



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority

Empowering Farmers Through Direct Marketing and Diversification

What is AKIS?

Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) enable the flow of knowledge and innovation between farmers, advisors, researchers, and policymakers.

Why Direct Marketing?

Increases farmers' income by connecting directly with consumers.
Builds trust and transparency in the food supply chain.

The Role of Diversification:

Reduces reliance on traditional farming income.
Examples - Renewable energy, agritourism, organic production, and value-added products.

Irish Success Stories

Farmers embracing renewable energy projects.
Local food markets and farm shops empowering rural communities.

Modernising Agriculture with AKIS

Definition of AKIS

A network of people, organisations, and institutions sharing knowledge and promoting innovation in agriculture.

Purpose of AKIS

Facilitate the exchange of ideas and solutions.

Bridge the gap between research, advisory services, and practical application on farms.

How AKIS Empowers Farmers

Provides tools and knowledge to adapt to

Market changes (e.g., consumer preferences, direct sales).

Sustainability challenges (e.g., climate change, resource efficiency).

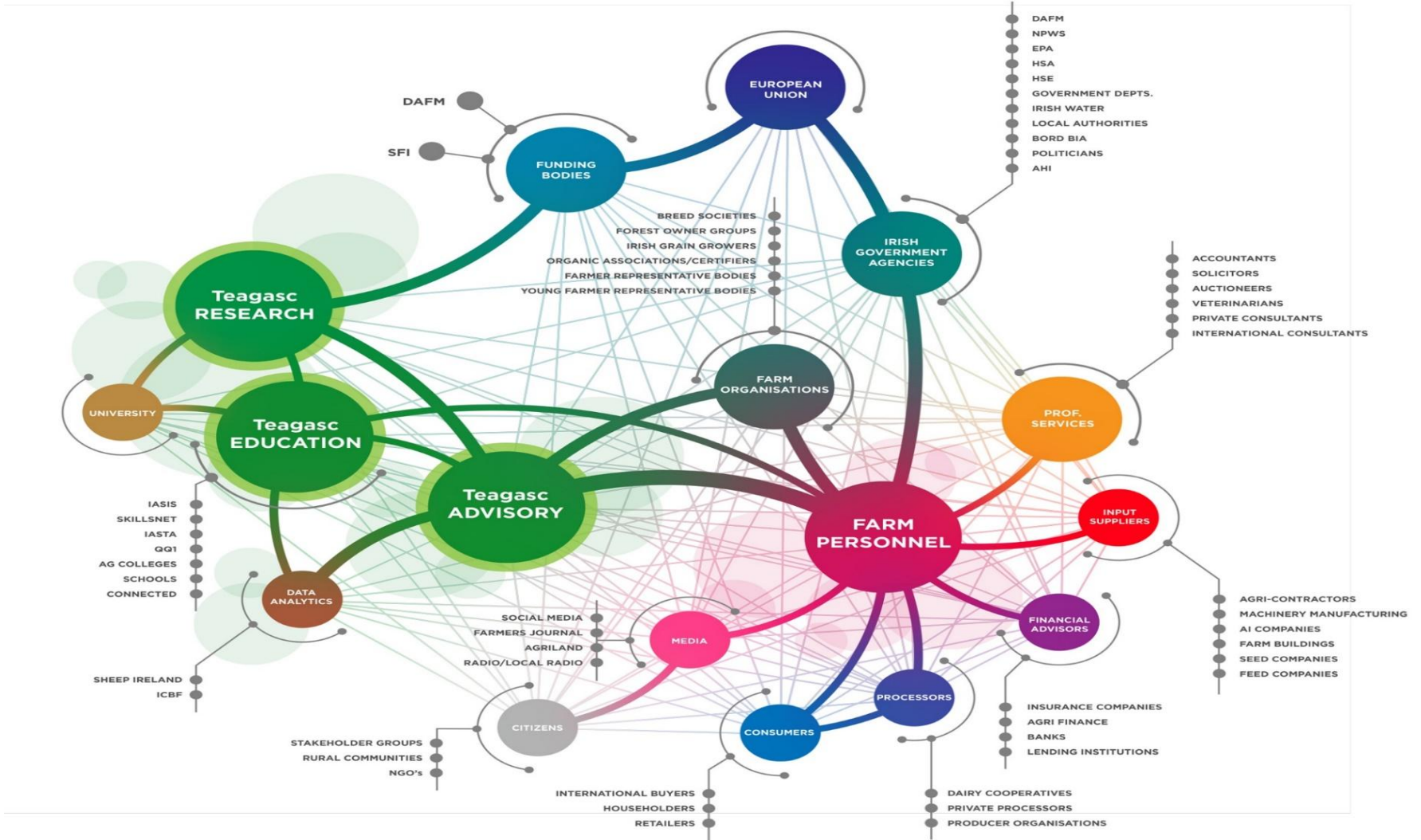
Promotes collaboration to solve real-world farming problems.

AKIS in Action

Connecting farmers with advisors and researchers.

Supporting innovation through training, workshops, and peer learning.

Teagasc AKIS



Challenges in Agriculture

Low Share of Value

Farmers retain only a small portion of supply chain profits.

Market Fragmentation

Small producers struggle to access markets and negotiate prices.

Rising Costs

Increased input costs strain profitability.

Climate Change Impacts

Extreme weather and sustainability requirements add pressure.

Need for Innovation

Solutions are required to address these barriers and create resilience.

Direct Marketing - A Path to Higher Farmer Incomes

What is Direct Marketing?

Farmers sell directly to consumers, bypassing intermediaries.

Benefits for Farmers

Capture a larger share of the value chain.

Build stronger relationships with local consumers.

Adapt products to meet consumer preferences.

Examples of Direct Marketing

Farmers' markets.

Local food networks and cooperatives.

Online platforms and farm vending machines.

The Role of AKIS in Supporting Farmers

Key Ways AKIS Empowers Farmers

Targeted Advisory Services - Tailored advice to help farmers adopt new strategies.

Peer-to-Peer Learning - Farmers sharing knowledge and experiences.

Access to Innovation - Tools, methods, and research for sustainable farming.

Teagasc Support in Ireland

Farm Business Options Programme - Explores diversification opportunities and new income streams.

Collaborative Farming Programme - Encourages collective action for shared success.

Outcome

Farmers develop sustainable, resilient business models tailored to modern challenges.

Farmers' Markets - A Foundation for Direct Marketing

Direct Connection to Consumers

Farmers sell directly, bypassing intermediaries to maximise income.

Increased Farm Gate Returns

Boosts profitability by capturing a larger share of the value chain.

Community Relationships

Builds trust and loyalty with local consumers.

Consumer Feedback

Helps farmers tailor products to better meet local demand.

Collaborative Networks for Enhanced Market Reach

What Are Collaborative Networks?

Small-scale producers pool resources to improve competitiveness and market access.

Example: West Cork Food and Drink Initiative

- Unites producers under a shared brand.
- Increases visibility and market reach.
- Strengthens regional market competitiveness.

How AKIS Supports

- Facilitates the creation of networks.
- Provides advisory services to enhance collaboration.
- Encourages knowledge sharing and innovation.

Renewable Energy as a Diversification Tool

Renewable Energy on Farms

Adoption of solar panels, biomass heating, and anaerobic digestion systems.
Reduces energy costs and generates additional income.

Collaborative Projects

Community energy initiatives enhance sustainability and profitability.

How AKIS Supports Farmers

Provides expert advice on renewable energy integration.
Connects farmers with funding opportunities and technical resources.

Case Study - The Burren Ecotourism Network

Location: County Clare, Ireland.

What is It?

A network of farmers diversifying into ecotourism while maintaining agricultural activities.

Key Features

Combines sustainability, tourism, and agriculture.

Promotes local produce and unique visitor experiences.

Why It Matters

Showcases how place-based solutions drive rural development.

Demonstrates the role of AKIS in fostering innovation and collaboration.

Peer-to-Peer Learning for Knowledge Sharing

What is Peer-to-Peer Learning?

Farmers sharing experiences, ideas, and solutions with one another.

<https://teagasc.ie/rural-economy/rural-development/options-programme/>

Why It Works

Builds trust and practical knowledge.

Encourages co-creation of solutions to shared challenges.

Key Benefits

Fosters communities of practice.

Promotes collective action to address fragmentation.

Strengthens connections and a sense of shared purpose.

Empowering Farmers Through AKIS

Transformative Role of AKIS

Supports farmers in direct marketing and diversification.

Provides targeted advice, fosters collaboration, and drives innovation.

Building Resilience

Strengthens farmers' ability to adapt to changing markets and sustainability challenges.

Call to Action

Continue building networks and sharing knowledge.

Work together to empower farmers and create sustainable futures.



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Thank you for you attention!



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