



HuMUS - WP4 pilot projects

Gezer Agricultural Soil Regeneration *Pilot project n.356 - Gezer regional council, Israel*

Publishable summary

The Gezer Regional Council pilot, *Gezer Agricultural Soil Regeneration*, is an ongoing process that is beginning to transform local agriculture toward a regenerative, soil-health-oriented system through a participatory governance approach.

Gezer is a highly agrarian regional council in central Israel, where farmland represents 67% of its territory. Facing climate challenges such as soil erosion, declining fertility, and increasing climatic extremes, the council recognized that long-term resilience requires embedding soil health into local governance and farmer practices alike.

During this year of the HuMUS pilot, the council and its partners launched a multi-stakeholder process that is already showing tangible initial results. Farmers, council staff, and external agencies came together in new ways, building trust, co-developing practical solutions, and starting to integrate soil health into everyday agricultural management.

Key actions included:

- Multi-stakeholder mapping and participatory workshops, involving farmers, council staff, national agencies, drainage authorities, and citizens.
- Establishment of “Study Circles” for agricultural soil health and agroecology, connecting farmers’ knowledge with scientific expertise.
- Identification of three soil priorities: erosion control, soil organic matter enhancement, and soil structure improvement.
- Development of operational council mechanisms: an agricultural coordinator, an active agricultural committee, and a cross-departmental roundtable.
- Drafting and adoption of the Gezer Agricultural convention (TMA), publicly signed in June 2025.
- Farmer training and demonstration farms, supporting peer-to-peer learning in regenerative agroecological practices.

These steps mark only the beginning of a long-term transformation. The pilot year has already created visible changes: a new atmosphere of trust and dialogue between farmers and the council, practical experimentation with regenerative practices, and stronger institutional recognition of agriculture as a strategic lever for resilience. Yet the broader vision - a systemic, soil-centered agricultural transition, will take several more years of commitment and partnership to fully unfold.

Other regional councils in Israel are taking notice. Presentations of the Gezer experience in national forums and conferences have sparked interest, as the pilot offers not a finished model, but a living process of change from which others can learn.



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