

Sustainability Champions



Ian Wilkinson



Tomatoes fed by harvested rainwater



Pizza with regenerative farmed ingredients



Food waste is used for compost

FarmED

Ian Wilkinson, Founder

After eight years of planning and preparation, FarmED opened its doors in 2021 and has already become a multi-award-winning exemplar for agroecology. Founder, Ian Wilkinson tells us about their ethos and work.

Tell us about FarmED

"FarmED is a 107-acre demonstration farm situated in the heart of the Cotswolds. Our facilities include a farm-to-fork café, conference barn and meeting rooms in award-winning buildings, boasting beautiful views across the farm and Evenlode Valley. We offer a range of courses, events and farm walks.

"Everything we do on the farm is centred around agroecology, which is to manage

sustainable agriculture and food systems, including the ecological and social aspects."

How sustainable are your buildings?

"Our buildings were designed to be as sustainable as possible, using materials such as English sheep's wool as insulation, and FSC certified wood. The buildings were designed in such a way to reduce the need for heating, but when it's extremely cold we have an air source

heat pump to power the underfloor heating.

"We use as little electricity as possible, and both buildings have 20m² skylights and full-length windows to let in as much light as possible, which heavily reduces the need to turn the lights on! We have a total of 52 solar panels, which on sunny days produce enough electricity to run the buildings without extra electricity. Our electric car charging point is also powered by solar energy."

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Farm-to-fork café



Electric car charging point



The view towards the Evenlode Valley



Composting



Solar panels

FarmED

continued

Tell us about your sustainable practices

"Water usage is kept to a minimum, but we also harvest rainwater for use on the farm. We compost all food waste and the majority of office waste (paper, cardboard etc), we then use the compost on the fields. We also have a compost loo down by the kitchen garden.

"We grow as much of our food as we can, and this is all farmed with regenerative farming practices. If we do have to buy in extra ingredients, we try our best to only source local, sustainable ingredients.

"Our whole farm has been designed to be as

nature friendly as possible, including wildflower areas around buildings to create safe habitats."

What is Green Tourism and why did you decide to join the scheme?

"Green Tourism is a certification that verifies our 'green' practices. We're very conscious of green washing happening so commonly, and we wanted to make sure we had the evidence to back up what we say we do."

What are you hoping to do next?

"We're always looking to improve and

develop things. We're currently designing the development of two new buildings (replacing falling down ones!) which we're hoping to use hemp as the main building material!"

What quick wins would you suggest to a business starting their own sustainability journey?

"Reducing plastic use is a very quick win! As well as using suppliers that are as sustainable and local as possible."

farm-ed.co.uk

"You've got to be doing it for the right reasons, not just to tick a box. If you're passionate, this will show and you're bound to create something wonderful!"