

# How Agroforestry Is Transforming European Farms

Agroforestry is becoming a popular solution that brings multiple benefits both for the environment and the landowners. Integrating trees into crops or livestock contributes to food security and mitigates the effects of climate change while providing diversified income for the farms.

Although 30% of the agricultural land in Europe has the potential to introduce agroforestry practices, a recent study from EURAF shows that the expansion of agroforestry on the continent is still low.

Life Terra, a reforestation initiative co-funded by the European Commission, is actively demonstrating how trees can help create **healthier landscapes while providing socioeconomic benefits** for the landowners.

Planting a mix of native species in existing agricultural land promotes **biodiversity** and enhances **ecosystem services**, such as water infiltration, soil fertility and the presence of local fauna and pollinators. In addition, tree-based systems create new income streams, such as fruit trees, timber, or participation in the carbon credits market.

Trees contribute directly to increasing the land's resilience against climate change and making it more productive in the long term. This was the case of [Setos de Campo Azálvaro](#), in Segovia, Spain. After only two years of planting, the farm observed an increase in local fauna (insects, rodents and amphibians) and in the presence of the Common kestrel, a local bird at risk of extinction.



*Green hedges at Setos de Campo Azalvaro, 2023.*

This 65-hectare farm planted 12,000 new trees and shrubs, using the key-line design, creating green hedges to reduce erosion caused by strong winds predominant in the area and provide shelter for their livestock. “We are pleased to have found a way to maintain livestock activity with tree planting, and we hope to continue developing it to enjoy all the benefits it brings”, said Ignacio Canales, Landowner at Setos de Campo Azálvaro.



*Livestock and tree planting at Setos de Campo Azalvaro, 2023.*

Another example of [innovative land management](#) can be found in Castries, near Montpellier, where Racines de France developed a project that mixes tree planting, biochar and agriculture. “The idea was to provide both an agricultural and forestry solution to address environmental and climate challenges”, stated Yann Fortunato, landowner at Castries, where years of conventional agriculture left the soil poor and degraded.



*Biochar is used to strengthen tree survival at Castries, 2025.*

In this case, more than 3,000 trees were planted to enhance ecosystem values, while adding biochar, a carbon-rich material produced from vegetal waste, served as a boost for nutrient retention, water-holding capacity and microbial activity, therefore providing a safer environment for the young saplings.



*Tree planting at Castries, 2025.*

This synergy of ecological and financial advantages underscores the transformative potential of agroforestry for rural communities and beyond. The Life Terra Foundation is now looking to [expand its landowner network](#) and develop more agroforestry projects around Europe.