

THE SILVOPASTORAL AGROFORESTRY TOOLBOX

A.R. Sibbald

The Macaulay Institute, Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen, AB15 8QH, United Kingdom.
(email: a.sibbald@macaulay.ac.uk)

Silvopastoral agroforestry has not been taken up by many farmers in the UK, partly because government funding has not been available and partly because many UK farmers have no experience of such systems or of managing trees on their land.

Changes in the EU's Common Agricultural Policy towards more bio-diverse, environmentally-friendly and sustainable land-use systems should result in future funding for silvopastoral agroforestry. This will still leave the problem of the lack of experience of UK farmers. Consequently, a browser-based, one-stop-shop of information about silvopastoral agroforestry and managing silvopastoral systems has been constructed.

The content of the Toolbox was developed at a workshop using a soft-systems approach involving: farmers who had silvopastoral systems on their farms; forward-looking farmers who had no experience of silvopastoral systems; an agroforestry advisor; a farm-woodland advisor; a professional forester and silvopastoral researchers who facilitated the process and provided background information. The workshop produced the types of information that farmers would require to:

- assess if silvopastoral agroforestry was suitable for their farm and
- set up and manage a silvopastoral system.

The browser-based structure allows farmers to seek the information they require under five initial questions. The links from each of these provide further detailed information, for example, on the pruning of trees using the links:

How easy is it to manage? > Tree management > Post-establishment management > Pruning for quality timber.

The Toolbox is available on the internet:
(http://www.macaulay.ac.uk/agfor_toolbox/) and on a CD-ROM.