

Transition to agroecological approaches

Home Farm, Screveton, Nottinghamshire

The farm has been in the family since 1933. Prior to transition, David Rose found himself questioning the intensive way of farming on the arable farm and began looking for alternative approaches.

The medium-sized enterprise used to be all arable and farmed in partnership with other farmers. David looked to diversify the business, including a mixed enterprise with cereals and sheep, and the creation of an edible woodland for the local community. The farm is a member of LEAF and the arable enterprise is run as a joint venture with one other farmer. David himself focuses on the agroforestry and livestock. Several years ago, David decided to plant about 6.5 hectares of edible woodland on arable land. The planting of the edible woodland is in an early stage; in total about 4,000 fruit and nut trees were planted.

His initiative was partly motivated by the desire to leave some of his land to a community-led agricultural scheme. The project has been supported by the local community, for example by volunteers planting trees. David set up FarmEco on the farm, which aims to educate and inform people about what is happening in the working countryside, hosting about 60 school visits per year.



David Rose

182 hectares, mixed farm, family owned and rented land

Integrated farming, Agroforestry, Community engagement

The farmer also hopes to offer creative and practical courses, including tree identification workshops. The woodland should become a community resource, offering volunteers the chance to plant, tend and harvest the crop as well as have a say in how it should be used, or where it could be sold.

David thinks that for the transition to be successful, the management of the environmental areas needs to be given the same attention as that of the cropped areas. David found the environmental stewardship application process to be helpful and the relationship with the adviser is good; he found the LEADER application process quite long but rewarding in the end.

“I tried it the big way but what I am doing now works better economically. I like the way the land looks now and I enjoy engaging with the community rather than working on my own all the time, which can be quite lonely. I also like working with the livestock.”