



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 15

AUTHOR(S):

Egil Petter Straete

RURALIS – Institute for Rural and Regional Research

How do organisations of advisory services ‘learn’?

A company offering advisory services for farmers is an example of an organisation. Organisations can be regarded as systems comprised of the actors involved, their social relations, and their mutual dependency. Organisational knowledge is shared by multiple individuals and is more than the sum of each individual’s knowledge. Innovation is important for advisory services, and innovation implies change. To achieve change in an organisation, the organisation must be able to develop new knowledge and learn; however, innovation is not limited to a single action but is instead a process that is concerned with how the actors influence each other. To create something new involves breaking up established routines and conventions in organisations. The legitimacy associated with established practices must be replaced with new legitimacy and practices. Organisational learning is about being able to challenge established routines, produce new knowledge, and establish new routines. Routines are the links between the process and the structure. The practical recommendation is to be aware of the often taken for granted routines and question why and what an organisation is doing to be able to change and develop new routines. The organisation of advisory services is important for development of advisory products and implementation of new knowledge into the farming community, thus organisational learning is essential. Approaches from organisational learning theory can be applied to explore and explain how organisations work with innovation, and how organisations can improve their ability to learn and innovate.

CONTACTS:

egil.petter.strate@ruralis.no

www.ruralis.no

COUNTRY/REGION:

Norway

Trøndelag and Sogn og Fjordane

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This Practice Abstract is derived from one of 27 Theory Primers that support the conceptual framework which underpins the AgriLink project. Each Theory Primer introduces a specific theoretical topic in the conceptual framework and is intended primarily for academic readers. The Practice Abstracts derived from each Theory Primer aim to make these topics more accessible and understandable to a wider non-academic audience.

The AgriLink Conceptual Framework and all Theory Primers can be found here: <https://www.agrilink2020.eu/our-work/conceptual-framework/>



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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twitter.com/agrilink2020



pierre.labarthe@inra.fr

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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>