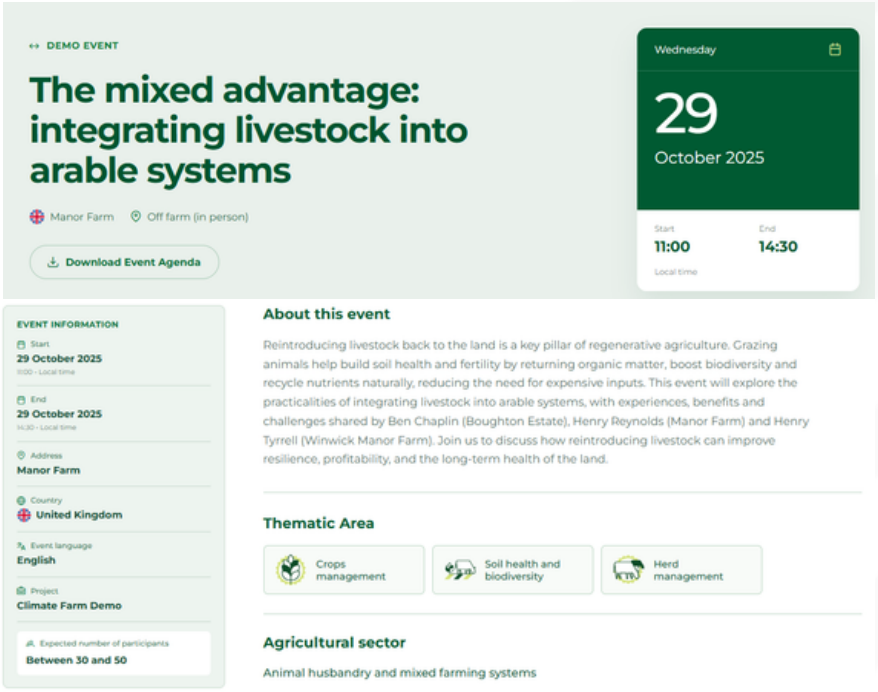
How to make ‘climate’ an attractive topic for farmers?

Climate and climate smart farming can be perceived as distant, theoretical, or even politically loaded concepts. Especially since farmers are primarily focused on the realities of running a profitable and resilient farm. As a result, it can not only be challenging to frame climate related topics in a way that resonates with farmers, but also difficult to attract enough farmers to on-farm demonstrations when climate is the main theme. This inspiration sheet highlights the question: **how to make climate an attractive topic for farmers in on farm demonstrations?**

1. Phrase a recognisable topic in the title of a demo event invitation

Rather than inviting farmers to a ‘climate’ demonstration event, organisers can focus on clearly recognisable topics such as drought resistant crops, soil health improvement, heat stress management in livestock, or water availability solutions.

These topics connect better to the every-day reality of farmers. Farmers are more likely to attend when they **recognise the issue as something they also face on their own farm**.



Climate Farm Demo website - demo event

In this demo event invitation from the UK, resilience, profitability and long-term health of the land are emphasised.

This connects the topic of climate with farmers’ realities and interests.

2. Quantification through data and audits

Some climate-smart practices can also be presented as business tools rather than environmental or climate measures. Climate solutions become more attractive when they are explained in terms of reducing risk, stabilising yields, or protecting margins. For example, crop diversification can be framed as risk management and insurance against weather extremes, or improved soil organic matter as reduced vulnerability and yield-loss as a result of drought and heavy rainfall.

> We focus on economic solutions for farmers that are related to the climate.
>
> **Javier Abad, Spain**

3.Hands-on, practical demonstrations: measuring, sampling, touching

Turn the topic of climate into something farmers can see and experience. Practical interaction or hands-on experiences relate more to farmers' interest and everyday life. Demonstrations where farmers dig into the soil, measure water infiltration, monitor crop roots, or observe animal behaviour under heat stress mitigation make climate effects visible and more relatable.



After an introduction to the principles and practice of syntropic agriculture and agroforestry, demo participants get practical experience of planting small trees in the field at a farm in Switzerland. Picture: Thomas Alföldi

4.Show climate solutions in real farm contexts

Demonstrate climate-smart farming measures to farmers on a farm similar to their own. Climate-smart farming practices feel relatable for farmers when they are shown on real farms and presented by peers who show the results, but also the challenges of implementing climate-smart farming practices. Seeing side by side comparisons, such as ploughed versus no-till systems or different crop varieties under the same conditions, allow farmers to see and judge outcomes themselves.

> [We made climate an attractive topic for farmers] by entering through technical questions, such as the usefulness of a cultivator when ryegrass has gone to seed instead of the use of herbicide. Or economic ones such as the significant cost of non-GMO soybeans versus producing one's own protein from peas.
>
> **Marion Hassenforder, France**

5.Link climate to farm priorities

Climate can feel as an abstract topic because it does not relate to every-day and urgent farming priorities. Still, climate topics in farm demonstrations can be linked to farm priorities such as workability of soils, labour efficiency, animal welfare, long-term productivity, or farm succession.

For example, planting trees or hedges in meadows is an adaptation measure that helps to reduce heat stress, but it also improves animal health and milk yield. Climate therefore becomes a more attractive topic when a demo event shows climate solutions that support a farmers' own goals.

> [We made the topic of climate more tangible and attractive to farmers by connecting it to the practical theme of soil health, which directly relates to their daily farming practice. Instead of starting with abstract discussions about climate change, we used provocative statements based on real-life quotes and experiences from farmers. This helped trigger recognition, discussion, and curiosity among participants.
> **Emma Knol, The Netherlands**



A German farmer demonstrates how he grows soya and sunflowers and explains the role these crops play in promoting biodiversity and climate adaptation in the north.
Picture: Thomas Alföldi

> We focus more on other related issues such as trade or even animal health, that farmers feel 'closer' to their reality. Eventually all those topics are related to climate.
>
> **Lucia Diez, Spain**

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