

PRACTICE ABSTRACT

SHARING EXPERIENCES FROM: FRANCE

Do we have to reduce the number of pigs to avoid soil erosion?

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In a free-range system, pigs graze wherever they want, exploring the soil through their digging activity. Without a ring, the floor is very quickly turned over and laid bare. Within the association of Baron des Cévennes, and more generally in the traditional systems observed in France, pig loads fluctuate between 20 and 30 pigs per hectare. From the first rains, the soil turns into mud.

Various solutions are then considered and being tested with farmers:

- Increase the area under extensive grazing, via agreement with neighbouring owners. This agreement requires technical specifications to reassure the owners and find a financial or sharecropping remuneration. For the owner, the advantage is the maintenance of the land, to prevent the fire risk and a reduction in the cost of maintenance now obligatory. For the breeder, this reduces the pressure on his plots and also diversifies the feeding of animals (acorns, chest nuts, etc). The cost of fence has to be taken into account. It could represent 750 € of materials (fence, metal posts, barbed wire and fixation wire) for 100 meters.
- Install a ring in the nose to avoid a high level of soil degradation. Breeders engaged in this practice, sometimes criticized in biological certifications, are often satisfied with the animal welfare caused by a meadow with permanent grass.
- Remove pigs from pastures to building during the winter months. By putting the pigs in the shelter just after the acorns, the breeder thus avoids grazing in periods too wet in winter and it comes out the animals in spring.

The third solution is probably the most effective solution. While it's quite possible to combine all three.





ABOUT MIXED IN FRANCE

In France MIXED is implemented by AGROOF and INRAE in collaboration. The project is working with two groups of farmers practicing MiFAS (Mixed Farming and Agroforestry Systems) in different ways.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

MIXED (Multi-actor and transdisciplinary development of efficient and resilient MIXED farming and agroforestry systems), an EU-project, is supporting the development of European Mixed Farming and Agroforestry Systems (MiFAS) that are more efficient and resilient to climate changes.

7M€ BUDGET	19 PARTNERS	10 COUNTRIES
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Agriculture in France can be characterized as highly specialized and reliant on inputs (synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, feed, etc.). Indeed, livestock is concentrated in a limited number of regions and has almost disappeared in cropping areas. This segregation in space has led to a disconnection between crop and livestock farms.



MIXED partners from France:

