



Grazing4AgroEcology
NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026
No.12



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Welcome to the 12th Grazing4AgroEcology Newsletter!

In this final edition, we look back on the achievements, collaboration and impact of the Grazing4AgroEcology project across Europe.

Over the past years, farmers, advisors, researchers and project partners have worked closely together to strengthen grazing-based livestock systems through innovation, knowledge exchange and practical on-farm solutions. This edition highlights the key results of the project, including major outputs, events and tools developed to support more sustainable and resilient farming systems.

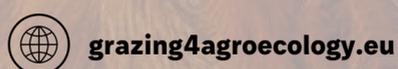
You will discover country updates from across the G4AE network, presenting recent meetings, study tours and knowledge-sharing activities that have reinforced cooperation between farmers and AKIS actors at both national and European level. The Partner Farm Network section showcases concrete examples of innovation in practice, demonstrating how agroecological grazing contributes to biodiversity, soil health, animal welfare and farm profitability.

The Partner Publisher contribution explores how technological innovation, such as virtual fencing, can support biodiversity-friendly grazing management. The Country Views section offers insights into current weather patterns and market conditions shaping pasture-based farming across Europe.

Finally, this edition presents national highlights and reflections from project partners, illustrating the long-term impact and legacy of Grazing4AgroEcology in participating countries.

As we conclude this journey, we sincerely thank all partner farms, advisors, researchers and stakeholders who contributed their expertise, commitment and enthusiasm. Together, we have strengthened European cooperation in grazing-based agroecology and laid foundations that will continue beyond the lifetime of the project.

We invite you to explore this final edition and celebrate the collective achievements of the G4AE community.



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Overview of the project

Grazing4AgroEcology (G4AE) is a Horizon Europe project supporting sustainable grazing-based farming across Europe. At a time when grazing is declining despite its proven benefits for food quality, animal welfare and ecosystem services, G4AE places farmers at the centre of a European thematic network.

Bringing together 18 partners from eight countries and 120 Partner Farms, the project strengthens national grazing AKIS through co-creation, peer learning and knowledge exchange. A key element is the development of an integrated self-assessment approach based on agroecology, helping farmers optimise their systems and improve economic, environmental and societal performance.

Through practical tools, training materials and cross-border collaboration, G4AE contributes to more resilient and future-oriented grazing systems in Europe.

Events

<p>56 Young Farmers Meetings 875 young farmers engaged through 3 Young Farmers Tours and more than 50 National Young Farmers Meetings across participating countries.</p>	<p>20 Partner Farm Network Meetings Meetings hosted on partner farms, where farmers exchange practical knowledge and discuss on-farm innovations.</p>	<p>20 Farm Walks On-site visits focused on sharing practical grazing strategies and discussing field-based solutions.</p>
<p>30 National AKIS meetings Multi-stakeholder meetings within a country to share knowledge, discuss needs, and develop solutions for the grazing sector.</p>	<p>10 International AKIS meetings Meetings that connect stakeholders across countries to share knowledge and foster cross-border learning and collaboration.</p>	<p>3 Conferences and Workshops Policy Workshop and two conferences focussing on labelling approaches and wildlife conflicts.</p>

Main Outputs



121
**Practice Abstracts/
Context Analyses
Videos**



12
Newsletters



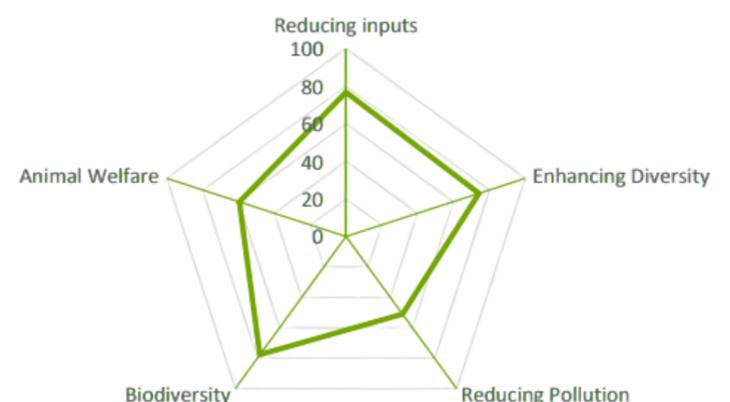
382
**Pages of
Educational
Material**

Self Assessment Tool

The way grazing is performed at regional level has different peculiarities and characteristics. Despite their best intentions, farmers often do not know whether their way of practicing grazing is well balanced to meet the required productive and environmental goals and those expected by the wider society.

Therefore G4AE has developed the self-assessment tool based on indicators for optimum grazing capacities on farm level and fine-tuning by theoretical and practical expertise from all member states. It provides the basis for discussion between advisors, extension officers and practitioners for the assessments of European grazing-based farms who are striving to improve their agroecological performance.

Performance report of the full G4AE-Partner Farm Network (PFN)



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From Pasture to Policy: Policy pathways for sustainable grazing and agroecology

The [Grazing4AgroEcology Policy Workshop](#) brought together farmers, AKIS members and policy stakeholders to explore how European and national policies can better support sustainable grazing systems.

The resulting policy paper highlights the strategic role of grazing in delivering climate resilience, biodiversity, soil health and animal welfare, and outlines concrete recommendations to strengthen financial incentives, advisory services, research, regulatory frameworks, certification and monitoring systems.

By aligning policies with agroecological principles, Europe can unlock the full potential of grazing-based farming for resilient rural landscapes and sustainable food systems.

Policy Recommendations from the project Grazing4AgroEcology

Financial incentives

- Support sustainability and efficiency in nutrient management practices
- Support low-input, biodiversity-rich systems
- Increase reliance on locally produced feed sources
- Promote robust breeds and grazing infrastructure

Training and advisory services

- Support training and knowledge on pasture and nutrient management and practices to increase on-farm sustainability
- Promote knowledge exchange about grazing

Research and innovation support

- Improve nitrogen efficiency in livestock and forage systems
- Advance agroecological and climate-resilient grazing systems
- Enhance access to precision grazing technologies
- Expand agroecological research across Europe

Regulatory Frameworks

- Adapt grazing management to climate variability with flexible guidelines
- From farm to landscape thresholds
- Integrate grazing requirements into animal welfare legislation

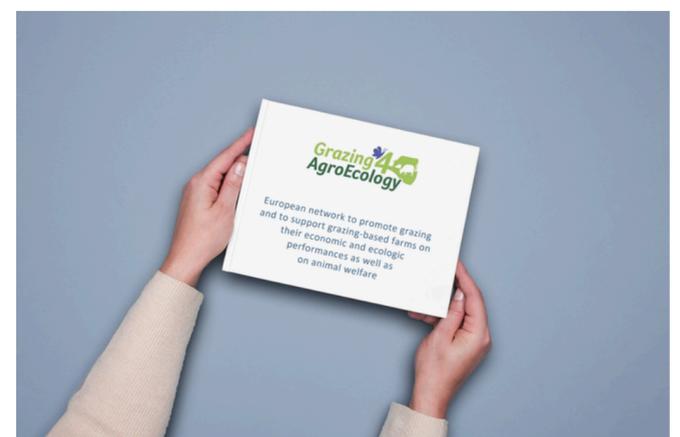
Certification and labelling

- Strengthen market recognition for sustainable grazing-based products
- Integrate grazing into sustainability certification schemes
- Simplify labelling for consumers and farmers

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Improve CAP schemes with measurable indicators
- Develop accessible monitoring metrics
- Strengthen performance tracking with robust monitoring systems
- Ensure relevant and inclusive monitoring

Easy-access and user-friendly tool





Showcasing Innovation and Sustainable Grassland Solutions

G4AE was strongly represented at the Swedish Grassland Conference held in Uppsala on 3–4 February 2026, bringing together over 300 farmers, advisors, researchers, industry representatives and students. Eight Swedish Partner Farms participated in the event. Two farmers presented their on-farm innovations, while several G4AE videos were showcased on a large screen, highlighting practical solutions developed within the project.

Christian Huyghe (INRAE, France), G4AE Work Package Leader, opened the conference with a keynote address focused on improving nitrogen efficiency within planetary boundaries. He emphasised the importance of increasing legume use, boosting grass yields and reducing mineral fertiliser dependency, positioning grasslands as part of the solution for more sustainable livestock systems.

During the conference, lamb producer Tomas Olsson was awarded the Swedish Grazing Award 2025 in recognition of his well-documented grazing management, systematic monitoring of grass growth and continuous efforts to improve production systems. Tomas manages around 1,000 ewes on 180 hectares of arable land and 150 hectares of semi-natural grasslands in central Sweden. The award continues the Grazing Award initiative founded by G4AE in collaboration with the Swedish Grassland Society and SLU. The Swedish G4AE team also promoted the project through dedicated stands and a large poster presenting the 120 Partner Farm innovation videos from the eight participating countries, reinforcing the strong European collaboration behind G4AE.



Strengthening Spring Grassland Management

On 16 January, a Grassland Management Meeting was held at Teagasc Moorepark, bringing together young farmers and members of the G4AE Partner Farm Network. The event combined indoor technical sessions with practical outdoor demonstrations, offering hands-on learning ahead of the spring grazing season. Discussions focused on key spring grassland targets, including optimal farm cover, grazing percentages and first rotation management to secure high-quality regrowth. The link between grass intake and milk production was highlighted, demonstrating how maximising grazed grass in the diet can sustain milk yields while reducing concentrate use.

Participants also explored grass budgeting and rotation planning to better align grass supply with demand, supporting informed decisions on grazing, supplementation and fertiliser use. Spring nitrogen management was addressed with an emphasis on improving efficiency while minimising environmental losses. The meeting concluded with practical guidance on interpreting grass covers, selecting paddocks for grazing and maintaining appropriate residuals, reinforcing the role of knowledge exchange in improving sustainable grassland management.





Germany



Learning from the Alps: Grazing Study Tour to South Tyrol and Austria

As part of the ongoing knowledge exchange within Grazing4AgroEcology, German farmers and young farmers are invited to take part in a seven-day Grazing Study Tour through South Tyrol and Austria. Organised in collaboration with the Italian G4AE network around Versuchszentrum Laimburg and Bioland Südtirol, the programme combines practical farm visits, workshops and cultural exchange in Alpine grassland systems.

Participants will visit representative dairy farms, traditional hay milk producers and specialised processors, gaining insights into both innovative and long-established grazing practices. The tour also includes visits to leading agricultural education and research institutions, such as HBLFA Raumberg-Gumpenstein, strengthening cross-border learning on grassland management.

By connecting practical farming experience with research, processing and regional value chains, the study tour highlights the importance of international collaboration in developing resilient and sustainable grazing systems.

For more information click [here!](#)



The Netherlands



Inspiring Final National Young Farmers Meeting

On 11 February 2026, the final National Young Farmers Meeting in the Netherlands was held at Aeres University of Applied Sciences in Dronten. The event brought together young farmers to explore one of the most pressing topics in livestock farming today: the future of grazing.

Daniel Reisman, founder of Collie, led an interactive session on virtual herding and fencing as an innovative management tool. Farmers can use the system to remotely bring the herd in for milking, veterinary checks, or housing, in this way saving time and reducing stress. This approach also reduces labour requirements and increases flexibility for farmers.

The discussion focused on two key themes: virtual fencing as a management innovation and smarter pasture management. Participants explored how improved grazing precision can optimise pasture use, enhance paddock design and support more efficient farm operations. The session generated lively debate, particularly around implementation costs, animal welfare considerations and legislative frameworks.

A strong message emerging from the meeting was that innovation should not be delayed by uncertainty around regulations. Rules evolve, and proactive farmers often contribute to shaping future frameworks. The meeting in Dronten once again demonstrated that the future of grazing in the Netherlands will be driven by confident young farmers who see technology as a tool to strengthen agroecological systems rather than replace them.





France: Knowledge Exchange and Innovation in Action

Two key meetings in Brittany highlighted the strength of the French Partner Farmers' Network and its role in knowledge exchange and innovation.

On 28 November 2025, 33 students gathered at Institut Agro Rennes for the latest Young Farmers' meeting. The session focused on dairy production systems in Brittany, comparing grass-based and maize-based feeding strategies. Participants explored the technical and economic performance of these systems and discussed the role of grazing in improving efficiency and sustainability.

Shortly after, on 2 December 2025, the final French Partner Farmers' Network meeting took place at François Pinot's farm on the north coast of Brittany. Farmers reflected on recent international exchanges, including the Young Farmers' study tour to Ireland and the GPA meeting in Sweden. French and European innovation videos were screened, generating lively peer-to-peer discussions.

The afternoon field visit to François Pinot's multi-species pastures provided an opportunity to connect theory with practice, reinforcing how collaboration, shared learning and on-farm innovation have strengthened the G4AE network in France.



France: François Pinot – Multi-Species Grasslands for High-Performance Dairy Production

François Pinot and his partner manage an 85-cow dairy herd in northern Brittany, farming 91 ha, including 37 ha of grassland. The herd produces around 573,000 litres of milk per year, with each cow averaging 9,000 litres and consuming about 1,000 kg of concentrates. Grazing access is generous, at roughly 0.40 ha per cow.

For the past four years, the cows have grazed multi-species swards composed of perennial ryegrass, white clover, hybrid ryegrass and tall fescue, complemented by species such as red clover, timothy or birdsfoot trefoil. The aim is to create mixtures that align with production goals: high-yielding, homogeneous swards with strong nutritional value throughout the year, supported by a high share of legumes. The mixes are also designed to perform under both wet conditions and drought, ensuring grass availability across seasons.

This approach comes with challenges: higher seed costs due to dense sowing rates, and the difficulty of maintaining long-term balance between species, keeping legumes dominant and preventing weed encroachment. Before establishing multi-species grasslands, François emphasises the need to clearly define the intended use of the pasture and carefully select each species and variety—ideally buying seeds individually and creating tailored mixes.





Ireland: Spring Grazing Management and Water Quality at Hanrahan Farm

On 17 February, Gerard and Caroline Hanrahan hosted a Spring Grazing Management Walk on their farm in Ballyhooly, Co. Cork, as part of the G4AE Partner Farm Network. Organised by Teagasc, the event demonstrated best practices in spring grazing management and water quality protection.

A key focus was maximising grass in the diet, as grazed grass remains the most cost-effective feed on Irish dairy farms. Participants discussed early spring grazing where ground conditions allowed, prioritising lighter covers and following a Spring Rotation Planner to ensure timely paddock grazing and efficient completion of the first rotation. The group also addressed challenging spring conditions, highlighting practical solutions such as grazing the driest paddocks first, on/off grazing and back-fencing to maintain grass intake while preventing soil damage.

Water quality protection was another central theme. Buffer zones along waterways, responsible slurry and fertiliser application, and careful nutrient management planning were emphasised to minimise nutrient losses and safeguard local watercourses. The meeting clearly demonstrated how structured grassland management, forward planning and environmental responsibility can work together to enhance both farm profitability and sustainability.



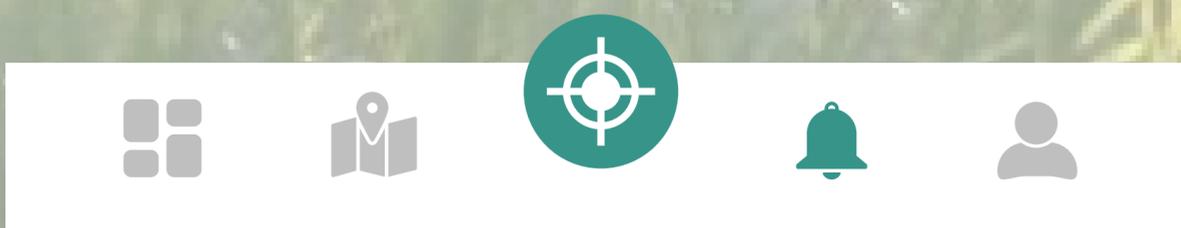
Germany: Diversification and Adaptive Grazing on Dry Sandy Soils

The organic Tangsehl farm in Northern Germany operates on sandy heathland, managing 110 hectares of grassland and 50 hectares of arable land. The mixed crop-livestock farm milks around 30 crossbred dairy cows. Operating under dry climatic conditions and on sandy soils, water availability and grassland productivity remain key challenges, compounded by the uncertainty of farming partly on leased land.

To improve soil fertility and water retention, the farm applies a high-density, short-duration grazing system. Cows are moved quickly across paddocks at the three-leaf stage, grazing only the upper third of the grass. The remaining trampled residues form a protective mulch layer that builds soil organic matter, enhances microbial activity and increases moisture retention. Rather than seeing residues as waste, they are valued as a key input for long-term soil health.

To balance lower production outputs and strengthen independence from volatile market prices, the farm processes all milk on site and markets dairy products directly through a solidarity-based agriculture model. Members receive contracted shares of milk or dairy products, ensuring stable income and close links between producers and consumers. To reduce infrastructure costs on leased land, the farm also invested in a mobile milking system, allowing flexible milking directly on pasture.

For more information click [here!](#)





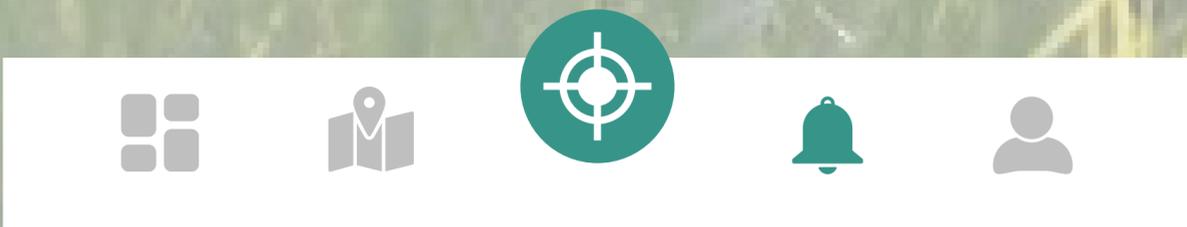
Romania: Adaptive Grazing Management on Semi-Natural Grasslands

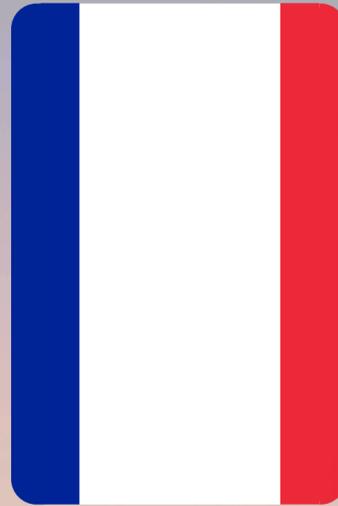
The Romanian Partner Farm Network highlights the importance of semi-natural grasslands for both livestock production and biodiversity conservation. One of the participating farms manages an extensive grazing system based primarily on permanent pastures, where maintaining forage quality under variable climatic conditions remains a key challenge. To improve pasture resilience and optimise forage use, the farm applies rotational grazing with careful timing of stocking density. Animals are moved regularly to prevent overgrazing, allow sufficient regrowth, and maintain plant diversity. Particular attention is given to adjusting grazing pressure according to seasonal growth dynamics, especially during dry periods when grass production is limited. By combining traditional pasture knowledge with improved planning and monitoring, the system supports animal performance while preserving soil structure and botanical diversity. This approach demonstrates how low-input grazing systems in Romania can remain productive while contributing to sustainable land management and ecosystem services.



Sweden: Gunnar Danielsson – Optimising Lambing for Sustainable Grassland Use

Gunnar Danielsson manages a lamb production farm in southern Sweden with 125 ewes grazing 50 hectares of semi-natural grasslands, along with additional arable land used for pasture and 20 hectares dedicated to winter feed production. Managing a high proportion of semi-natural grasslands requires both effective grazing and strict parasite control. Through practical on-farm testing, Gunnar identified the second half of June as the optimal lambing period. Ewes graze the pastures early in spring (April–May), maintaining high grazing pressure and preventing grass from reaching heading. When lambs are later introduced to the pasture, parasite levels remain low, as most parasites have already died off. This strategy ensures high-quality forage, improved animal health and efficient use of valuable semi-natural grasslands.





Germany

Leonhard Klinck – University of Göttingen



Virtual Fencing as a Tool to Protect Ground-Nesting Birds

Ground-nesting birds such as lapwings and curlews face considerable challenges on grazed grasslands. Their nests lie unprotected on the ground and are at constant risk of being trampled by livestock. Temporary protective fencing around nesting sites can reduce this risk, but it is labour-intensive and difficult to relocate as grazing progresses. Virtual fencing (VF) may offer an innovative and more flexible solution.

With this technology, grazing boundaries are digitally defined on a map and transmitted via GPS to collars worn by the animals. When approaching a virtual boundary, the animal first receives an auditory warning signal. If the warning is ignored, a short electric impulse follows – comparable to a conventional electric fence, but without posts or wires.

A recent study on extensively managed wet grassland in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern investigated whether virtual fencing can effectively protect small-scale exclusion zones. Twenty heifers equipped with VF collars grazed the area over a period of approximately four months. To simulate nest protection, clay pigeons were placed as nest substitutes and monitored weekly for trampling damage, both within virtual exclusion zones and in open control plots.

The results were clear: animals learned within a few days to respect the virtual boundaries and avoided electric impulses in around 95% of cases. Trampling damage within protected zones remained below one percent at both low and moderate stocking densities. In contrast, open control plots showed significantly higher damage rates, ranging from approximately six to nineteen percent.

An important finding was that the system was only fully effective when all animals in the herd were equipped with collars. If even a small number of animals were not included in the system, protection levels declined considerably, with damage rates between thirteen and sixteen percent in both VF and control plots.

Once virtual fencing receives legal approval in Germany, it could become a practical tool to combine biodiversity-friendly grazing, ecoscheme-oriented management and reduced workload for farmers – demonstrating how technological innovation can support both conservation and sustainable livestock production.



Likes



Reply



Repost



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Country views

Ireland

Ireland is currently experiencing a prolonged period of wet and unsettled weather, with rainfall reaching between one and two times the seasonal average, according to Met Éireann. As a result, soil moisture levels remain high nationwide, and many areas are facing saturated or waterlogged ground conditions, particularly in the south and east of the country.

Limited drying opportunities, persistent rainfall and reduced sunshine hours have significantly restricted field operations. Fertiliser and slurry application, as well as early-season grazing, have been delayed in many regions.

These difficult weather conditions are creating ongoing challenges for spring grazing management, requiring careful planning and flexibility from farmers as they navigate the start of the growing season.



France

Autumn 2025 in France began close to seasonal norms in September, followed by milder-than-average temperatures from late October onwards. Rainfall was slightly above normal in September and near average in October, with more widespread precipitation between 19 and 31 October.

These relatively mild and stable conditions supported a rebound in autumn grass growth, although the intensity varied across regions. The renewed grass availability provided welcome relief for farmers after a challenging summer marked by reduced production.

Grazing activities were extended until mid-November in many areas before colder temperatures returned. However, despite this positive autumn period, the late-season recovery was not sufficient to offset the grass production deficits accumulated during spring and summer.



Romania

Romania has experienced variable winter conditions, with periods of mild temperatures alternating with colder spells and uneven precipitation across regions. In some areas, rainfall and occasional snow improved soil moisture levels, while in others, moisture deficits remain a concern following previous dry periods.

Field operations have been limited in wetter regions due to reduced trafficability, while colder episodes temporarily slowed vegetation growth. Farmers are closely monitoring soil conditions in preparation for the upcoming grazing and fertilisation season.

Overall, the current weather pattern highlights the increasing need for flexible grassland management and adaptive planning in Romanian livestock systems.



Sweden

Swedish dairy farmers are currently facing reduced milk prices for both conventional and organic production. The decline is linked to high milk volumes at both EU and global level, which continue to put downward pressure on farm-gate prices.

In contrast, meat prices remain at relatively high levels in Sweden. The past year has been marked by a shortage of beef, contributing to sustained price strength. Current indications suggest that both the limited supply and firm price levels are likely to continue.

These contrasting market dynamics are shaping production decisions and economic planning across Swedish livestock farms.



Germany

German dairy farmers are currently facing significant economic pressure as milk prices have declined sharply, with many producers receiving payments close to or even below production costs. Volatile markets and rising input expenses are further tightening farm margins.

At the same time, persistent wet weather has created additional operational challenges. High rainfall has pushed slurry storage capacities to their limits, delaying field applications and increasing management pressure on farms. To cope with the situation while remaining compliant with environmental regulations, some producers have adopted short-term technical solutions, such as installing temporary slurry tube storage directly on farmland.

The combination of market instability and weather-related constraints is creating a demanding environment for dairy farms, requiring flexibility, careful planning and strong cost management.



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Grazing4Agroecology Awards 2024

On **1 March 2024**, Sociedade Agrícola D. Diniz, S.A. won the 2nd edition of the Extensive Livestock Farming Innovation Award.

This initiative, which was supported by CONSULAI and the G4AE project, had as its main objective the **recognition of the most innovative livestock farms** in four areas of activity: Environmental Sustainability, Technological Innovation, Profitability, and Animal Welfare.

Portuguese Team



Our participation in the project was an extremely enriching experience, both technically and personally. Throughout the project, we had the opportunity to collaborate with outstanding European partners, deepen our knowledge of agroecological grazing systems, and actively contribute to highlighting the role of grazing in enhancing the environmental, economic, and social sustainability of farming systems. We particularly value the exchange of best practices, the strengthening of international cooperation networks, and the positive impact generated within the national livestock sector. It was a privilege to be part of this European initiative and to contribute to building more resilient and sustainable solutions for the future of agriculture.



João Pereira

I had the opportunity to participate in a Young Farmers Meeting in the Netherlands and it was very interesting to see how, in various parts of Europe (the Netherlands, France, Germany, Sweden, Romania, and Italy), grazing is increasingly being regarded as an important practice in dairy and beef cattle production.



International AKIS Meeting 2025

On **5 November 2025**, CONSULAI hosted an event at the School of Sciences of the University of Lisbon (FCUL) **“Pasture Resilience in Action: From Science to Practice”**. **Organized**. The meeting brought together around 60 participants, including farmers, researchers, advisors, NGOs, and representatives from national and international organizations. The gathering functioned simultaneously as a national and international AKIS meeting, fostering dialogue across diverse stakeholders.



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National AKIS meeting in South Tyrol

On Tuesday, 25 November 2025, a national AKIS meeting took place in Bolzano. The aim was to develop joint activities to better transfer existing knowledge about grazing management into practice. Constructive discussions took place and various measures were explained. Topics discussed included working groups with and for practitioners (e.g. "Pasture Talk", "Grazing School"), farm walks and Farm visits, pasture days at schools, communication channels and local grazing awards. The final evaluation and discussion revealed that grazing days or a grazing conference could be an immediate and feasible activity for transferring existing grazing knowledge into practice. All partner organisations would participate in the implementation of the action.

International AKIS meeting 2025

"The International AKIS Meeting held on 13 November 2025 in Sardinia brought together Italian and French partners to discuss the potential creation of a regional or national label for grazing products. Discussions were informed by an overview of Sardinia's livestock context and by examples of labeling models used in Europe. Participants highlighted the need for clear criteria, differentiated for meat and dairy, and emphasised the superior quality of products from animals grazing on semi-natural pastures. Concerns were raised about the failure of the organic model in livestock due to high certification costs and low price differentiation. A proposed solution was to remunerate grazing farms through recognition of the broader "social benefits" they generate.

Italian Team



"Participating in the activities of Grazing4AgroEcology has been truly stimulating for us as Italian partners, offering a valuable opportunity to deepen our mutual understanding and to clearly articulate the differences that exist among our diverse territorial contexts and agroecological innovations in terms of grazing animals, grazing management and farming systems, while communicating these perspectives at the European level. We warmly thank the partner farms that shared their innovations and actively took part in the national meetings, greatly enriching the collective work of the project"

Andreas Stockner (South Tyrol)

We practise pasture farming on our farm, and I am always interested in trying out new things and improving implementation on the farm. By participating in the G4AE project, I was able to visit interesting farms and exchange ideas with like-minded people. Examining the agroecological services provided by pasture farming reinforces my own actions. The opportunity to think outside the box, especially to learn about inputs from other European countries, is very enriching.





Grazing4AgroEcology Awards 2025

On 11 April 2025, the G4AE Romania team hosted a workshop at the Agraria Fair in Jucu (Cluj County), centred on the question: “Are current subsidy measures adapted to the needs of pasture-based farms?”

The event brought together farmers, public authorities, researchers, and AKIS facilitators to exchange challenges and solutions for sustainable grazing, and featured the award ceremony of the “Most Skilled Farmer in Pasture Management” contest (organised by USAMV Cluj-Napoca and UBM Feed Romania), where the winner, farmer Cristian Echim, received a study trip to Ireland to participate in the Young Farmer Tour 2025.

International AKIS Meeting 2025

On 8 September 2025, the G4AE partners opened the International AKIS Meeting in Romania with a field visit to Green FarmsLeu (Cluj County), focused on manure management and practical solutions for grazing-based farms. The session gathered Romanian AKIS actors — farmers, researchers and public authorities — together with experts from Germany and the Netherlands, supporting peer-to-peer exchange of practices and the sharing of applied know-how.

Romanian Team



For the Romanian team, participating in Grazing4AgroEcology has been both professionally rewarding and personally motivating. Beyond research and coordination, the project created real opportunities for Romanian farmers—to showcase their innovations, connect with advisors and authorities, and learn directly from peers across Europe through on-farm exchanges and AKIS meetings. We warmly thank the Romanian pilot farms and all national stakeholders who engaged openly and actively—your contribution has been central to the project’s impact and to building more resilient, pasture-based livestock systems for the future.



Cristian Echim

“I had the opportunity to participate in the Young Farmers Tour in Ireland and it was truly inspiring to see how, across Europe (the Netherlands, France, Germany, Sweden, Romania, and Italy), grazing is increasingly recognised as a key practice for sustainable dairy and beef production. I am also grateful for the chance to join the G4AE conference in Sweden, where the session on Conflicting Goals: Large Carnivore Reintroduction in Grazing Landscapes offered valuable perspectives on how farming and biodiversity objectives can be balanced in practice. I sincerely thank the organisers for these opportunities and I will bring the ideas and connections back to my farm in Romania.”



Young Farmers Tour to the Netherlands

The Netherlands hosted the Young Farmers Tour from 9 to 11 June 2024, bringing together participants from across Europe to explore innovative grazing practices in dairy farming. The programme included farm visits, peer-to-peer exchanges and discussions on agroecological services provided by pasture-based systems.

Participants gained first-hand insights into how Dutch farmers combine grazing efficiency, biodiversity measures and technological innovation to strengthen farm resilience. The tour reinforced the importance of international exchange in shaping the next generation of grazing-based livestock systems.



International AKIS Meeting at Auke Spijkerman's Farm

On 21 May 2025, the Netherlands hosted an International AKIS Meeting at the farm of Auke Spijkerman. The event gathered farmers, advisors, researchers and policy actors to discuss knowledge transfer, innovation uptake and the role of grazing within sustainable livestock systems.

The meeting demonstrated how collaboration between practice and research can accelerate the implementation of agroecological solutions, strengthening both environmental performance and farm viability.

Netherlands Team



The Dutch partners contributed actively throughout the project, combining research, advisory work and farmer engagement to strengthen grazing-based systems. The team from ZLTO and Aeres University of Applied Sciences played a key role in organising national meetings, study tours and innovation exchanges.

Through their commitment to young farmer engagement, knowledge transfer and practical innovation, the Netherlands contributed significantly to the European learning process within Grazing4AgroEcology.

Renske Weitkamp

Renske Weitkamp, winner of the Grazing4AgroEcology Award in the Netherlands, runs an organic dairy farm together with her parents, managing around 90 dairy cows, young stock and beef cattle.

Her farm is a strong example of sustainable, low-input grazing management. Herb- and clover-rich pastures enhance soil health and animal resilience, while cows graze for approximately 3,500 hours per year to maximise the use of home-grown forage. Biodiversity is actively supported through the creation of "plas-dras" zones that provide habitat for meadow birds.

The farm operates with minimal external inputs and applies self-sufficient manure management practices. During peak grazing periods, cows graze extensively without supplemental feed for up to three months, demonstrating the potential of well-managed pasture systems to combine productivity with ecological responsibility.



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