The digitalisation of agriculture – Challenges for advisory services.

Professor Tom Kelly, Director Knowledge Transfer, Teagasc, Oak Park, Carlow, Ireland

Sustainable digital transformation of the agricultural value chain
BMEL EURAGRI
I am going to

- Briefly explain who I am and what I do.
- Explain the context of digitalisation of advisory services and Teagasc.
- How international cooperation in the FAIRshare project is helping advisory services
- What have we learned about advisors and farmers and the challenges they face in this digital world.
- Some take home messages
Location & Staff

52 Advisory offices
4 Teagasc colleges
3 Private colleges
7 Research Centres

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<th>Perm.</th>
<th>Con.</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>227</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisors</td>
<td>240</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<td>Specialists</td>
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(1,228)

760 Professional staff who interact with the Irish AKIS daily.
Global Advisory Digitalisation Drivers

- Increased acceptance of digital tools and services by farmers as part of all services including Ag. extension.
- Demand from farmers for better more specific advice and decision support. (pull factors)
- Demand from advisors for new ways to support farmer decision making. (pull factors)
- Demand from policy makers and society for more information relating to agricultural production and quality of products. (push factor)
- Demand more efficient process administration from government and industry. (e-government etc.) (push)
- The advance of low cost digital technology (pull)

2020 Covid19 – A giant leap in digital extension
Question?

Digitalisation of advisory/extension work a substitute or an aid?

Digital technologies are substitutes for farm extension activities and will replace on farm advisors in future

or

Digital technologies will improve the efficacy and quality of extension services and strengthen farm advisors
Findable, Available, Interoperable, Reusable and Shareable


Topics: RUR-13-2018: Enabling the farm advisor community to prepare farmers for the digital age

Coordination and Support Action (CSA)
**FAIRshare Introduction: Ambition and Challenge**

- **Why = Digital Divide?**
  - Farmer - the non user to the best user
  - Advisor
  - Other supply chain actors

- **What to achieve?**
  - More farmers participating in Digital Age

- **How?**
  - Sharing – adapting - learning from each other
    - Digital Advisory Tools & Services (DATS)
    - Expertise of those that develop and use
    - Motivation/attitudes of advisors and farmers

Digital Advisory Tools and Services (DATS)
Outcomes:
- A fully functional Permanent Networking Facility, with multiple functionalities, accessible to all
Good Practice in Digital Tools and Services

Focus on WHAT, HOW, WHERE, WHO and WHY

Good Practices

Key Success Factors

Success Stories

Lessons Learned

Focus on WHAT
Understanding advisors and farmers needs

Includes digital solutions to every day problems and characteristics of user attractive interfaces with Digital Agriculture applications

Results of surveys, focus group and workshops
FAIRshare 2020 advisors survey
What Type of DATS do advisors use? n=630
(FAIRshare D3.2 Miron (2020))

- e-mail, phone and text (SMS): 526
- Social Media: 220
- Webinars /Farminsars: 215
- Chats, fora/messaging groups: 165
- Analysis & benchmarking tools: 117
- Did not offer any DATS: 25
2020 FAIRshare advisors survey \( n=583 \)
(FAIRshare D3.2 Miron (2020))

The degree to which advisors personalise their services

- Less than 20%: 147
- 20% to 50%: 55
- 50% to 80%: 143
- More than 80%: 249
2020 FAIRshare Advisors survey n = 583
(FAIRshare D3.2 Miron (2020))

Source of Data used in digital services

- Manual input: 442
- IOT: 210
- Administrative: 219
- Third party: 126
2020 FAIRshare advisors survey  n=571
(FAIRshare D3.2 Miron (2020))

% of Farmer clients who use of DATS

- 185 clients use DATS less than 20%
- 156 clients use DATS 20% to 50%
- 152 clients use DATS 50% to 80%
- 86 clients use DATS more than 80%
Key conclusions from farmer and advisor surveys
(FAIRshare D3.2 Miron (2020))

- Farmers and advisors have preference for digital tools the support personalised advisory services
- They have similar expectations in term of benefits
- Both groups are challenged by the investment needed (time, cost and learning effort)
- Advisors lack a reliable reference or source for their DATS
- Farmers are influenced to use DATS by advisors and other farmers
- Advisors recognise that they need training, they prefer in person training i.e. offline
- Interoperability is an issue for both groups

THANK YOU