

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there's a dense cluster of trees. Behind them, a stone building with a chimney is visible. The landscape is a mix of green fields and wooded areas, with rolling hills in the background under a blue sky.

Farming For Nature Festival

FESTIVAL REPORT

2026

A review of our first Farming For Nature Festival at Ballykilcavan Brewery, Co. Laois. This report demonstrates the impact, reach and outcomes of the festival. It also reflects on what we learned from the event and identifies opportunities to build on its success in future years.



OUR MISSION

The National Farming For Nature Festival is a farmer-led festival that aims to inspire and support the adoption of nature-friendly and regenerative farming practices.



Farming has a vital role in protecting and restoring nature, with Irish farmers already finding practical ways to make a difference. We believe the greatest driver of change is farmers learning from each other. Our festival platforms these leaders to share what works, what hasn't, and lessons learned along the way.



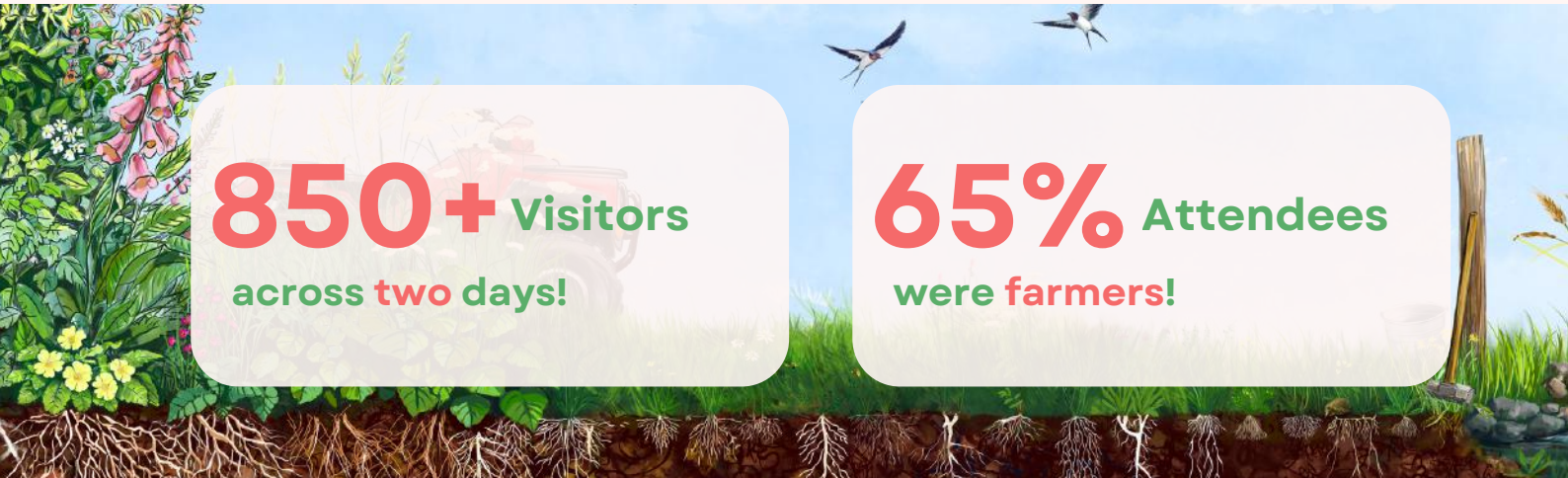
The festival explores both **the why and the how**. It highlights why farming for nature matters—for biodiversity, water, soil health, and society—while demonstrating how to put these principles into practice through honest conversations, real examples, and peer-to-peer learning.



Bringing the community together, it connects farmers, researchers, advisors, and policymakers. By building awareness and strong connections, the festival turns inspiration into action on the ground, creating a lasting platform for greater impact in the years ahead.

2026 FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

The first festival demonstrated a clear appetite for a space where farmers can learn from one another and explore practical ways to farm for nature.



850+ Visitors
across **two** days!

65% Attendees
were **farmers**!

The success of the festival is measured not only by attendance, but **by the impact it had on those who came**. From our visitor feedback the festival showed that bringing people together creates shared learning, collaboration and positive change.

- **93%** Rated the festival as **"Excellent"** or **"Very Good"**.

- **90%** Were **"Likely"** or **"Very Likely to Attend Again"**

- Strong evidence of **increased knowledge and understanding** of regenerative and nature-friendly farming

- Farmers valued **learning directly from other farmers** through practical experiences

- Attendees reported **feeling connected to a wider community of like-minded people**, creating optimism, confidence and hope for the future



Festival Scale & Activities

From farmer-to-farmer learning to practical demonstrations, the inaugural festival brought people, ideas and experiences together, creating a day of discovery, connection and inspiration.

2 Days

Of interactive learning, practical exchanges, and community celebration.

2 Tents

Running farmer led talks (Farming For Nature & BASE Marquees).

63 Speakers

Including farmers, advisors, and practitioners sharing real field experiences.

4 Tasty Talks

Featuring dedicated 'gate to plate' farmer stories followed by local food tastings.

EXPERIENCES IN THE FIELD



4 Dedicated Field Walks

Including pre-event Farm Walks, an overnight bat walk, and a post-dawn chorus bird walk.



10 Practical Field Demos

Hosting dynamic machinery displays and live field sessions on biochar, agroforestry, and hedgerows.



14 Drop-in Mini Demos

Providing interactive technical spaces for soil pits, rainfall simulators, biological seed dressings, and wormeries.

THE FESTIVAL ECOSYSTEM



45 Trade & Environmental Exhibitors

Showcasing diverse industry stands, local organisations, and active farming networks in the main area.



3 Free Advice Clinics

Operating all day in the stableyard via the habitats helpdesk, Irish Seed Savers, and the Hometree horsebox.



4 Gourmet Food Trucks

Serving high-quality, locally sourced catering options inside the central courtyard food court.

Website

Reporting Period: 5 March – 24 June 2026

CORE TRAFFIC INDICATORS

✦ **15K** Active Website Users

✦ **24K** Total Website Sessions

✦ **43K** Total Page Views

On-Site Live Users

✦ **918 active users**

Tracking timetables on the ground (1,400 views on the Full Schedule page).

878 **TICKETS SOLD**
(100% SOLD OUT)

KEY INSIGHT

Hitting our **100% ticket conversion target proved the massive demand for this event.** Moving forward, we will structure the website into a long-term digital asset to maintain our ongoing search visibility and domain traction.



Social Media

Reporting Period: 5 March – 24 June 2026

17,710 Facebook Followers

✦ **(+5% growth)**

Primary channel for interaction volume and direct ticket links.

11,570 Instagram Followers

✦ **(+11% growth)**

Hub for interactive countdown stories and collaborative content.

2,719 LinkedIn Followers

✦ **(+24% growth)**

Strongest growth among agribusiness and professional stakeholders.

CONTENT CREATED

4 Channels Managed

✦ **90 Design** Published

From July 2025 to August 2026

KEY INSIGHT

The campaign's true success was **the massive audience participation.** High levels of comments and peer-to-peer sharing generated unprecedented collaborative engagement across the farming sector.



Who Supported Us In 2026

Presented by **Farming For Nature**, in partnership with **BASE Ireland** and **NOTS**. The success of the **National Farming For Nature Festival 2026** was the result of a collective effort involving event coordinators, project managers, and the operating teams who built this joint platform from the ground up.

This landmark event was strengthened by the invaluable support of over **60 expert speakers and contributors** and the hospitality of **Ballykilcavan Farm & Brewery**. We are also deeply grateful to the **local food, trade, and industry exhibitors**, and the **team of volunteers** who dedicated their time before and during the event.



Turning this vision into reality was made possible through our funders. We gratefully acknowledge our main funders, the **Lifes2good Foundation** and the **Shared Island Civic Society Fund** (€75,000 collectively).

For further support, we thank **Laois County Council** (€2,000), alongside **NPWS** and **DAFM** for their vital operational co-support. Finally, we thank our **Contributing Partners** for aligning their networks and practical expertise to grow this movement on the ground.

Main Funders



Further Support



Contributing Partners





“There was such a wealth of information and resources, and it provided lots of opportunity to network.”

“It was great to hear from so many farmers, and the event truly felt like a farmer-led event.”

“I feel I am a little more empowered to make ourselves useful to a transition to better relationship with nature now”

**“A great opportunity for networking among colleagues and meeting farmers we would not usually get in contact with’
Agricultural Advisor ”**

Farming For Nature
Festival

Interested in **The National Farming For Nature Festival?**

Get in touch to find out more about sponsorship, exhibiting, or attending our next edition in 2027!

- Would you like to **sponsor** the National Farming for Nature Festival 2027? Partner with our network to support farmer-led change. Contact Lydia and we will send you our official 2027 Sponsorship Package.
- Would you like to **exhibit** at the National Farming for Nature Festival 2027? Showcase your business, research, or environmental organization. Email Brigid to join our list and receive future exhibitor updates.
- Would you like to **attend** the National Farming for Nature Festival 2027? Be the first to secure priority access. Go to our website and sign up for the 2027 Early Bird Waitlist to be notified the exact moment tickets drop!



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