



[About us](#) ▾

[Menu](#) ≡

[Home](#) → [Members details](#) → [Agrolab Project, Open Agriculture Laboratories](#)

MEMBER

Agrolab Project, Open Agriculture Laboratories

Living Lab AgrolivingLab Aranjuez | Spain

AGROLAB

LABORATORIO DE AGRICULTURA ABIERTA

Aim

The aim is to promote agroecological practices and sustainable food systems at the local level from a multi-stakeholder approach. The LL focuses on sustainability in its three pillars. The socioeconomic dimension consists of the social and labour integration of people who are unemployed or at risk of social exclusion. On the other hand, agriculture is open to the whole municipality and the interested public through open workshops, theme days, and open days. Visits are also made to public schools, so that children can learn where food comes from and get to know the horticultural tradition of the municipality.

In terms of environmental sustainability, we are committed to ecological systems, promoting natural enemies and pollinators, diversifying crops, and making compost.

Background information

The Madrid Institute for Rural, Agricultural and Food Research and Development (IMIDRA) is a research centre under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Madrid Region. IMIDRA is currently involved in several projects focused on agroecology. This Living Lab is a cooperation between local and regional government. It also includes key stakeholders involved in the local food system: farmer association, schools, vocational school for catering, restaurant association of Aranjuez, etc.

Funding structure

This Living lab is a co-founded pilot experience: the plot and technical support are funded by IMIDRA, that means this part is funded by the regional government. Coordination team and facilitators are funded by the local government.

Activities

- Workshops: pests and diseases, soil, planting.
- Both traditional varieties (vegetables and fruits) are tested recovering those

Both traditional varieties vegetables and fruits are tested, recovering those that have fallen into disuse, as well as promising crops that could be a profitable alternative.

- New models of small-scale horticulture are also tested, such as market gardening, with non-tillage methods. Tools are being tested that are tailor-made for this methodology.
- Work is being done on the creation of short channels between production and the gastronomic sector.
- Agro-composting trials are carried out.
- Solar and localised irrigation is used.
- The LL has a multifunctional strip trial for attracting pollinators and natural enemies.
- There is an area of the plot dedicated to the cultivation of mushrooms in the open air as an alternative to traditional crops.
- The LL also participates in a citizen science project on edible wild plants.



Poster of specific calls for thematic workshops. Source: AgrolivingLab Aranjuez



Volunteers participating in the Agrolab in a dairy activity during the spring. Source: Aranjuez





Trial with mushrooms in the Agrolab. Source: Aranjuez

Methods, stakeholder engagements and tools

The local government issues a call at the beginning of the year for people interested in learning about agroecology to sign up. Each week, there are activities in the garden guided by a supervisor. Every month, a specific workshop is organized, led by experts and professionals. These workshops may be exclusively for Agrolab volunteers or open to all local residents. Once a year, a tasting event is held featuring seasonal, organic, and local products. Throughout the year, school groups visit the garden to learn about it. There is collaboration with companies to test and promote technology relevant to agroecological practices. Agrolab gains visibility during local festivals by hosting open house events. It also collaborates with local restaurants and promotes proximity-based commerce activities.

Achievements

Some of the achievements attained can be measured using the following indicators corresponding to the year 2024:

- Weekly activity attendance data: 20 volunteers working every week.
- Technical workshop attendance data: 458 attendees at the open-door events.
- Events held: 20 events conducted.
- School visits conducted: 5 visits to educational institutions.



Volunteers working in the orchard. Source:



Aranjuez



Composting workshop. Source: Aranjuez



School visit. Source



IMiDRA

Instituto Madrileño de Investigación
y Desarrollo Rural, Agrario y Alimentario

Source: Aranjuez

Contact

E-mail:

- José Luis Cruz (Head of Rural Development Department):
joseluis.cruz@madrid.org
- Clara Sabán (Researcher Ecosystem Services): clara.saban@madrid.org



agroecology.ps@ilvo.vlaanderen.be

Useful links

[Disclaimer and Privacy Policy](#)

[Credits](#)

[Contact](#)

[Subscribe to our newsletter](#)

Follow us



[Manage cookies](#)

Coordinator: Projektträger Jülich (Germany) | Co-coordinator: Agence nationale de la recherche, ANR (France)
