



Awareness raising campaign on AKIS in the Netherlands

Why do European organisations consider this important? What are the opportunities for the main players (advisors, trainers, knowledge brokers, researchers, teachers, etc.) in AKIS? Which new cooperation and connections can emerge? “We are seeing that the term AKIS (Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System) is used more and more in our network, however it is still unclear to many people what it actually means,” explains Thamar Kok from the Dutch Network Support Unit. “We decided to organise a series of webinars that answers these questions”.

The Southern Agriculture Organisation (ZLTO), Wageningen University and Research (WUR), the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food quality and the NSU teamed up to prepare this initiative in Spring 2022. These partners felt it was important to provide more information on AKIS, as in the Netherlands, as well as in all EU Member States, national AKIS are part of the CAP Strategic Plans 2023-2027.



Three short webinars were held over the period of five weeks. Each webinar was deliberately short, and dealt with a different angle regarding AKIS, and included different AKIS players as speakers. The first dealt with the general context and objectives of AKIS, the second was about the components of AKIS and knowledge development and the final one was about AKIS seen from the farmer's perspective.

Thamar Kok “The idea was to present AKIS from a bird's eye view, from different perspectives and then challenge the participants to explore their own interests and possible contribution to these systems. We encouraged them to think about how reinforcing AKIS could affect their work, what role they can play in Dutch and European AKIS, how they could concretely collaborate with the various parties in the innovation ecosystem.”

During one of the webinars for example, Paul Daniels of the Organisation of Farm Advisors presented the agricultural consultancy landscape in the Netherlands, both positive and negative aspects He talked about how advisors work in a complex environment and are connected to the world of research and education. His organisation supports them in terms of quality assurance and impartiality.

In another webinar, Remko Lette, knowledge broker at Groen Kennisnet, talked about the role of his organisation in accessing knowledge and innovation. Groen Kennisnet is working on sustainable storage of knowledge, access to knowledge and knowledge dissemination. They have been cooperating with EU FarmBook.

Arable farmer Piet Hermus also made a presentation “I get the necessary knowledge from agricultural journals, different types of advisors and my own experience. Change is a constant, you cannot stand still. I find the exchange of knowledge with colleagues during demo projects essential, for example about non-inversion tillage and new fertilisers.”



About 30 people attended each webinar, and the recordings have been watched by many more. The organisers felt they achieved their goal as AKIS is a new concept for many people, but what the concept includes is not new, and this was successfully presented. One of the participants said "AKIS is a term for something we already do. By giving it a name it helps us to better understand how it works, where there are blank spots and how to act better."

Thamar Kok "The webinars gave us a lot of information about what we, as Network Support Unit, can do about AKIS in the next CAP programme. It has also connected us with new AKIS players. In the future we want to strengthen these connections between the AKIS players, among other things, via the CAP network."

Another participant said "Sharing knowledge is not a top-down process. Because farmers already have a lot of knowledge, sharing knowledge between farmers must be central".

More information

- Further information and recordings:
<https://www.netwerkplatteland.nl/samenwerken/netwerkactiviteiten/webinars-akis-wat-is-het-en-wat-kan-je-ermee>