives of farmers, with the aim of explaining and demonstrating how life on the farm really works.

#### Activities carried out, results and benefits

In 2022, the Wirtschaften am Land, a non-profit association dealing with agriculture, forestry and rural development, launched the farmfluencer\_at project. Around ten Farmfluencers launched the joint [Instagram account 'farmfluencer\\_at'](#). From the very beginning, the focus was on the shared vision of educating society. More members joined in March 2023, and the group currently includes 25 Farmfluencers. From mountain farmers in Tyrol to arable farmers in Burgenland, the community covers almost all agricultural sectors in Austria, and aims to continue developing.

After two years of the project, in November 2024 a new project phase was launched together with Junge Landwirtschaft Österreich (Young Farming Austria). Farmfluencers aim to take agricultural communication to the next level, with a focus on targeted social media campaigns, but also promoting personal exchange more intensively. Farm visits and information events are planned for this purpose, where the Farmfluencers can talk directly with consumers. The focus is on animal welfare, the circular economy and reducing food waste.



© Wirtschaften am Land



## 4.2. Civic campaign 'I know my farmer'



**Flanders (Belgium)**

**Date:** 2023- ongoing

**Funding:** Public - local city of Ghent

<https://www.ikkenmijnboer.be/site/> (available only in Dutch)

### Description of the project

'I know my farmer' is a campaign where customers of an organic farm share their love for their farmer and promote the importance of sustainable, local food production.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The key aim is to create a neighbourhood farm in each municipality as a place where everyone is welcome and where everything comes together: a small-scale initiative, diverse, where people are close to each other and to nature, and where customer and farmer know each other's names and greet each other with a smile.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

The campaign is an initiative by some customers of the organic farm Plukboerderij Grondig, near the village centre of Heusden. The idea arose to use a slogan and a logo to share their love for their farmers with the rest of the local community. In September 2023, the slogan spread in and around Heusden on posters, postcards, saddle cards, buttons, and postcards, and on social media. A special feature was a handmade stamp for printing on T-shirts or other textiles.

In March 2024, the campaign expanded to 12 other sustainable food producers in and around Ghent thanks to funds from the City of Ghent. Each producer received its own logo, poster, bicycle tickets and two stamps to print on T-shirts, carrier bags and packaging.



© IkkenmijnBoer



## 4.3. Promotional videos about new entrants to farming



**Bulgaria**

**Date:** 2020-2022

**Funding:** Horizon2020 - NEWBIE project

<https://www.newbie-academy.eu/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jW4fqYuN58Y>

### Description of the project

The **NEWBIE network** aims to increase innovation, entrepreneurship, and resilience in the European farming sector by enabling new entrants to successfully establish sustainable farm businesses in Europe. As part of the network's activities, short inspiring videos about new entrants to farming were produced.

One of these is small-scale mountain farmer Dimitar (Mitko) Kukundzhiev, from the village of Yagodina (1 200 m above sea level). He exemplifies how grazing traditional Bulgarian breeds saves biodiversity, and how maintaining high land pastures helps preserve rural landscapes. Mitko applies a marketing approach, namely cooperation with an organic jam workshop and the Hotel Mursal, to promote his own dairy products, which go beautifully with organic jam made from wild berries.

The **video** helped to promote Mitko's farm through effective storytelling, highlighting farmers' wider societal contributions, and presenting farming as a feasible career choice, in particular for younger generations or people with no farming background.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The goal of the initiative was to identify successful innovative farmers - new entrants and their business models - to be promoted as examples of good practice of EU sustainable agriculture, and subsequently to disseminate example of farmers' wider contributions to the society.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

Activities included identification of relevant examples, interviews with farmers to understand their challenges, what they are proud of and their success factors, as well as preparing the concept and planning a short video.

As a result, a library of 'visual storytelling' videos was created to increase awareness of the impact of sustainable farming on communities and inspire young people. The videos were disseminated through websites, social media, presentations, but also used as good practices in educational training materials for vocational education, and in training centres and universities.

As a winner of the NEWBIE new entrants contest, farmer Mitko Kukundzhiev was widely promoted on the NEWBIE website at national and EU level and in educational material, and at university events and a scientific conference in 2024.



© Newbie



## 4.4. Social Media Campaign 'There's more to the story...'



Ireland

Date: 18 Feb - 19 Apr 2025

Funding: CAP / National CAP Network funding

<https://capnetworkireland.eu/campaigns/>

### Description of the project

CAP Network Ireland, which is co-funded by the European Union and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), launched an eight-week social media campaign entitled 'There's more to the story...' to highlight the ongoing contributions made by farmers in Ireland to restoring the natural environment under a range of European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) schemes.

The campaign featured regular social media posts over eight weeks, providing interesting statistics illustrating how the ongoing efforts of the farming community are paying off in terms of benefits to the environment. These benefits include the protection of watercourses, the expansion of habitat areas for wildlife, a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and increases in organic farming practice and hedgerow planting. The figures presented in the campaign demonstrate that farming is also part of the solution to the current climate and biodiversity crises, and that farmers in Ireland are playing a key role in restoring nature.

### Aims and objectives of the project

- To highlight the ongoing contributions made by farmers in Ireland to restoring the natural environment under CAP Schemes;
- To present statistics from DAFM that demonstrate tangible and quantifiable ecosystem benefits from farmers in CAP;
- To change the narrative about the role of farmers in terms of the environment;
- To demonstrate that farming is part of the solution to the current climate and biodiversity crises and that farmers have a key role to play in addressing these issues;
- To create awareness of CAP Schemes and CAP Network Ireland.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

#### Activities:

- A selection of statistics demonstrating the ecosystem benefits garnered from farming in Ireland over recent years were chosen, e.g. percentage reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from farming, number of native new trees planted by farmers in the ACRES scheme, quantity of watercourses being protected by farmers in the Eco-Scheme, etc.



© CAP Network Ireland

- 24 infographics were then created to illustrate the eight chosen themes using three different graphic styles. A posting schedule was created to coordinate three different posts per week on the same weekly theme, on three social media platforms (Facebook, X, LinkedIn) for a period of eight weeks. Posts were scheduled on three different days at three different times. Posts were mainly circulated organically, with a small selection being chosen for boosting as paid social adverts.
- A Press Release was sent to national and local media.
- A webpage was created on the CAP Network Ireland website with links to scheme information and case studies telling the stories of some of the individual farmers involved in creating these statistics.
- An additional promotional paid advertising campaign was launched in conjunction with a large national online farming news website.

#### Results:

The campaign achieved an approximate overall total of 1.18 million impressions. This figure is made up of almost 80 000 impressions using organic and paid posts to CAP Network Ireland social media accounts. In addition, a paid advertising contract with a large national online news website generated approximately 1 100 000 impressions.

#### Benefits:

The campaign contributed to challenging existing narratives and stereotypes of farmers' roles in society and informed the general public of the ongoing work being undertaken by farmers to help restore the natural environment. The campaign highlighted that farmers can be part of the solution to the climate and biodiversity crises.



## 4.5. Annual Social farming awareness week



Ireland

Date: 2022-2024

Funding: National

<https://www.socialfarmingireland.ie/newsletters/>

<https://www.socialfarmingireland.ie/>

### Description of the project

Social Farming Awareness Week is an annual initiative led by the Social Farming Network in Ireland, held during the first week of October. Organised in collaboration with partners in Northern Ireland and the UK, the initiative features daily public open days hosted by social farms in different regions. These events provide an opportunity for the general public to visit working farms, meet the farmers, and learn about social farming practices. The week is supported by a coordinated media campaign, including social media activity, press releases and media features, aimed at increasing public awareness of both farming and the role of social farming in rural communities.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The main objective is to invite the public to visit one of the participating farms during the week to experience social farming in action. Through direct engagement with farmers and exposure to the activities on social farms, the initiative seeks to build a deeper public understanding of the social, therapeutic, and community value of farming.

In parallel, the accompanying media campaign is designed to raise the profile of farming among broader audiences.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

#### Activities:

- Organisation of five open farm days in different regions of the country during the awareness week.
- Media engagement at local and regional levels across local radio, newspapers and social media platforms, including invitations to attend events and distribution of feature content about the farms and social farming.

#### Results and Benefits:

- Hundreds of people attend the open farm days each year;
- Increased public visibility and understanding of social farming;
- Strong local media engagement and social media reach.



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## 4.6. De BoerenBoom (The Farmers Tree)



**The Netherlands**

**Date:** Since 2025

**Funding:** Public

<https://en.boerenboom.nl/> (available in Dutch and English)

### Description of the project

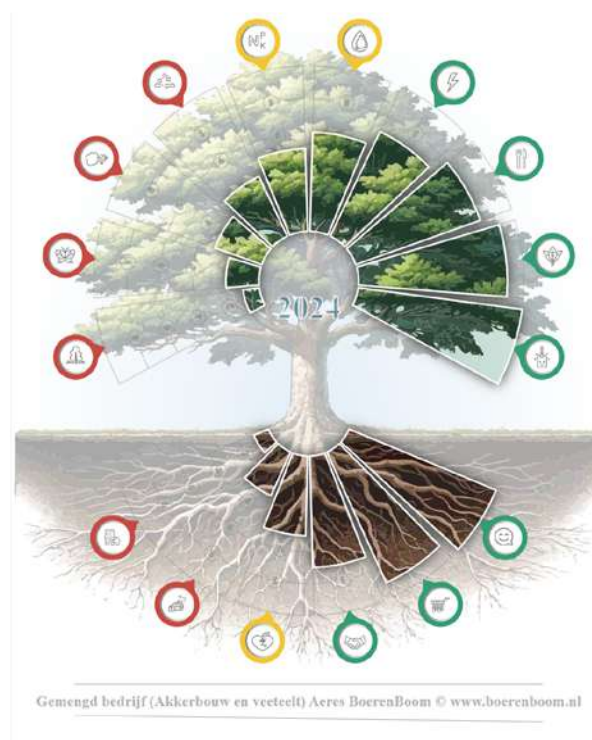
'De BoerenBoom' (The Farmers Tree) is a visual tool for farmers to visualise contributions that a farm brings to wider society. The farm is not just a food production company, but also a guardian of the landscape, soil, water, and air, as well as a social connector in rural areas, an educator about food origins, a tourist attraction and even a keeper of regional identity or heritage. Besides these external features, there is also a reflection on the farm's internal financial-economic status, as well as on the well-being of the farmer and his/her family.

### Aims and objectives of the project

The main objective of 'De BoerenBoom' is to provide farmers with a comprehensive overview of their farm's contribution to society, enabling strategic planning for the future. By identifying strengths and weaknesses using the doughnut model (a theoretical framework for sustainable development), the tool helps farmers to promote certain strong points (Unique Selling Propositions) for further market positioning. The model also serves as a monitoring instrument to compare the old and new situations of the farm.

### Activities carried out, results and benefits

The tool is built around a doughnut model and is informed by data collected through a structured questionnaire, ideally completed with the support of an advisor who is familiar with the methodology. Based on the farmer's responses, the system generates a visual representation in the form of a tree, reflecting the diverse functions and societal value of the farm beyond food production.



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