

<b>Short title in English</b>	<b>Leitrim Organic Farmers' Co-op</b>
<b>Country</b>	Republic of Ireland
<p><b>Short summary for practitioners in English on the (final or expected) outcomes</b> (1000-1500 characters, word count – no spaces).</p> <p>This summary should at least contain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Main <b>results/outcomes</b> of the activity (expected or final)</li> <li>– The <b>main practical recommendation(s)</b>: what would be the main added value/benefit/opportunities to the end-user if the generated knowledge is implemented? How can the practitioner make use of the results?</li> </ul> <p>This summary should be as interesting as possible for farmers/end-users, using a <u>direct and easy understandable language</u> and pointing out entrepreneurial elements which are particularly relevant for practitioners (e.g. related to cost, productivity etc). Research oriented aspects which do not help the understanding of the practice itself should be avoided.</p>	<p>Leitrim Organic Farmers' Co-op is an organic selling cooperative in Ireland that has expanded to include training, agricultural advice, activism and influencing policy.</p> <p>The main goal was to find outlets for their organic produce so they developed markets in different ways. The cooperative set up one of the first Farmers' markets in the country and collaborated with larger processors. They worked with them to supply products outside of Ireland – in the Netherlands and the UK. Those contracts are still in place today.</p> <p>They then devised educational programmes for their members. The programmes allow organic producers to be trained in a whole range of things from food safety to growing techniques to biological farming techniques to agroforestry. It's all demand-driven, driven by the farmers and producers themselves.</p> <p>The cooperative has now spawned other initiatives such as a training company. They go to farmers because they are agricultural advisors and can help them to deal with the bureaucracy with the EU programmes. Farmers are also encouraged to look at things like Ecotourism.</p> <p>It's very important to connect with the local community and have their support. The cooperative has been able to reduce rural isolation because they run discussion groups and events improving social interaction.</p> <p>Social farming has also developed in the region, mainly because of their influence. The farm is used in a holistic way of dealing with the traumas and difficulties in the lives of people with special needs.</p> <p>The cooperative was involved in work at European level, trying to formulate new policies especially through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to make it more reflective of their own ambitions. Small farming traditions of Europe should be enshrined in law.</p>