



AGRIDEMO



FARMDEMO



PLAID

Country Report for Germany

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Topics of demonstration

- Farmers offer demo-activities on diverse topics, however more frequently on:
 - **Animal health and welfare**
(Many farms organized in topical demo-networks; topic of public interest; public funding available)
 - **Fodder crops**
(Several demo-networks exist due to National Protein Plant Strategy; public funding available)
- **Environmental sustainability** is highly reflected in agricultural demonstration activities in Germany (e.g. improve long-term soil fertility, promoting biodiversity).
- Economic and social topics are less represented (e.g. community supported agriculture, working with handicapped people).

Providers and purpose of demonstration

- Many organic demonstration farms joined the PLAID network. Most of them follow whole-farm approaches. If there is a focus on a certain topic, it is integrated into the whole-farm approach. The demonstration activities of the other members joining the network usually target single practices.
- Most demonstration activities are provided by the farmers themselves, often in collaboration with public advisory services or farmers' associations. Funding mainly comes from the farmers themselves or from public budgets through demo-networks.

History

17th century: Agriculture literature becomes available; pastors important role as most farmers not literate.
19th century: Professional exchange of experience and knowledge facilitated through agricultural associations.
20th century: Parallel emergence of public advisory services and strong private knowledge-sharing initiatives, esp. in the organic sector. Important organic demo-network established in 2002. New networks and the ever since rewarding exchange of knowledge facilitated through farmers associations set a pattern for other demo-networks to emerge lately (e.g. collaboration between science and practice).

Historically, the agricultural sector focused on production quantity in order to provide sufficient food. Nowadays, agricultural productivity is high. Farmers are therefore not only seen as food producers, but also as stewards of the land and natural resources.

Types of Demonstrations (in descending order)

Farmers' inventory	Organizations' inventory
Oral presentations	Oral presentations
Farm-field walks	Farm-field walks
Hands-on experience/training sessions/workshops	Field trials
Demonstration displays	Exhibitions
Interactive discussions	Demonstration displays
Field trials	Hands-on experience/training sessions/workshops

Access Issues

Audience: Mainly farmers, public or private advisers, students and consumers (descending order).

Gender: To a greater extent male dominated.

Age: More equally distributed, farmers and organizations stated that mainly "all ages" participated.

Reach (acc. to farmers): Mainly regional, but also attendees from the national, EU or global level (for certain topics).

Reach (acc. to organizations): Primarily national and regional.

Other Issues

- Emerging topics like double purpose chicken and mobile stables for laying hens were not captured by the questionnaire, but are increasingly important for demo-activities in Germany.
- More demonstration activities take place in federal states with a strong public extension institution (e.g. in Bavaria and North Rhine-Westphalia).
- Germany has strong regional differences: There are fewer but bigger farms in the eastern states of Germany and more but smaller farms in the south (Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavaria) and west (North Rhine-Westphalia, Hesse) of Germany.
- Organic farmers are very active in the organization of demo-activities in Germany. This might be a result of the historic organization in producer networks and the endeavor for acceptance in the mainstream agricultural sector.

Distinguishing Characteristics

- Germany has a large number of demonstration activities organized by and for farmers.
- Public advisory institutions and farmer associations are important for knowledge transfer in agriculture in Germany.
- Many farmers are organized in (publically funded) networks and can receive public funding for demo-activities.
- Topics of public interest receive more public funding (e.g. nature conservation, animal welfare).
- The cooperation between science and practice is increasing.



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