



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 80

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Connecting two countries in a living lab

Part of the [Dutch-Belgian living lab](#) was to find out if the new advisory services – like the catch crop decision tree – developed in the Netherlands would be relevant in the Belgian context. In total, there were six exchanges with Flemish stakeholders. The most important learnings were:

- The legislation on both sides of the border is the same and the various advisory products developed in the Netherlands already exist in Flanders, but the implementation differs;
- The AgriLink project has generated a great deal of interest on both sides of the border among the various stakeholders for the exchange of knowledge and to know each other better. Cross-border visits between individual stakeholders have been planned, but may be affected by the pandemic;
- In general, cross-border exchange is complicated by the lack of small-scale Flemish-Dutch projects to tackle matters like prevention of nitrate leaching;
- Cross-border collaboration calls for choices to be made regarding definition and measuring: Taking for example the amount of carbon in the soil, in the Netherlands they measure in organic matter, while in Flanders they measure in organic carbon (there is a difference of 50%);
- Comparing how the decision tree was developed in the Netherlands versus Flanders has contributed to learning about living labs and co-creation.

Co-creation is one of the 5 characteristics of a living lab. Ideally stakeholders work together for a common goal, but the reality is that different stakeholders have different interests. In the Netherlands, this resulted in three decision trees. In Flanders, all stakeholders could express their wishes, but a small team, including a neutral expert, made the final decisions. The result is one decision tree with general consensus.

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COUNTRY/REGION:

BELGIUM/
FLANDERS

KEY WORDS:

#crossbordercollaboration,
#Innovationdecisionmaking,
#PeertoPeerlearning,
#FarmersAKIS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A field meeting

On 20 November, a field meeting took place at the Vredepeel test center with the theme "Catch crop 2019, how did you tackle it?". The day was organized within the framework of the Grondig Boeren met Maïs project by WUR | Open Crops and one of the other project: Agrifirm. Innovatiesteunpunt and the Belgian stakeholders were there.

In the Netherlands, maize growers are obliged to sow a catch crop to retain nitrate and prevent leaching. The catch crop must also be sown before 1 October. This means that if the catch crop is sown afterwards, the maize must be off the land before October 1.

Within the context of Dutch legislation on making maize cultivation more sustainable, a maize grower has three questions to ask himself today:

- How do I ensure a good yield from my corn? The target is 20 tons of maize per hectare
- How do I ensure that it is clean and that there are not too many weeds?



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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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 727577.

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>