



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 23

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What is AKIS?

An agricultural knowledge system (AKS) refers to the collection of agricultural information providers, the flows of information between them, and the institutions regulating these relations. It traditionally referred to farmers, support systems, educators, researchers and advisors, but has been broadened to include other actors (e.g. input suppliers, retailers). The term has also evolved from 'Agricultural Knowledge and Information System' to 'Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System' (both acronyms are AKIS), to emphasise the importance of innovation. Both are frameworks for identifying the different actors and their roles in innovation and knowledge exchange within the agricultural sector, rather than theories or approaches. Academics who use the term AKIS typically integrate it with another theory (e.g. relating to governance or systems) when undertaking empirical research, to increase its explanatory power. The concept of AKIS was developed by academics specifically interested in agricultural knowledge and communication. They aimed to promote the idea that innovation processes are social: farmers, advisors and researchers exchange and produce knowledge in conjunction with a number of sources. The practical implication is that to stimulate innovation towards sustainable agriculture it is not sufficient to target farmers alone. Farmers are influenced by a diversity of actors and using the AKIS concept can help to better understand the reciprocal influences. The concept can thus be used in a reflexive way by to think about the critical relations or networks for supporting innovation in various contexts. For more informatio see [here](#).

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Not Applicable

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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>