



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 69

The role of informal advice on innovation for sustainability (example of Italy, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands)

Within the AgriLink project the role of advisory services in support of innovation was investigated for different innovation types, in order to identify effective ways for providing advice to farmers. Innovations for environmental sustainability are particularly challenging to be spread, as they are not necessarily ensuring high profitability for the farmers. This type of innovation does not always provide immediate benefits for the adopters. Three case studies implemented in Italy, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic were focused on the introduction of soil management practices for different crops aimed at improving soil quality, such as non-inverse tillage and use of cover crops. These practices allow the reduction of soil compaction and erosion, better water management, increase of soil organic matter. The introduction of these techniques on farms in the three countries was not driven by business actors or advisors linked to input providers. In Italy as well as in the Netherlands, regardless of the historically different advisory landscapes, it came out that for many adopters the decision to implement or even to try out the innovation was related mostly to the practical experience and sensibility to environmental issues as demonstrated first by a peer farmer, followed by advice from a “professional” private advisor. Even in the Czech Republic, where the uptake of the innovation was mainly supported by governmental measures forcing farmers to fulfil GAEC 5 (the requirement for soil protection), the important role of informal networks was observed. Peer-to-peer approach on farmers’ level therefore seems promising in enhancing innovation for sustainable agriculture.

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KEY WORDS:

Sustainability, cover crops, informal advice, peer-to-peer learning

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More info : <https://www.agrilink2020.eu/our-work/innovation-case-studies/>



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>