

The site is designed to be inclusive, offering tailored opportunities for vulnerable groups, including individuals with physical or mental disabilities. Raised garden beds and a therapeutic garden have been established to stimulate the senses and support sensory needs. Barrier-free access is ensured across the farm, making it accessible to people with limited mobility and parents with strollers. This inclusivity extends to creating a meaningful space for those who may experience social isolation due to the peri-urban location, offering opportunities for social interaction and community-building. The farm also aims to offer practical benefits, such as shared equipment, to local gardeners and continues to engage the community through participatory activities.

The upscalability of the solution is supported by the fact that concrete concept for the expansion of the farm already exist at the pilot site. Subject to obtaining the necessary institutional and financial approval, these plans may enter the implementation phase in the near future.

Overall, the solution contributes to regenerative, climate-conscious, economically viable and socially inclusive urban development, offering a replicable and upscalable model that supports sustainable land use and counters urban sprawl across the region.

5.1.2 Testing circularity, social cohesion, education based UF scenario (Turin)

The pilot Cascina Falchera builds on an already established urban farm site, which has been further developed and enhanced through the CoFarm4Cities project, and is a unique example of a multifunctional urban farm in the Metropolitan area of Turin. Implementation via CoFarm4Cities project aimed to create a space where all individuals of the community – schools, young people, children and adults – can be part of urban Community Gardens, a space to protect and foster biodiversity starting from the community.

The pilot site is used from different angles as a lively example of various modalities of agriculture and circularity practices, and offers new opportunities to produce and consume locally-produced organic vegetables and fruits on a private level. The focus point is to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to residents who do not have easy access to these products or the economic means to purchase them. For the future, it represents a big potential for an internal restaurant that will be set up in the farmhouse, where it will be possible to use locally-produced ingredients, reducing food waste while showcasing different ways to consume such fresh products.



Key elements of the solution

5.1.2.1 Protection and enhancement of peri-urban landscape, soils and biodiversity

The Cascina Falchera pilot transitions from intensive monoculture to sustainable, environmentally responsible farming. Soil quality was restored through mechanical aeration and organic amendments, while sustainable cultivation practices—minimum tillage, organic fertilisation, mulching, and pest management—are applied in the urban garden. On the main agricultural land, crop rotation with ancient wheat and maize varieties, combined with cover crops, supports soil fertility and ecosystem resilience.

Water management leverages the historic spring-fed irrigation channel and an automated drip system that adjusts to seasonal conditions, optimising efficiency and minimising waste. Environmental and ecological monitoring, supported by the University of Turin, ensures alignment with biodiversity and green infrastructure goals. Land is allocated to buffer strips, food forests, shrubs and tree lines, while native crop varieties are reintroduced, enhancing genetic diversity and local ecosystem resilience. All measures collectively promote sustainable food production, soil and water quality, and overall environmental and community well-being.

5.1.2.2 Circular solutions at Cascina Falchera

The Cascina Falchera pilot applies a circular economy approach to create a resilient and self-sustaining urban farm. The economic model combines diversified revenue streams, including socially differentiated plot fees, sales of seedlings, short food supply chains with local actors, and income from educational activities. Initial investment and operational costs are supported by EU funds and private foundations, while local employment is generated through garden management, maintenance, and training roles.

Resource used within the farm follows circular principles: vegetable seeds are collected and reused for subsequent planting cycles, and crop residues and food waste are composted to produce nutrient-rich soil amendments. Automated irrigation and expert guidance support efficient, low-impact operations. Training programs and workshops engage the community in circular farming practices, seed conservation, and sustainable land management.

By integrating indigenous seed varieties, circular resource management, community involvement, and educational initiatives, the pilot ensures both environmental sustainability and long-term economic viability, strengthening the farm's role as a social, educational, and ecological asset.

5.1.2.3 Social inclusion, environmental education and community well-being

A central element of the Cascina Falchera pilot is the active involvement of the community in decision-making and agricultural practices, fostering a sense of belonging and enabling locally adapted solutions. Communal gardening sessions engage families, friends, and youth volunteers in maintaining shared areas and exchanging knowledge, while a year-round calendar of educational and social activities targets children, schools, and broader community groups. Collaboration with ITER and local educators provides hands-on learning experiences in agriculture, biology, and ecology, and workshops on sustainable farming, organic gardening, and environmental stewardship reinforce practical skills.

The farm dedicates plots to NGOs and vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, unemployed individuals, young families, and other disadvantaged citizens, offering reduced fees and access incentives. Guidelines on sustainable and safe gardening practices ensure environmental protection and community well-being, complemented by monthly recreational and health promotion activities. These initiatives collectively strengthen social inclusion, environmental awareness, and community cohesion.

Overall, the combines permaculture-based farming, circular resource management, diversified revenue streams, and active community engagement to create a resilient, sustainable, and socially inclusive urban farm that supports biodiversity, environmental education, and local well-being.



5.1.3 Testing a mixed-use UF scenario (Krakow)

The Krakow pilot within the CoFarm4Cities project represents a mixed-use urban farming model developed on municipal land, integrating environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and economic viability. The initiative transforms underutilized urban green space into a new gardening model that combines allotment gardening with a community-managed mini urban farm, led primarily by allotment holders. This new model contributes to sustainable land use, urban resilience, and improved quality of life for residents.

The project is aligned with the city's strategic framework, particularly the "Directions for the development and management of green areas in Krakow for the years 2019–2030", and reflects broader European objectives such as the EU Green Deal and Agenda 2030.

The pilot site, located on Orla Street, is managed through a collaborative governance model involving the Kraków Municipal Green Authority (ZZM) and a selected non-governmental organization acting as the site operator.