



Technical days and trainings during open farms day: learning by doing

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Knowledge transfer is one of the key axes for enhancing the transition and adoption of new practices such as agroforestry. In France, some trainings about agroecology and agroforestry are solely constituted of lectures and academical approaches, with few on the field involvement. This way of learning can be reinforced by the inclusion of practice learning to develop a holistic understanding of complex subjects that integrates the combination of multiple species, one of them a woody perennial. This will lead to logics that integrate crucial points for agroforestry development such as the farmer's reality or the interactions between species and their management into an agroforestry plot.

To facilitate the farmer's learning, more integrated trainings are now organized in France. These trainings are generally divided in three sections: on-line courses with audio lessons including bibliography, lectures and field visits, mostly at farmers' places already using agroforestry practices. This teaching process not only complete the academic one with hands-on skills but also stimulate the participants and allows to create and reinforce the technical and social links inside a group of actors (farmers, technicians, researchers, public institutions...). These field visits are also a good opportunity for wide communication and can attract a large range of participants.

One of the objectives behind this new teaching trends is also to set the farmer at the center of the reflection as an essential part to foster transition from conventional to a more sustainable land use systems such as agroforestry: promoting dialogue among farmers, creating partnerships with research institutes and universities.



Figure 1. Students in Agricultural sciences visiting Michel Nedellec's farm, Gers, France, 2018. Credit: Association Française d'Agroforesterie

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