



Care/ Social Farming in the UK, Ireland & Europe



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Presentation Outline

- What is Care/Social Farming?
- Activity in the UK & Ireland
- Developments in Europe
- National Care Farming Initiative
- Social Farming Community of Practice Group
- Potential in the UK and Ireland?
- European Institutional Support



What is Care/Social farming?

- Provide a supervised, structured programme of farming-related activities
- Provide social, health or educational support services for one or a range of vulnerable groups of people
- Provide services on a regular basis for participants
- Utilises the whole or part of a farm





Contexts....

- There are a number of contexts where care farming can happen
 - **59 City farms**
 - **66 School farms**
 - **5 Prison farms**
 - **47 Camphill Trust**
 - **40 Therapeutic communities**
 - **1000 community gardens**
 - **? Private farms – 3% of diversified farms are engaged in education. Are they care farms?** (2002



Care Farming in the UK

NCFI Numbers

- Essex study found 76 care farms (incl. 19 city farms)
- 124 care farms on NCFI database (Jan 2010)
- 109 prospective care farmers





Social Farming in Ireland

- Extensive utilisation by:
 - Camphill Communities
 - Services - working farms and gardens (across service sectors)
 - Community Garden Projects
- Small number private farmers formally involved
- Significant farmer interest in supplying services (SoFAR project)
- Interest from Support Services for Social Farming service.



Growing Interest in the UK

Recognition is emerging of benefits of the countryside providing health & wellbeing services – e.g:

- **Natural England – HLS/ELS**
- **LEAF – “Let Nature Feed Your Senses”**
- **Green Gyms/Green Exercise**
- **Ecotherapy**

However, care farming is still not a “scheme”



Social/Political Influences

- **Health/ Social Services:**
 - Social Inclusion
 - Rights of people that use services
 - Person centred planning
- **Rural Development:**
 - Multifunctionality



Care/Social Farming activity - Europe

Holland	818
Norway (2009)	460
Flanders (2008)	399
Italy	675
Austria	250
France	500
Germany	220

*Also Finland, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia,
Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey etc.*



Holland – why so successful?

- National Support Centre for Agriculture & Care
- VAT exemption
- Introduction of personal budgets





Flanders – why so successful?

- **Financial support under the Flemish Rural Development Programme – farmers receive a “compensatory” payment from Ministry of Agriculture**
- **Flemish Support Centre for Green Care (part of the NFU+ state support) – set up 2004**
- **Quality Guide for Green Care. However, no standardised quality assurance.**





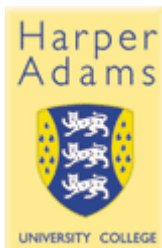
National Care Farming Initiative

Our vision:

Thriving farms and landscapes providing social, educational, therapeutic and development opportunities

Our mission:

Provide a voice and supportive services for care farmers, to inspire decision makers and to develop policies and actions that will support care farming in the UK





www.ncfi.org.uk

What is Care Farming? - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.ncfi.org.uk

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

What is Care Farming?

National Care Farming Initiative (UK)

Growing Peoples' Potential

combining care of the land with care of people

Click on the map to find a Care Farm



National Care Farming Initiative

For all the latest care farming news and updates visit our [News](#) page.

What are the therapeutic benefits of working on the land? Take part in Sarah Vaughan's [On-line Survey](#) - only nine questions to answer and provide her with some valuable feed-back.

What is Care Farming?

Care farming is the therapeutic use of farming practices

Care farms:

- Utilise the whole or part of a farm, be they commercial agricultural units, smallholdings or community farms.

Care Farm of the week



The ABLE Project
The ABLE Partnership Ltd
01924 339994
Outdoor Learning Co-ordinator

The ABLE Project is a social enterprise with a fish farm at its heart.

[click here for more info...](#)

Register with NCFI(UK)

Sign in for more resources and information:



Country/Regional Groups (UK)

- *Care Farming Scotland*
- *Care Farming West Midlands*
- *Care Farming East Anglia*
- *The Thames Valley Initiative*
- *Developments in Wales*

County groups developing in:

- *Dorset*
- *Staffordshire*
- *Essex*



Social Farming Community of Practice Group Ireland

Post SoFAR project:

Stakeholders coming together:

- Dept of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
- National Health Services Executive
- Social Care Service Providers (5)
- Camphill Network
- Irish Society for Autism
- Social & Therapeutic Horticulturalist
- Rural development (Local Action Groups) (4)
- Farm organisations(2)
- Teagasc
- Experienced Social Farmer (3)
- University College Dublin



Aim of Social Farming Community of Practice Group

- Aims:
 - To establish and strengthen a representative forum for the development of Social Farming in Ireland.
 - To stimulate and contribute to policy and public debate on Social Farming in Ireland.



Networks around Europe

- **Thematic Network on Social Farming** – collaboration between National Rural Networks across Europe.
- **Co-operation on Science & Technology Action on Green Care** www.umb.no/?avd=128
24 countries involved.
Chair: Dr Deirdre O'Connor, University College Dublin.
- **SoFAR Research Project:**
<http://sofar.unipi.it/> & Report on .pdf
- **Community of Practice on Farming for Health:**
www.farmingforhealth.org



Institutional support- Europe

- **The Netherlands:**
 - Support Centre -Joint funding Min of Health & Min of Agriculture
Support from main farmers' organisation.
- **Flanders:**
 - *Support Centre -Min of Agriculture and support from main farm organisation.*
- **Italy:**
 - Regional authorities – Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, Lazio (Rome),
developing regional networks.
- **Norway:**
 - *County Administrations have dedicated contact person as has the Norwegian Farmers Assoc - Bondelaget*
- **Europe:**
 - Thematic Network of European and National Rural Networks



*Thematic Initiative on Social Farming
(European Network for Rural Development)*

- Comprises the following activities:
- Compile, review and share existing information on the development of social farming at national level in different countries
- Compile and analyse case studies/experiences in different countries showing how engagement between rural development social farming actors is taking place.



Thematic Initiative on Social Farming

(European Network for Rural Development)

- Prepare of summary report/dissemination materials to support follow up activities among NRNS in the arena of social farming.
- Currently, NRNs from 9 countries (UK, Ireland, Austria, Netherlands, Finland, Belgium, Sweden, Italy and Germany) are providing information for this Initiative
- This information can also be supplemented with information from other sources (EU-funded SoFar project and EU COST Action 866 Green Care in Agriculture).



*Thematic Initiative on Social Farming
(European Network for Rural Development)*

- Door is still open to contribute.....
- If interested, please contact
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Summary

- Growing rural development activity across Europe
- People who use services looking for choices
- Service providers seeking new approaches to service delivery
- Rural development policy promoting multi-functionality
- Why is it not developing to a greater degree?
- Need for greater recognition and development assistance



Workshop Questions?

- How can we support the development of Care / Social Farming in the UK and Ireland?
- What existing policies can support development?



Potential of Care/Social Farming

– the UK & Ireland

- **Strengths**

- Examples of good practice with/alongside existing social care services.
- Resource of family farms
- History of funding of Care/Social Farming type initiatives
- Engagement from range of stakeholders

- **Weaknesses**

- Lack of awareness among farmers and social services
- Lack of awareness within business support organisations
- No clear pathways/market
 - pioneering
- Dependent on receptivity of local decision-maker.
- Diversity of stakeholders



Potential of Care/Social Farming

– the UK & Ireland

- **Opportunities:**

- Innovative
- Developments in the rights of people that use services
- Service providers seeking different ways to deliver services
- Additional role of farms in society
- European networks

- **Threats:**

- Innovative-lack of awareness
- Multi-sectoral- falling between policy agendas
- Lack of institutional framework –hindering engagement
- Re-creating institutions in the countryside?