

Agroforestry Research Trust, Devon

Martin Crawford runs the Agroforestry Research Trust in south Devon, a pioneering charity that promotes and researches agroforestry systems for UK conditions. There are two sites, an eight acre nut and fruit tree trials site and a two acre forest garden.

The forest garden was chosen for the carbon calculation to try and work out the potential for these systems to absorb carbon. Because this system is mature, the plants are perennials and the forest garden is designed to have very little maintenance, the emissions from the business were minimal. The largest emissions source was actually the embodied energy in mains water used on site.

Martin was surprised however just how much carbon was being absorbed by the plants and soil in the forest garden. He knew it was going to be very significant, but wasn't aware just how much carbon the trees were drawing down. Fortunately he had some soil organic matter samples and this proved just how much the system was building organic matter levels in the soil.



Martin Crawford



Multi-layer productive forest garden

This information further strengthens Martin's assertion that agroforestry systems will be a crucial part of a sustainable and low carbon future.

The Agroforestry Research Trust has a wealth of information to tap in to and also supplies a huge range of plants and seeds. Visit www.agroforestry.co.uk