Interactive methods to stimulate discussion and exchange about climate smart farming

Interactive methods are important to stimulate peer-to-peer exchange during on-farm demos. In climate smart demos, this is even more important since interactive discussion and exchange help to turn abstract concepts such as GHG emissions into practical and more hands-on experience. Interactively involving farmers increases farmers' confidence and willingness to adopt climate smart farming practices.

In the FarmDemo Trainingkit you can find many tools, guidelines and videos that can help you in organising a successful farm demonstration, also specifically about learning and facilitation methods. Below, we present eight interactive ways to stimulate exchange about climate smart farming.



Interaction between participants during a demo event at the Climate Farm Demo Annual Meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Picture: Thomas Alföldi, Fibl

Interactive methods for climate smart farming demos. *Which method fits your goal, group and situation?*

Learning goal	How	Expected outcome
Connect	**Social or informal exchange** *E.g.: coffee tables, lunches, BBQs tastings, ice-breaking exercises or networking during fairs or farmers markets*	

Learning goal	How	Expected outcome
Experiment	**Serious games** *E.g.: quizzes, brainstorming, scenario-based planning, role-playing on how to respond to different climate scenarios, ranking and scoring exercises or children's games at open days* **Workshops** *E.g.: around specific subjects such as genetics, emission-reduction, or biological control. Workshops can also be combined with climate smart co- designing or serious games.*	
Experience	**Farm walks** *E.g.: Walk-and-talk format or demonstration at a specific location (e.g. a soil pit, field, barn), guided tours of a whole farm, barn or facility, tours across multiple plots or locations, stop-and-talk format. Tours can focus on parts of the farm with specific climate smart farming practices, for example water buffering or catch crops. Also think about sustainable infrastructure such as biogas plants or solar energy installations.* **Hands-on exercises** *E.g.: digging soil pits, assessing animals, tastings, using digital tools, machinery-in-action demonstration, soil and water testing tools.*	
Reflect	**Small-group discussions** *E.g.: roundtable discussions, breakout groups, farmers presenting their own experiences and receiving feedback or reflection in smaller groups while moving between plots.* **Workshops** *E.g.: around specific subjects such as genetics, emission-reduction, or biological control. Workshops can also include climate smart co-designing or serious games.*	
Inform	**Plenary discussion, Q&A** *E.g.: informal discussions and open questions, dedicated Q&A sessions on climate smart practices, panel discussions and roundtables with farmers, advisors, technician and researchers, peer-to-peer questioning* **Showing visuals** *E.g.: comparison posters featuring adaptation and mitigation practices or climate information boards presenting project results or farm data, graphs illustrating GHG reduction strategies, maps, booklets or handouts with climate data.*	

Increased awareness **Real-farm experience** **Co-created insights** **Strong relationships**

Choose wisely, mix and match smartly:
Demos are most effective when you combine methods that fit your goals and audience

3 basic rules when selecting interactive methods:

1. Relate the learning content to climate smart farming practice
2. Engage participants in active knowledge exchange
3. Use a mix of learning methods



Digging a soil pit during a demo event in The Netherlands. Picture: Thomas Alföldi, Fibl



Visuals with farm data presented during a demo about reducing the carbon footprint on a dairy farm in Carrouge, Switzerland. Picture: Thomas Alföldi, Fibl

Examples of interactive methods

1 Which climate measures fit my farm? A set of cards for interactive workshops with farmers

Siw Fasting (Germany) created a card game to discuss adaptation and mitigation measures with farmers. The 3- step method enables practical and customised solutions for climate-friendly farming practices while fostering knowledge exchange among farmers. This method can be used in an interactive workshop of 2-3 hours in subgroups of 5 farmers. The goal is for farmers to find out which climate measures fit on their farm. Check the video below.

Step 0, preparation

Create a set of climate adaptation and mitigation measure cards that are fit for your region and sector.

Each card includes:

1. Title
2. Description of the measure
3. Additional information on cost
4. Tag: is it an adaptation or mitigation measure?
5. Tag: suitable for organic farms? Yes or no

Step 1

1. Give a group of 5 farmers a stack of cards
2. Let the farmers sort the measures based on feasibility by dividing the cards into two decks: easy to implement versus difficult to implement

Step 2

1. Farmers individually evaluate the relevance of each measure for their own farm;
2. and select 2-4 measures they want to implement on their own farm in the near future

Step 3

1. Farmers discuss the risks and possibilities of these practices in small groups of 3 to 4 farmers

Video *Which climate measures fit my farm? A set of cards for interactive workshops with farmers*
Click here to watch

2 Educational game from France
Accueil - GECO

GECO is an educational game with the objectives to promote the uptake of climate knowledge and understand the climate adaptation and mitigation strategies available in agriculture.

To solve certain puzzles, players must navigate on the GECO platform to identify adaptation and mitigation measures that can be implemented in agriculture.

This game was designed based on research findings focusing, in particular, on knowledge mediation, gamification of learning, and learners' intrinsic motivation. An epistemological analysis of knowledge related to climate change helped determine which concepts to include in the game.

Link to GECO here

Word from Pilot Demo Farmer

> We used highly interactive methods tailored to an expert audience familiar with Precision Livestock Farming. Participants engaged in guided on-farm walkthroughs, real-time evaluation of milking procedures, and hands-on interpretation of sensor and Precision Livestock Farming data. Open discussions and problem-solving sessions allowed them to compare their own experiences with the cases presented on the host farm. This expert-to-expert exchange created an active learning environment and encouraged practical, data-driven decision making.
> **Flavio Luongo - Italian Pilot Demo Farmer**

Supporting materials

FarmDemo Training Kit
Click here

Learning and facilitation methods
Click here

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