



## AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS: **SILVOARABLE**

<b>Year of foundation</b>	1984
<b>Specialization</b>	Crop growing – 50% organic / 50% conventional
<b>Farm area</b>	300 ha
<b>Number of employees</b>	8
<b>Year of starting agroforestry practices</b>	2011
<b>Location</b>	Ittre, Walloon Brabant, Belgium
<b>Web page</b>	...





The water had lots of **calcium** in it, due to a previous factory and there was flooding in the spring.

Main reasons for AF establishment:

- **Biodiversity** & fauna corridor
- **Erosion** / wind breaker
- Should be beneficial for crops on the LT
- LT (>35years) wood selling

Previous knowledge in AF: nearly 0, mainly literature. They had knowledge in forestry.



- The farm had a doctoral student From University of Ghent making his PhD about agroforestry, partially based on the data on his farm (Paul Pardon, 2018: "Silvorarable AF systems in temperate regions: impact of tree rows on crops, soil and biodiversity"). He had many important conclusions which can be found in the publications of his research.





The farmer discovered that subsidies are available from Walloon Region. Information available via AWAFF (Association pour l'Agroforesterie en Wallonie et à Bruxelles), the agroforestry association that represents the Walloon region of Belgium. These subsidies help supplement the cost of developing agroforestry in the area.

Basic knowledge in cutting/trimming trees are required. Beyond that, the farmer found agroforestry development to be rather simple to implement

## DESCRIPTION OF USED TECHNIQUES DURING ESTABLISHING OF AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS

The main methods used were:

- Rows of trees, each being 8m apart in the row (e.g. nut trees). The rows are multiples of 30m apart (-> sprayer width). The idea is to harvest the nuts from these trees in the coming years. No other trees in between.
- Hedges of trees, with high value trees being 8m apart inside of the hedges (high value trees: nannyberry, rowan tree, wood-type walnut). The other trees in between are wild fruit trees, being beneficial to fauna & for "forcing" the high value trees. The hedges are multiples of 30m apart (-> sprayer width).

The key techniques used by the farmer were **cutting and trimming trees** to ensure that they fit the landscape and goals of their agroforestry plans



## THREATS/CHALLENGES

- **Weed management** was very important. (especially in organic practices).
- In addition, there were often **branches in the way or falling on the field**, suggesting it's very important to consider what sorts of trees are used.
- Finally, **willow brought by birds in the row** and was making concurrence to the planted trees. Regular cutting of these trees needed.



Information exchange is a vital part of the process. Working with those who are experienced in agroforestry can help you better understand the process than you would have been able to on your own. The farmer noted that agroforestry has been going on for a long time, even though it hasn't always been referred to as agroforestry.



## FUTURE PLANS

It's important to share knowledge and learn from each other because that is how we expand and get better.

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

The key piece of knowledge to developing agroforestry is having basic knowledge of forestry itself.

Farmer recommendation:

*“Adapt the AF type to the cultural practices. Uncovered soil to be avoided in organic practices (weeds management) and promote hedges”*

## KEY WORDS

Alley cropping, Walloon, Forestry, Water, Erosion, Nuts, timber, reserche



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