



# NEWSLETTER

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## INTRODUCTION PROJECT

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*GOOD: “An Agroecological Weed Management Network for the promotion of sustainable weed management strategies”*

The first European network of agri-food stakeholders dedicated to sustainable agroecological weed management started this year. GOOD covers the main EU pedo-climatic regions and a wide range of representative arable and permanent crops in organic, conventional and mixed farming systems. Core of the project is the monitoring and evaluation of the technical, environmental, social and economic impact of agroecological weed management solutions. The project website can be found at [www.goodhorizon.eu](http://www.goodhorizon.eu).

The ambitions of GOOD are to:

1. Deliver innovative combinations for agroecological weed management in the long-term
2. Develop measures for the management of invasive and competitive weeds
3. Support EU countries in their efforts to reduce the use of herbicides by 50%
4. Create and expand a community of agroecologically conscious people and committed citizens.

## CONCEPT, VISION & OUTCOME

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### Concept

Weeds negatively affect the sustainability of EU farming systems and weed management is relying to a large extent on herbicides. The reduction of pesticide use and risk has become a major policy target of Farm to Fork strategy, aiming to promote agroecology and the transition to sustainable and resilient farming systems. GOOD is a 4-year project adopting a multidisciplinary approach, aspired to create and evaluate Agroecological Weed Management (AWM) systems.

The AWM solutions proposed will be tested (alone & in combinations), evaluated and demonstrated at different locations across Europe in so called Living Labs (LLs). Each LL represents local/regional agronomic realities. Living-Labs (LL) will be co-created with stakeholders and established in 6 EU pedoclimatic conditions in both annual and perennial crops. LL's will test and promote AWM practices in conventional, organic and mixed farming systems. The use and combination of cover crops along with several cultural practices, the use of beneficial microorganisms and digital tools will be assessed towards the agroecological management of weeds and the increase of crop productivity and farmers' income.

#### GOOD will:

- 🌍 create a series of open access tools for various stakeholders including an AWM repository, to foster the uptake of AWM solutions
- 🌍 develop an open access digital AWM Toolbox to assist decision-making for weed management
- 🌍 produce a training module on AWM solutions, to provide 'easy-to-adopt' and 'custom-made' guidelines
- 🌍 formulate Best Practices with quantitative and qualitative evidence of the optimal solutions across the EU
- 🌍 work on scaling-up of GOOD outcomes through policy recommendations and custom-made business models to reduce herbicide input across several European agroecosystems.

#### Outcomes

- (1) Creation of an Agroecological Weed Management Network (AWMN)
- (2) Development and combination of innovative and socioeconomically validated sustainable agroecological practices that will generate social, economic and environmental benefits through the reduction or elimination of chemical inputs and optimized use of natural resources linked to the post EU 2030 targets
- (3) Digitalization of weed management
- (4) Enhancement of the agricultural systems resilience without jeopardizing productivity and profitability.

#### Living Labs in GOOD

The AWM solutions proposed will be tested (alone & in combinations), evaluated and demonstrated at different locations across Europe in so called Living Labs. GOOD will test AWM practices in annual and perennial crops in 16 Living Labs, in 9 European countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, France, Netherlands, Serbia, Latvia).

Table 1: Countries and crops in the Living Labs

Annual crops		Perennial crops	
Country	Crop	Country	Crop
Latvia	Rye and peas	France	Apple and plum
Netherlands	Onion	Spain-Galicia	Apple and grapes
Serbia	Soybean	Spain-Extremadura	Cherry
Serbia	Maize	Portugal	Olives
Italy	Triticale	Italy	Grapes
Greece	Winter wheat	Italy	Citrus
Portugal	Cowpea	Greece	Grapes
Spain	Rice	Cyprus	Olives

## AWM Practices

Each LL selects the AWM practices that are most relevant to the crops they work in. The following practices will be tested in GOOD:

-  Cover crops
-  Intercropping
-  Grazing
-  Mowing
-  Mulching'
-  Mechanical control
-  False seedbed
-  Bio-based herbicides
-  Automated weed control/robots
-  UAV's & spot or site specific spraying
-  Cover crop inoculation

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 PROJECT GOOD

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