



EURAF European Agroforestry Federation

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1. EURAF ACTIVITIES

EURAF has been involved in the sub-groups on Innovation and on LEADER and Community-Led Local Development (CLLD), as well as in the steering group of the European Network of Rural Development (ENRD) during the last two months. Innovation sub-group meeting took place in February and was mainly focused on the development of [Operational Groups](#) within the whole National Rural Development programs. The cooperation between Operational Groups of different European projects is also intended once most of the calls for operational groups are solved at regional level. Most of the countries will support the cooperation of operational groups with similar themes among different countries. Current state of the operational groups can be seen in the [link](#). The other subgroup meeting dealt with LEADER/CLLD activities, and presentations can be seen in the following [link](#), where the importance of LEADER/CLLD activities within the Rural Development Programs was highlighted. Some examples, where woody vegetation was part of the LEADER projects were shown. The activities of both sub-groups and the current evaluation of Rural Development Programs were the main theme of the Steering Committee of the ENRD. Promotion of EIP-activities through NGOs and Member States representatives were promoted.

EURAF was also present in the European Parliament session “Opportunities and threats: EU land and forests in the climate and energy framework for 2030” organized by Mr. Paul Brannen. The program included a presentation titled “[Land Use and Finance for Innovation DG Climate Action, European Commission](#)”, other presentation on “[Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry: threats and opportunities](#)” and a third presentation on “[Land and Forests in the 2030 Climate and Energy Package](#)”. Moreover, this Parliamentary session highlighted the role of Agroforestry within the LULUCF inclusion in the European fulfillment of the Kyoto protocol.

EURAF continues promoting agroforestry within the different CAP funds. Meetings with European Commission and Parliamentary members took place to better relate Pillar I and Pillar II funds (i.e. agroforestry establishment promotion to be eligible in Pillar I) but also to identify the eligibility rule of 100 trees per hectare with mature trees.

Source: María Rosa Mosquera Losada (EURAF President), March 2016.

2. REGIONAL AGROFORESTRY NEWS

2.1 Agroforestry Association in Sweden (Agroforestry Sverige)

Agroforestry Sweden (Agroforestry Sverige) was formed the 27th of February 2016. The aim of the association is to promote the development and spread of agroforestry in Sweden through national and international collaboration. The association will have activities revolving around agroforestry in its many different forms and give members a platform for sharing information and ideas for practical agroforestry. Individual members as well as organisations are welcome to join the association. A group of people with a variety of backgrounds ranging from agroforestry farmers through a municipality representative and interested individuals, from different parts of Sweden, initiated the association on a sunny day in February in Stockholm. The association's formation was preceded by two conferences about agroforestry in Sweden, one in Stjärnsund (2014) followed by the agroforestry congress in Gothenburg (2015). A great interest for agroforestry was demonstrated during the conferences, and one outcome was the resolution to create an agroforestry association. There were many thoughts about possible activities for the association at the constituting meeting, and a more specific plan will be set up during the spring. The association would be glad to collaborate with Nordic as well as other agroforestry initiatives. More information can soon be found on the association's homepage www.agroforestry.se. In the meantime, you are welcome to contact info@agroforestry.se for further information.

Source: Linnéa Asplund (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden), March 2016.

2.2 Pastoralism and fire prevention in Spain

After one of the warmest winters of the last decade, this year the region Comunidad de Madrid (Spain) will boost the controlled grazing as part of the measures to prevent the forest fires in the region. The last year, in the Comunidad of Madrid a total of 4,335 heads of cattle have grazed around 735 hectares. Cattle maintained throughout the year the firewalls that have been previously opened by the worker groups of the region. The project started in 2011 with funding of the "Obra Social La Caixa" and since April 2013 the investment is carried out by the Comunidad de Madrid with the support from FEADER. The Comunidad de Madrid with the collaboration of municipalities, local entities and associations of farmers will distribute informative leaflets to invite the farmers of the region to join the project. Farmers receive up to 50 euros per grazed hectare, which is calculated based on the degree of fulfilment of the planned objectives. This system allows significant savings compared to other prevention options, e.g. the use of worker groups with flail mowers or tractors. In any case, the activities of forest fire prevention are adapted to the specific needs of each site, being chosen in each case the most effective alternative to fight

the fire. In 2015, the controlled grazing and preventive interventions of forest brigades have involved the direct treatment of 2.732 hectares of forest in the Comunidad de Madrid, with an investment of 12.1 million euros, to which we must add another 12 million allocated to the labours of forest fire fighting.

Source: María Rosa Mosquera Losada (EURAF President) and Nuria Ferreiro Domínguez (University of Santiago de Compostela), March 2016.

3. FEATURED FARM: “Red Tractor Farm”, Kea, Greece



[Red Tractor Farm](#) is an agrotourism project on Kea island in the Cyclades.

The farm occupies 3.24 ha located 150 meters from the sea near the port town of Korissia. The farm has excellent soil due to annual topsoil runoff from surrounding hills.

Figure 1: Symbol of the “Red Tractor” farm

Red Tractor Farm has been certified organic since 2008. Income relies on multiple means of revenue: 2500 bottles of red wine are produced annually under the RTF label; 400-600 kg of olive oil are bottled each year, year round cannery products from our gardens, guesthouses and occasional topic-specific seminars. Red Tractor Farm is also the home of OAKMEAL, an independent bakery that specializes in acorn based foods, particularly Acorn Cookies.

The Red Tractor Farm has four guesthouses with a maximum guest capacity of 22. The guesthouses have had excellent ratings on TripAdvisor and have garnered international attention in travel and lifestyle magazines worldwide. The guesthouses were built in 2008 with the help of a Leader+ grant for sustainable rural development. Each house has extensive private gardens with many plants imported from Mediterranean regions around the world: South Africa, Australia, Southern France and California. Dozens of antique rose species are also cultivated in the guesthouse gardens.

All water from the guesthouses, OAKMEAL bakery and Maroulis private residence is processed through an organic yeast based sewage system. The recycled water is stored in an overground water tank and used for watering at the farm. Bio-friendly products are used for washing and cleaning and no paper is permitted to be discarded in the toilets. Laundry, including guesthouse sheets and towels, are always line dried outdoors. All plastics, tin and glass are recycled or repurposed.



Figure 2: Some pictures of the “Red Tractor” farm

Kostis Maroulis and Marcie Mayer share responsibility in running the farm with two part-time employees. Maintaining the farm involves 365 days per year and there is very little difference between weekdays and weekends. Projects can emerge unexpectedly due to abundance on the farm (e.g. watermelon ketchup developed as a result of having too many watermelons one year, it is now an annual standard). The farm hosts volunteers during the winter months and in October each year. Volunteers learn about seasonal offers through www.wwoof.org, www.workaway.info and www.helpx.net. Volunteers exchange six hours of work per day, six days per week, for a room at the guesthouse and food. Each volunteer relationship is different and some projects involve prior skills such as dry wall reconstruction and pruning with chainsaw. Past volunteers have also spoken very highly of their experiences at the Red Tractor Farm, making it one of the most sought after opportunities with more than 1000 applications per year for only a dozen positions.

The secret to RTF's success is the integrity with which work is approached and completed. The farm tries to have as low an impact as possible on the environment whilst preserving farmland in an area that is rapidly becoming commercialized. Guests at the farm are mainly visitors from Northern Europe that are attracted to the simplicity and beauty of Kea. The farm aims to help these travellers make the most of their time on Kea, to discover the ancient network of walking paths that traverse the island and the many archeological sites those paths lead to. As full time residents on Kea, Marcie and Kostis have a love for the place they live and work that can be intoxicating for guests.

Currently Kostis is planting vines at several locations on the island to expand the annual wine production, and Marcie is building a network of retail partners worldwide for Acorn Cookies as well as giving free weaving seminars throughout the winter for Kean residents.

Source: Marcie Mayer (owner of the “Red Tractor” farm), March 2016.

4. FOCUS GROUP ON AGROFORESTRY

During the first months of 2016, the European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) has announced a new Focus Group on agroforestry. Agroforestry Focus Group will bring together 20 experts, including farmers

or foresters, advisers, researchers and agri-business representatives, to collect and summarise knowledge on best practices in agroforestry. This Focus Group will complement other Focus Groups where the role of agroforestry has been briefly analysed like those linked to silvopastoralism ([Permanent Grasslands Focus Groups](#)), disperse woody vegetation within the arable lands ([Ecological Focus Areas Focus groups](#)) and the integration of woody vegetation as part of mixed farming systems ([Mixed Farming Focus Group](#)). Within the agroforestry Focus group the before mentioned stakeholders will present the state-of-the-art in research and practice and highlight possible solutions to the problems identified, suggesting and prioritizing innovative actions. The Focus Group will also deliver future research needs on agroforestry and suggest operational groups. EURAF recommends all agroforestry stakeholders to submit their candidatures to be part of this new focus group. EURAF will forward the Focus Group call when EIP-AGRI announces it.

Source: María Rosa Mosquera Losada (EURAF President), March 2016.

5. ASPEN AGROFORESTRY

Eadha Enterprises is an environmental charity based in the West of Scotland. “Eadha” is the old gaelic name for aspen and Eadha’s main focus has been in developing a native aspen conservation project and researching and promoting the use of aspen in productive forestry and community woodlands.

Aspen is most suited for use in an agroforestry/wood pasture system as it is a fast growing native species and casts a light shade. In addition, it can deliver a range of other benefits outlined below. Aspen is nationally rare in Scotland and of conservation concern, thus Eadha has built up a national collection of aspen clones to create a gene bank. It has a high biodiversity value supporting rarer flora and fauna than most of other native species.

In the Nordic countries aspen was traditionally pollarded to supply feed for horses. Pollarding is likely to promote suckering, aspen’s predominant mechanism for regeneration. Trials in Germany have indicated that where a crop of aspen is coppiced after 10 years, as much as 45 stems/tree on average can regenerate. This will reduce naturally in denser plantings through competition to 2 dominant stems from the stump and 3 suckers.

Aspen has been found to be particularly nutritious and can form a substantial portion of the diet of both livestock and wild ungulates. Aspen leaves have been found to average up to 17% protein (peaking in June) and fat content up to 10% (peaking in September). The variation in nutrient content between clones, however, can be substantial. The bark and wood of mature aspen trees also has a potential value as livestock feed.

Aspen is also a fast growing tree and useful for biofuel production. Aspen wood is useful for kindling and to reduce tar build up when burning softwood logs.

Aspen agroforestry is considered to be particularly appropriate in upland pastoral systems. It is a resilient pioneer species and can tolerate harsh conditions. Therefore introducing aspen can have major environmental benefits, including notably in remineralising and neutralising depleted soils.

It is recommended that aspen clones are planted in discrete blocks to allow for a comparison of clonal performance for the particular site. This also mimics natural aspen woodland where clonal differences create a mosaic of colour throughout the year. However, perimeter strips comprising intimate clonal mixes are also recommended to maximise cross-pollination during a rare seed year.

The management regime to be adopted very much depends on the landowner's priorities. There will be a trade-off between cutting regularly (every 2-6 years) to promote leafy growth or less frequently (8-15 years) to promote woody material for biomass use. Temporary fencing could also be built to protect suckers, supplementing forage.

The beauty of aspen and the colour variation provided by different clones during the autumn provides a stunning addition to the landscape.



Figure 3: Mature aspen adjacent to sheep pasture in Inverclyde, West of Scotland

Source: Peter Livingstone, CEO, Eadha Enterprises, E: peter@eadha.co.uk, T: 07968745196, www.eadha.co.uk, March 2016.

6. EU CONSULTATION ON GREENING

At the beginning of March EURAF made a submission to the Commission consultation on CAP Greening Measures. We gave only a "slightly positive" overall score to the greening measures, largely because of the low use being made by Member States of the "landscape feature" options provided in Article 45 of the [EU Delegated Regulation](#). Four of these landscape features relate to small areas of trees: (a) hedges or wooded strips with a width of up to 10 meters; (b) isolated trees with a crown diameter of minimum 4 meters; (c) trees in line with a crown diameter of minimum 4 meters (where the space between the crowns shall not exceed 5 meters); (d) trees in group, where trees are connected by overlapping crown cover, and field copses of maximum 0.3 ha in both cases. However these four features have been "activated" in only around half of the 32 EU "[countries](#)" (hedges 17, isolated trees 13, trees in line 16, trees in groups 18).

Furthermore, while EURAF was pleased that agroforestry (AF) was included as an Ecological Focus Area (EFA) in the Enabling and Delegated Regulations, there are three constraints which will greatly limit its uptake: a) AF was only activated in 12 "countries", of which b) only 7 have any eligible areas of AF (i.e. areas established as part of formal Pillar II schemes); and c) AF only counts as an EFA if it is on or adjacent to arable land. In contrast to this last constraint, areas of new afforestation or short-rotation coppice will count as EFAs irrespective of the type of farmland that they are established on.

We also drew attention of the Commission to a recent report sponsored by the EU Joint Research Centre titled "[Guidance and Tool to Support Farmers in Taking Decisions on Ecological Focus Areas](#)" by the University of Hertfordshire, which found that agroforestry was the EFA with the greatest positive environmental impact, and we therefore suggested that the constraints on AF should be relaxed by allowing any area of agroforestry to count towards the "greening" requirement of eligible farms, irrespective of whether the agroforestry is sited on arable or pastoral parts of the farm.

Source: Gerry Lawson (EURAF Deputy President) and María Rosa Mosquera Losada (EURAF President), March 2016.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

3rd European Agroforestry Conference

The 3rd European Agroforestry Conference will take place at Montpellier, France, during 23th – 25th May 2016. The theme of the Conference will be “Celebrating 20 years of Agroforestry research in Europe”.

More info [here](#).

Agroforestry in Action Webinar Series

The Agroforestry in Action Webinar Series is a production of the [Center for Agroforestry at the University of Missouri](#). Presentations in this webinar series explore topics in agroforestry from North America and around the globe, showcasing examples of excellence in practice and research. Live webinars are presented on a monthly basis and are free and open to all. Please see the [live webinar schedule](#) and register well in advance to participate.

A new module on Agroforestry has just been added to the [FAO Sustainable Forest Management Toolbox](#)

In addition to an overview of Agroforestry, the module contains tools, case studies and further reading that FAO hopes will be useful to the different stakeholders dealing with agroforestry issues. The module is intended to be a living document and FAO would greatly appreciate any comments you might have on the text but more important are new case studies, tools and new publications that you would like to contribute with. More info [here](#).

ERIAFF Technical Conference 2016: Agriculture, Water and Climate Change

The ERIAFF Technical Conference 2016: Agriculture, Water and Climate Change will take place at Badajoz, Spain, during 27th – 28th April 2016. More info [here](#).

2nd International Meeting on Mediterranean Stone Pine for Agroforestry (AGROPINE 2016)

The 2nd International Meeting on Mediterranean Stone Pine for Agroforestry (AGROPINE 2016) will take place at Oeiras, Portugal, during 18th – 20th May 2016. The main objectives of AGROPINE 2016 are to connect the different researchers from the Mediterranean region, to update, share and transfer the current knowledge, to identify strategic research needs and partnership opportunities and to network and analyse the current state of stone pine culture and pine nuts markets. More info [here](#).

International Conference on Conservation Agriculture and Sustainable Land Use

The International Conference on Conservation Agriculture and Sustainable Land Use will take place at Budapest, Hungary, during 31th May – 2nd June 2016. More info [here](#).

2016 International Conference of the European Society for Soil Conservation (ESSC)

The 2016 International Conference of the European Society for Soil Conservation (ESSC) will take place at Cluj Napoca, Romania, during 15th – 18th June 2016. The 2016 ESSC International Conference is a great opportunity for Soil Scientists to stimulate deep reflections on the importance of the soil resource for the humankind. More info [here](#).

12th European IFSA (International Farming Systems Association) Symposium

The 12th European IFSA Symposium will take place at Harper Adams University, Shropshire, UK, during 12th – 15th July 2016. The theme of the Symposium will be "Social and technological transformation of farming systems: Diverging and converging pathways". More info [here](#).

EcoSummit 2016, Ecological Sustainability: Engineering Change

The 5th International EcoSummit Congress will take place at The Corum Convention Center, Montpellier, France, during 29th August – 1st September 2016. More info [here](#).

World Congress Silvo-Pastoral Systems 2016

The World Congress Silvo-Pastoral Systems 2016 will take place in Évora, Portugal during 27th – 30th September 2016. The theme of the Congress will be “Silvo-Pastoral Systems in a changing world: functions, management and people”. More info [here](#).

Open Public Online Consultation: PRIMA (Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area) in Horizon 2020

Deadline: 24/04/2016

More info [here](#).

This is your newsletter! If there's anything you think should be included, please send suggestions to euraf@agroforestry.eu for the next issue.

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