REDUCING INPUTS

Knowledge Transfer & Innovation Fund (KTIF) SG Final Report

KTIF/009/2022

March 2023

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Soil Association SCOTLAND

CONTENTS

1. PROJECT TITLE/ APPLICANT

1.1 Title

Reducing Inputs: KTIF/009/2022

1.2 Overview of Soil Association Scotland

The Soil Association[1] established in 1946, is the UK's leading charity working for healthy, humane and sustainable food, farming and land use. The Soil Association is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity number 206862 and with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, charity number SCO39168.

The Charity has a wholly owned subsidiary Soil Association Certification Limited, the UK's largest organic certification body. This is run as a not-for-profit company that delivers parts of the Charity's strategy and generates financial returns that are put back into the Charity's wider work. It also audits other schemes including FSC and PEFC forestry standards. The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and governed by Articles of Association. The governing body of the Charity is the Board of Trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law.

The Soil Association (charity and certification body) currently employs around 240 people across the UK, with 15 full-time equivalent staff based in Scotland. Income to the Charity for the financial year 2020/21 was £10,929,000, with around 10% of that income attributable to Scotland. Income is received from a range of sources including government grants, trusts and foundations, programme partner organisations and private donations.[2]

Soil Association Scotland[3] was created in 2002, to provide a focus for the Charity's work in Scotland. The Charity has a long and successful track record of working with the Scottish Government and partners organisations to deliver programmes of work for sustainable and healthy food, farming and land use. Our programmes are delivered in partnership with a wide range of public and non-governmental organisations. These programmes aim to demonstrate and enable practical solutions for transforming the way we way eat, farm and care for the natural world to restore nature, a safe climate and health. Our recent and current partnership programmes of work include:

- 'Agroecology: enabling the transition' – a KTIF-funded partnership project delivered with Nourish Scotland, Nature Friendly Farming Network, Land Workers' Alliance, Pasture For Life, Food, Farming and Countryside Commission. The aim of the project has been to follow on from the 'Agroecology: facilitating mindset change' project which finished in spring 2022, to further embed and support the transition to agroecological practices in Scotland.

[1] https://www.soilassociation.org/
[2] https://www.soilassociation.org/about-us/annual-review-and-finances/
[3] https://www.soilassociation.org/our-work-in-scotland/

- ‘Agroforestry in Action and AIA2’ – two one-year KTIF-funded projects which ran 2020–2021 and 2021–2022. These projects increased awareness and understanding amongst farmers, crofters and other stakeholders of the opportunities for agroforestry in Scotland and its benefits for rural development, the environment and climate. The second iteration, AIA2, built on the knowledge of the first project and allowed more in-depth participation and knowledge sharing.
- Innovative Farmers Field Labs, which are delivered as part of the Duchy Future Farming Programme and funded by the Prince of Wales’s Charitable Fund through sales of Duchy Organic products in Waitrose.
- Food for Life Scotland, which supports local authorities across Scotland to put more local food on the table and serve fresh, healthy, and sustainable meals in their schools through the Food for Life Served Here award. (Funded by the Scottish Government.)
- Our UK-wide National Lottery Community Fund Food Get Togethers project which supports and facilitates regular community activities that connect people from all ages and backgrounds through food.

The Reducing Inputs project was developed, managed and delivered by Colleen McCulloch – an independent facilitator and project manager, experienced in delivering high-quality knowledge exchange and collaborative innovation projects. She is the former senior farming programmes manager for Soil Association Scotland; and former lead of the Rural Innovation Support Service (RISS).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reducing Inputs has been a short programme consisting of two webinars, one farm visit, and creation of a case study and two practical resources; which was designed to inspire and inform farmers and growers to reduce their use of chemical inputs including synthetic nitrogen-based fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides.

The 4-month knowledge exchange project ran from late November 2022 to March 2023; and involved six farmers and farm managers and two technical experts, sharing their experience of practical approaches which have helped reduce chemical inputs and carbon footprints, reduce disease prevalence, improve soil health and ecological performance, protect natural capital, and boost financial resilience. The online and in-person events attracted a total of 111 participants.

The project's overarching theme has been promoting resource efficiency and a shift toward a low-carbon and climate resilient economy; with the main objective being to inspire farmers and growers to make practical changes to reduce the use of external inputs.

This has been achieved by:

- Broadening access to practical information on agroecological approaches, by producing, curating, sharing and signposting content widely via a range of industry networks
- Showcasing best practice through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing (in-person, virtual and video).

As a result of engaging with the project, most participants reported:

- Having an increased understanding of a range of agroecological approaches
- Feeling they have enough information to consider reducing input use
- Feeling inspired and committed to implement change.

These anticipated changes in management practices represent significant environmental benefits, through a reduction in:

- Nitrogen fertiliser use; reducing carbon footprints and boosting soil health
- Pesticide use; supporting biodiversity recovery above and below ground
- Herbicide and fungicide use; supporting biodiversity recovery above and below ground.

Promotion of the events and the farmers we highlighted resulted in some good publicity for the project, and project outputs will continue to be disseminated across multiple industry networks in a range of formats, including written resources, case studies, blogs, recordings and film (the farm walk is the feature of FAS TV S2 Ep29).

An additional industry benefit has been improved links between Soil Association and organisations including FAS, NFUS and PFLA (and their members); increasing likelihood of future collaboration to foster wider peer learning and co-innovation opportunities.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 Summary background of the project:

What was the project setting out to achieve?
'Reducing Inputs' aimed to inspire and inform farmers and growers to reduce their use of external inputs including synthetic nitrogen-based fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides; through a short series of in-person and online peer-to-peer knowledge exchange events and practical resources.

Why was this project necessary?
Soil Association's 'Fixing Nitrogen' report shows that, in Europe, more than half of all man-made reactive nitrogen derives from synthetic fertilisers. Global biodiversity assessments also show excess nitrogen in the air and water as one of the most significant biodiversity threats.

Concurrently, chemical inputs of all kinds are rapidly becoming prohibitively expensive, and the detrimental impacts on soil health and carbon footprints (N) and biodiversity (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides) are well documented. This rising cost is already having an impact on the farming industry; and is likely to have lasting negative consequences if reliance on inputs is not reduced. In tandem with this, biodiversity and climate goals are not compatible with continued extensive use of artificial inputs. Promoting and enabling the adoption of more low input, agroecological and organic farming approaches can play a key role in addressing these issues and improving the resilience and environmental sustainability of our food production systems.

How did the project function?
The project consisted of one farm visit and two webinars, which used a dynamic facilitated discussion format between farmers and their peers, and some technical input from expert speakers. Knowledge exchange events were promoted through social media and industry networks, and outputs have been disseminated in a range of formats including practical resources, case study, recordings, blog, and film (produced by FAS at the farm visit).

Many of the themes and approaches highlighted drew on learnings which have been tried and tested through peer-led projects, including Innovative Farmers Field Labs and FAB Farmers. These included a combination of:

- Building soil fertility and soil organic matter using cover crops, crop rotations, diverse swards and livestock integration – which can support crop health and natural immunity
- Measuring and baselining soil health to inform better management
- Reducing soil tillage
- Managing habitat for beneficial pest predators and pollinators
- Increasing diversity in rotations to help control weeds without chemicals
- Intercropping, which can help boost soil health and help control weeds without chemicals.

When did this project take place and where was it predominately based?
All activity took place between late November 2022 and March 2023. The farmers featured in the webinars and farm visit were all based in the central belt and Perthshire, but the webinars were accessible to and joined by participants from across the UK and abroad, with recordings available online to make them accessible to all.

4. FINANCE

4.1 Sum awarded:

KTIF grant awarded: £7,500 (75%)

Total approved spend: £10,000

Spend on KTIF/009/2022 over lifetime of the programme: £9932.99

KTIF award spent over lifetime of programme: £7449.74 (75%)

4.2 Detail of spend:

Table 1: Detail of spend

Project development costs	
Soil Association staff costs – development of project	£400
Project management costs	
Soil Association staff costs – delivery of project activities, management, administration finance & reporting	£4200
Fees for speakers/facilitators	
Expert speaker fees for webinars & visits	£1949.40
T&S for speakers/ facilitators	
T&S for travelling to venues	£138.60
Event venue costs	
Fees for venues and catering	£662.19
Materials costs	
Resources for promotion etc.	£382.80
Publicity	
Soil Association staff costs - web hub creation, production of supporting resources, press and article writing, dissemination	£2200
External costs	£0
TOTAL SPEND	**£9932.99**

4.3 Discrepancies between costs approved and costs claimed

Total underspend = £67.01

Category D: - £61.40 – full travel budget was not utilised
Category E: + £12.19 – over budget due to additional refreshments for farm walk
Category F: - £17.20 – reused some existing event materials

5. PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

5.1 Link what was set out in the application and why these aims/objectives were sought.

Key objectives:

The project's overarching theme is promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift toward a low-carbon and climate resilient economy; with the main objective being to inspire farmers and growers to reduce their use of external inputs including synthetic fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides, through peer knowledge exchange and practical information.

Nitrogen fertiliser can be one of the biggest contributors to a farm's carbon footprint, and compromises crop disease immunity. Inspiring farmers and giving them the information and peer support they need to be able to reduce the amount they use, may facilitate the mindset shift required to shift towards a low-carbon and more climate resilient sector.

Promoting and enabling the adoption of more low input, agroecological and organic farming approaches can play a key role in improving the resilience and environmental sustainability of our food production systems.

Our medium to longer-term goal is to facilitate mindset change and mainstream agroecology and organic farming, but in this short-term project the content was aimed at a broad audience, and framed in an accessible way (i.e. not using agroecological terminology) for land managers who may not have engaged with this approach before.

6. PROJECT OUTCOMES

6.1 Aims and Objectives: clearly define the main aim and objectives of the report. Give an indication of the outcomes that you hoped to achieve.

As outlined in Section 5, the overarching aim of the project was to promote resource efficiency and encourage uptake of agroecological practices and approaches which will allow a reduction in the use of chemical inputs. A complementary objective – which also helped to deliver objective one - was to provide opportunities for peer-to-peer knowledge exchange on agroecological approaches.

As a result of engaging with the project, we wanted participants to:

- Have an increased understanding of a range of agroecological approaches
- Feel they have enough information to implement change towards reducing input use
- Feel inspired to implement change.

Our main routes to achieve this were to:

- Provide access to practical information on agroecological approaches, by producing, curating, sharing and signposting content widely through our own channels and a broad range of industry networks
- Showcase best practice through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing (in-person, virtual and video).

Feedback from the events, summarised below (and detailed in Annex 4), suggests that we were successful in delivering the outcomes outlined above.

Table 2: Event feedback

Event	Inspired to change	Already planning change	Total planning change (KPI = 60%)	Increased understanding of topic/ already confident (KPI = 80%)
IPM webinar	45%	45%	**90%**	90%
Soils webinar	35%	60%	**95%**	90%
Farm walk	35%	18%	**53%***	100%

**29% of respondents from the farm walk indicated that implementing change was not applicable to them (e.g. advisors). Anecdotally, some who said they did not yet feel ready to implement change thought more information/KE or deeper understanding might take them closer to that point.*

Some answers to the question *"Is there anything you intend to try because of this event?"* include*:*

- Looking at climate adaptive species
- Reducing wormers
- Grazing winter crops; herbal ley; rotational grazing
- Look at integrating livestock into [arable] rotation
- Change/ diversify crop rotation.

Changes in management practices as a result of engaging with this programme, if adopted on a wide scale, could represent significant environmental benefits through a reductions in:

- Nitrogen fertiliser use; reducing carbon footprints and boosting soil health

- Pesticide use; supporting biodiversity recovery above and below ground
- Herbicide and fungicide use; supporting biodiversity recovery above and below ground
- Antibiotic use; helping in the fight to reduce antibiotic resistance

Further farm-level benefits as a result of changed management approaches could also include reduced input costs, better functioning soil (with positive impacts on associated ecosystem services, and farm productivity), and improved farm resilience.

There are also potential legacy benefits to consider:

- Information, in the form of text resources and video content which will remain freely accessible on the SAS website after the project
- The practical, environmental and financial benefits to farm businesses and the wider environment through changes in farm management practices.
- Improved industry links between participating organisations (and their members), encouraging future collaboration to foster wider peer learning and co-innovation opportunities.

6.2 Milestones

Table 3: Milestones

Month(s)	Activity
Dec – Feb	Engage with industry stakeholders
Dec – Jan	Recruitment of host farmers
March	Delivery of on-farm event
Feb – Mar	Delivery of webinars
Throughout	Production of videos, comms content and practical resources; monitoring and evaluation
March 2023	All resources completed; monitoring/evaluation completed; final report submitted.

Table 4: Deliverables/ KPIs

Deliverables / KPIs	Delivered
One on-farm event, delivered to 25 farmers, growers, crofters, land managers and advisers between January and March 2023	**Yes: 29 participants**
Two webinars showcasing low-input and agroecological approaches; delivered to 75 farmers etc. between December 2022 and March 2023	**Yes: 82 participants;** recordings available online
One farmer-focused case study highlighting specific measures /approaches	**Yes,** see Comms Activity Log (Annex 1)
A range of dissemination materials including at least one practical resource, one blog, and one press release/article	**Yes**, see Comms Activity Log (Annex 1)
Regular communications and dissemination throughout the project	**Yes**, see Comms Activity Log (Annex 1)
500 visits to web content and practical resources on agroecological approaches, accessed between the start of the project and December 2023	**200*** visits by March 2023
80% of participants report an increased understanding of agroecological approaches	**93%** over all events
60% of participants report an intent to implement change after engaging with the project.	**79%** over all events**

**This does not take into account visits to the resources and case study pages, as these were shared via email with participants and highlighted in the newsletter on 30th March. Therefore the number of web visits is likely to increase in early April.*

***29% of respondents from the farm walk indicated that implementing change was not applicable to them (e.g. advisors).*

7. LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 Issues/Challenges

Since this was a very short and straightforward project, we were glad not encounter any major challenges or issues. However, since it was so short, time felt tight for producing the resources and case study whilst also producing the report and grant claim in March.

Feedback from some webinar attendees indicated they would have liked longer sessions with more time for questions, and for content to have been more in-depth. Getting the level of technical detail in webinars can be tricky, and in a longer programme with more webinars it would be easier to have some at entry level and some more in-depth. It is encouraging however to have feedback confirming that there is interest in more of this type of content.

7.2 Impacts and would you do anything differently

Feedback from the farm walk (which showcased a farm which had integrated livestock into an arable enterprise, and reduced soil cultivation) suggested participants were keen to try some of the measures which had been highlighted and discussed - including using more cover crops, herbal leys and green manures; integrating livestock with arable, grazing winter crops, planning implementation of rotational grazing, and diversifying crop rotations.

This was very encouraging, not least because of the potential benefits associated with such practices, as outlined above in Section 6. Anecdotally, some of those intending to implement changes were already thinking about or researching the topics, but said they felt much more confident to now take action, as a result of seeing measures in practice and being able to talk to peers who were further on in their learning journey. Creating opportunities for peer support, as well as knowledge exchange, is an important aspect of enabling change. This type of dynamic peer exchange is less easy to achieve in a webinar; but the format is still valuable for exchanging information and ideas.

The content for the farm walk and webinars was co-designed with the hosts and speakers, to benefit from their knowledge, and insight into what their peers might find most useful. This collaborative approach has been a positive feature of this project, and is intended to be replicated in future KE work.

8. COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

8.1 Detail communications throughout the project's lifetime

The project promoted activity, shared information and disseminated outputs throughout the project, using a range of platforms including social media, blogs, newsletters, and partner newsletters.

Full details of comms activity can be found in Annex 1, and the Comms Plan in Annex 2; however the following figures give an indication of project visibility.

Table 5: Social media impressions

Platform	Posts	Impressions	Notes
Twitter	17	15637	Tweets very often tagged stakeholders listed in comms plan
Facebook	3	2168	
Soil Assoc Scot newsletter	4 (monthly)	3000 per edition	
Website hits (until March)	Updated throughout project	200	This does not take into account visits to the resources and case study pages, which were shared via email with participants and highlighted in the newsletter on 30th March. Therefore the number of web visits is likely to increase during April.

Information was also promoted through partner newsletters by NFFN, NFUS, and FAS.

To enable a broad base of participants to be attracted, including those who have not previously engaged with SAS or projects promoting agroecological practices, promotional communications followed these principles:

- Introduce and frame topics using accessible language
- Highlight the potential business benefits of featured approaches
- Highlight benefits of participation in peer-to-peer learning
- Highlight the use of online and digital formats to make content more accessible to participants in remote areas.

The project web page, with links to all resources produced (also outlined in Annex 1), can be viewed at: https://www.soilassociation.org/our-work-in-scotland/scotland-farming-programmes/current-scotland-programmes/reducing-inputs/

8.2 FAS Engagement

As well as our activities and outputs being highlighted through FAS channels, we were delighted to be able to collaborate with the FAS TV team on S2 Ep 29: Farming for Economic and Environmental Benefit (web link in Annex 1). This was filmed during our farm visit to Balbirnie Home Farms, where we also promoted the Agriculture, Biodiversity and Climate Change (ABCC) Network.

9. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Analysis and discussion: analyse and discuss results or finding. Outline the key issues arising from the project and explain why they are important or significant.

The biggest key finding from this project, is the high proportion of participants who expressed an intention to implement a new practice or approach as a result of engaging. A whopping 93% reported an increased understanding of agroecological approaches; and 79% reported an intention to implement change(s). Some of these were already thinking about change, but it is still significant that engaging with peers and seeing practices working 'on the ground' gave people confidence to go home and implement the changes they had been considering.

This really highlights the importance of providing opportunities for peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and peer support, for building the practical knowledge and confidence required to put plans into practice.

It potentially also flags a gap, if farmers who have furthest to go in terms of input reductions, are the ones least likely to have knowledge of agroecological approaches and least confident to know where to look for (quality) information.

A number of key themes also emerged, which were common across different systems. These included:

- Using a whole-system approach, and using it to plan how changes might fit together
- The importance of soil, understanding your own soil, and how to naturally build soil health, fertility and function
- The importance of diversity (and increasing it) in crops, rotations, habitats and systems
- The benefits of providing habitat for beneficial pest predators and pollinators
- Time and patience – system change does not happen overnight or always happen without challenges.

Promoting these themes, framed in a way which is accessible to those who may not have engaged with low-input and agroecological approaches before, should be the next step in building the knowledge and confidence needed to enable widespread change towards more sustainable practices.

10. CONCLUSION

There is appetite among mainstream farmers and growers in Scotland to reduce chemical fertilisers, pesticides, and fungicides. This was discussed anecdotally between participants, and also highlighted in the recent NFUS members intentions survey. The appetite to learn more about agroecological approaches was also reflected in the feedback from participating farmers. This represents a great opportunity to engage with the conventional farming community to promote practices and approaches which can improve farm and environmental resilience and reduce carbon footprints.

The farmers who have furthest to go in terms of input reductions, are the ones least likely to have knowledge of agroecological approaches, and least confident to know where to look for (quality) information. 'Knowing where to look' for information, especially on topics relating to agroecological approaches, is something which comes up often in discussions with conventional farmers; and can be a real barrier to change. This is something which Soil Association tries to address through KE and creation of resources, and is keen to collaborate on with diverse partners; but there is also an opportunity for well-known services like FAS to promote more information, resources and knowledge exchange opportunities on agroecological approaches.

Annex 1 – Communications Activity log

Web Links

Project web page	https://www.soilassociation.org/our-work-in-scotland/scotland-farming-programmes/current-scotland-programmes/reducing-inputs/
Webinar recording: IPM	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cm288MKi6R4
Practical Guide: IPM	https://www.soilassociation.org/media/25656/sa_reducing-inputs_integrated-pest-management.pdf
Webinar recording: Soil health	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scTJqN6AWr4
Practical Guide: Soil Health	https://www.soilassociation.org/media/25657/sa_reducing-inputs_supporting-soils.pdf
Blog	https://www.soilassociation.org/our-work-in-scotland/scotland-news/2023/march/reducing-inputs-project-summary/
FAS TV Episode	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFkWT8O6OJc

Link to post	Platform	Date	Impressions	Likes	Comments	Shares	Clicks On Link
FB post	FB	4/1/23	1414	2		4	42
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1605202383499304962?s=20&t=ReQKStP6jnyiThCOz73g-Q	TW	20/12/22	1491	8	1	7	36
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1611284205870219265?s=20&t=F25bcSAcSPPDqpat_O8ABg	TW	6/1/23	2437	16	0	10	60
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1612815353649717251?s=20&t=4XnfdtFkpEe_cNJNh01tBw	TW	10/1/23	1338	14	0	3	56
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1620796202316075009?s=20&t=7pzka9yp-j8nJlQs1mPO-Q	TW	1/2/23	537	1	0	3	3
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1621138872716636163?s=20&t=9N3NqVgLhUS6lra6W6y3WA	TW	2/2/23	429	4	0	2	8
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1622568276848001024?s=20&t=ShVppMiV34HXW44qq89TwA	TW	6/2/23	1268	4	0	5	7
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1623244996316139521?s=20&t=mtwuFjRBsEMKE2MPmW8xeQ	TW	8/2/23	267	4	0	2	1
FB post	FB	10/2/23	105	3	0	0	

FB post	FB	15/2/23	649	3	0	2	
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1625430361864912897?s=20&t=uxL-ef90OLCawhyVv6hTEA	TW	15/2/23	456	3		2	4
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1627674603110690816?s=20	TW	20/2/23	328	0	0	0	0
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1627723216905961502?s=20	TW	20/2/23	1426	6	0	2	2
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1627998210173112321?s=20	TW	21/2/23	417	4	0	1	0
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1627998205693632512?s=20	TW	21/2/23	2186	15	1	6	15
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1628089614903697408?s=20	TW	21/2/23	387	0	0	0	0
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1630904401454825472?s=20	TW	1/3/23	1429	17	1	4	0
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1630904404034322433?s=20	TW	1/3/23	534	4	1	2	5
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1630904407972782081?s=20	TW	1/3/23	303	3	0	0	0
https://twitter.com/SoilAssocScot/status/1640628540893990915?s=20	TW	28/3/23	404	1	0	1	2
TOTAL			**17805**	**112**	**4**	**56**	**241**

NEWSLETTER to 3000 subscribers	26/1/23
	16/12/22
	23/2/23
	30/3/23

Annex 2 – Communications Plan

Communications Aims:

- To promote resource efficiency and support a shift toward a low-carbon and climate resilient economy
- To inspire farmers and growers to reduce their use of external inputs including synthetic fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides
- To increase awareness and understanding of agroecological approaches.

Objectives:

- 100 farm event attendees
- 150 webinar attendees
- 1,000 visits to web content and practical resources on agroecological approaches, accessed between the start of the project and December 2023
- Increased numbers of farmers, growers and land managers stating an intention to reduce the use of inputs/ implement change in management approach.

Key messages by audience:

- Mainstream and progressive farmers, growers and land managers in Scotland:
  Adopting agroecological approaches can help farms reduce chemical inputs (incl. nitrogen fertiliser, pesticides), and thereby reduce carbon footprints, tackle disease resistance, improve soil health and ecological performance, protect natural capital and boost profitability & financial resilience.
- Industry organisations working with farmers: e.g. FAS, AHDB, NFU Scotland, SAC Consulting, SRUC:
  Adopting agroecological approaches promotes resource efficiency, and can support a shift toward a low-carbon and climate resilient economy, build natural capital and restore biodiversity
- Policy makers and public:
  We are facing a climate, nature and health crisis. We need to support farmers to be part of the solution – 70% of our land is farmed. Reducing chemical inputs and adopting agroecology is good for farm businesses, it increases nature on farms, improves soils and takes carbon out of the atmosphere.

Channels and tactics:

- **Event promotion for events and webinars**: Soil Association Scotland channels (website, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, 3x newsletters/month), industry/ stakeholder channels incl. NFUS and FAS
- **Digital content creation for online**: videos, case studies, farmer web stories, practical resources, social media blogs/graphics/video (inspirational and practical), capture of webinars, links to external resources
- **Content promotion**: social media inc. stakeholder engagement, event follow up with attendees, sign-up to established monthly sustainable farming newsletter, inclusion in industry newsletters

Press and PR: Stakeholder engagement with industry organisations and partner organisations (e.g. Soil Association, NFUS, Agricology) for maximum reach and engagement.

Annex 3 – Monitoring and Evaluation

Option Code (official use only)	**Course /meeting duration - (days)** (e.g. half day = 0.5)	**Number of participants in trainings**	**Number of training days** (Days multiplied by participants)	**Gender** Male	**Gender** Female	**Age Range** 40 and Under	**Age Range** 41 and Over
(Example)	*(2)*	*(10)*	***(20)***	*(12)*	*(8)*	*(5)*	*(15)*
	Integrated Pest Management (webinar) 22/2/23 (0.5)	28	14	11	17	13	15
	Reducing Inputs, Balbirnie Home farms (on-farm event) 28/2/23 (1)	29	29	15	14	12	17
	Supporting Soil Health (webinar) 8/3/23 (0.5)	54	27	25	29	26	28
Totals: (Project to complete)		**111**	**70**	**51**	**60**	**51**	**60**

Annex 4 – Event Feedback

Event	Inspired to change	Already planning change	Total planning change	Increased understanding of topic/ already confident
IPM webinar	45%	45%	**90%**	90%
Soils webinar	35%	60%	**95%**	90%
Farm walk	35%	18%	**53%***	100%

Event	***"Is there anything you intend to try because of this event?"***
IPM webinar	• [planting] Hedging
Soils webinar	• Compare financial statistics between "conventional systems" and A more regenerative system • Looking at climate adaptive species • Reducing wormers • Mob grazing • Perhaps mixing cattle and sheep into a Flerd • Look into companion cropping further • Dig more holes to look at structure
Farm walk	• Diversity! • Grazing winter crops; further research on mob grazing • Grazing winter crops; herbal ley; rotational grazing • Look at integrating livestock into [arable] rotation • I am estate manager but wish to encourage farm tenants to make changes; introduce regen practices • Make compost; dual cropping/ living mulch • Change/ diversify crop rotation
Event	***"What elements of the session could have been improved?"***
IPM webinar	• More time for questions
Soils webinar	• A bit more time. 2 hours would have been better • More time for questions
Farm walk	• Really interesting! • None • Very good, well done! • All good • A leaflet/ sheet available on main farm activity/info*

**The case study of the host farm was made available after the event.*