



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 61

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**In Flanders, is there a relationship between types of farmers and advisory providers in the decision-making process?**

The H2020 project AgriLink studied the AKIS (Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems) of around 100 farmers in Flanders, Belgium. The AKIS of most farmers was quite similar, also it is not really possible to relate differences in farm characteristics to differences in the role of advice in decision-making based on this survey. One difference that did stand out, however, was the regional presence of Inagro (a local advisory department of the Ministry of Agriculture) in West-Flanders. Almost all farmers from this region were advised by this organisation about a variety of topics and the farmers were generally very pleased with their support. Yet despite this small regional difference, most farmers would seek advice from similar advisory actors about the same topics, regardless whether they were old or young or whether their farms were large or small. We don't see new business models of advisory services. The classical method of one-to-one advice in person still was the most popular form of advice provision and the awareness was often triggered by reading magazines or visiting fairs. Hence although farmers do use the internet a lot for inquiries, the older methods remain very prominently present as well. However, the fact that some of the farmers who had installed a technical solution on their farms organised themselves in a group on Facebook (<https://bit.ly/3aNHG6T>). This small example of digitization in agriculture was helpful for sharing knowledge between farmers fast, and jointly discussing problems and opportunities. The emergence of such groups enables farmers to gain easy and free access to highly relevant information.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Extra links:

Website Inagro: <https://www.inagro.be/>

Description Inagro:

Inagro organises practical research tailored to the agricultural and horticulturalist. With advice and personal guidance they help farmers in the development of their farm. With research into new crops and new techniques, Inagro is an innovative force in the sector. On more than 80 test fields, spread throughout the province of West- Flanders, their specialists look for better cultivation techniques and assess new varieties.



## ABOUT AGRILINK

AgriLink is a multi-actor project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. It brings together 16 partners from 13 countries, including universities, applied research institutes, advisors and consultants from public organisations, private SMEs, a farmer-based organisation and specialists in communication and distance learning.

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All the Practice Abstracts prepared by the AgriLink project in the EIP-AGRI common format can be found here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/find-connect/projects/agrilink-agricultural-knowledge-linking-farmers>