



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 1

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Facilitating farmer decision-making: how can advisors make the greatest impact?

Micro-level agricultural knowledge and innovation systems (micro-AKIS) are the knowledge systems that farmers personally assemble. Research shows that farmers are more receptive to innovations and new ideas at particular points in time. Farms are 'path dependent', following a steady trajectory most of the time. Farmers accumulate information during this phase, but typically give it minimal attention. It is through a 'trigger event' (a major change in perception or circumstance e.g. succession, financial losses, new opportunities) that the farm decision maker(s) start to actively acquire information and seek out options for change. New innovations are actively considered and evaluated, and then implemented. The implementation phase is fragile, while the innovation is adapted for on-farm implementation and new knowledge is being consolidated. Once the new pathway is well established, the farm returns to path dependency. Advisors can play a role at any stage: general awareness-raising during the path dependency stage, active advice provision during active assessment and implementation. Advisors are particularly important during the development of innovation implementation, when farmers are actively seeking new information (see also <https://agrispin.eu/>). Advisors may also be part of a trigger event, making farmers aware of particular activities or performance issues (e.g. accountants reporting poor financial returns may encourage farmers to make a change). Recommendation: Advisory service provision will have the highest impact during responses to key events, such as farm succession, subsidy changes, and input or commodity price fluctuations.

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COUNTRY/REGION:

Not applicable

KEY WORDS:

#advisory system for cooperative support, #multi-stakeholder, #participatory process, #financial, #co-creation

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/>

More info:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0264837716311280>



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>