
What do farmers perceive as barriers, possibilities, and solutions to circular agriculture?

The CircAgric-project conducted two workshops with farmers in Norway in October and November (2023). The farmers were prompted with questions about how to enhance circular agriculture, on-farm, and between farms.

Circular agriculture involves strategies for better utilization of resources and nutrients, reduced use of external inputs, and replacing fossil energy with renewable energy.

The primary findings were:

- A healthy farm economy is essential to introducing new circular practices.
- The farmers want to find the best solutions tailored to their own farm.
- It is important to recognize the farmers knowledge and efforts.
- There is a demand for more holistic policy instruments and support.
- It is necessary to recognize dilemmas between conflicting climate and environmental considerations.

One workshop took place at NIBIOs research station Tjøtta, located at Helgeland coast, between Trondheim and Bodø. The agricultural systems here are predominatly grassland and pasture-based livestock production. “Key measures emphasized by the farmers were reduced use of external inputs such as fertilizers and feed, improved grass yields, and cultivation of clover to fix nitrogen. One farmer highlighted seaweed as an important

alternative to feed and fertilizer on Helgeland”, says Vibeke Lind, Research Scientist at NIBIO Tjøtta, and Project Leader of CircAgric-GHG.

The other workshop was organized in Nord-Østerdalen, a region in the interior of Southern Norway, primarily mountainous, with a subarctic continental climate. Agriculture is vital for employment in the region and dominated by grass production and ruminants. Outfields are used for grazing, and the regions are one of the two core areas for summer dairy farming in Norway.

The farmers emphasized more and better roughage, composting and the importance of forest and own logging, which differed from the focus of the coastal farmers at Helgeland, says Valborg Kvakkestad, Research Scientist in NIBIO, with the responsibility for task 4.3 in the project. She also lives in a farm in a neighbouring municipality.



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