



Methods of Farmer Engagement



Background

The University of Lincoln, ADAS and Anglian Water are involved in a European H2020 project - FAIRWAY: *Farm systems management and governance for producing good water quality for drinking water supplies*, with a focus on nitrates and pesticides.



FAIRWAY

Integral to the project are the Case Studies; for England, the Anglian Region Case Study is a social science approach to understanding farmer motivation for uptake of 'best practice' to reduce agricultural diffuse pollution.

Anglian Water catchment advisers currently use **two main farmer engagement methods** to encourage best management practices (BMP) for on farm pesticides i) knowledge transfer through 'network engagements', ii) 'ecosystem payment systems' - product substitution (Ferric Phosphate) and offset payments to cover increased farmer costs.

In a **third catchment**, innovative approaches to farmer engagement were piloted using a **multiactor platform approach**.



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Multi Actor Platform (MAP) Development

The farmer engagement 'market' with stakeholders in England is mature and busy, so rather than creating an 'new' MAP, it was decided by the project team to build on the **existing structures, organisations and experts in the Cringle Brook area**. To date the key learnings for the MAP development are:

- MAPS need to be fluid addressing **current farmer issues/needs** and also to develop **innovative platforms** going forward
- The **core MAP personnel** need to be **evolving and empathetic to farmer/industry needs** and adaptable and knowledgeable of wider network.
- Needs **purposeful engagement** and a **exemplary facilitator**
- Focus and upskill **trusted advisors and the wider industry** so we all provide the same message to the farmer.

The MAP development in the case study area, to date has been successful, with **two Knowledge and Innovation Days (KID) events held in 2018 and 2020**; these were informed and designed based on farmer's requests.

The next phase of the MAP is to extend the farmer led engagement process in the Cringle Brook/South Lincolnshire, seek to embed the KID event in the industry, and create a wider forum to exchange thoughts and processes on successful farmer engagement, which needs to encompass farmers' ideas on how they could engage more in the process.

For more information about the work of the University of Lincoln visit:

<https://agrifoodtech.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/>.

To go to the FAIRWAY project homepage please visit:

<https://www.fairway-project.eu/>



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