



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 22

How farmers assemble knowledge for innovation

Farms are often thought of as part of systems (i.e. a set of parts working together as a whole). For example, the notion of 'agricultural knowledge and innovation systems' (AKIS) implies that there is a defined set of actors who communicate with farmers. However, farmers have many other interactions with different people (i.e. family and friends) and different forms of interaction (listen to the radio, watch TV etc.). All of these interactions provide knowledge and generate innovations. The concept of 'assemblage' recognises that individuals interact with different actors and their resources through constantly changing configurations. It enables each of these actors and their resources to be considered on its own (i.e. rather than solely for the knowledge they provide to farmers). Assemblage thinking also takes geography and physical resources into consideration (e.g. distance to travel to access information, differential internet access). Thus, assemblage theory enables progression beyond the 'systems thinking' of AKIS, to acknowledge the role of different actors and technologies in mediating knowledge flows. Thinking of AKIS as a system raises a question about why the system components are not working together well. Thinking about assemblage raises questions about who and what are playing a role in knowledge exchange and innovation, and how the behaviour of these elements is influenced.

For more information see: <https://www.agrilink2020.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/AgriLink-conceptual-framework.-Theory-primers.10.pdf>

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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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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>