



MAGRSC INNOVATION SUPPORT PROGRAMME 2015-2017



Study title: BETTER Sheep Farm Focus Group - An assessment knowledge and practice change

Student: Martin Mulkerrins

Supervisors: Mr. Michael Gottstein and Dr. Bridget Lynch

Office location: Athenry

Objectives/Research Questions

- To identify the influence of practice change in terms of sustainability, productivity and profitability on the BETTER Sheep Farms.
- To quantify the ease of adoption for various technologies on the BETTER farms and to identify, if any, the supports required to enhance the adoption of these technologies.



Objectives/Research Questions

- To identify if the BETTER farm sheep programme has an influence on sheep farmers in discussion groups in terms of practice change.
- To assess advisors perspective regarding the BETTER farmer's influences on practice change and the supports the farmers require.



Thesis Structure / Chapters

- ▣ Chapter 1: Introduction
- ▣ Chapter 2: Literature Review
- ▣ Chapter 3: Research Methodology
- ▣ Chapter 4: Research Findings
- ▣ Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions & Recommendations
- ▣ References

Methodology



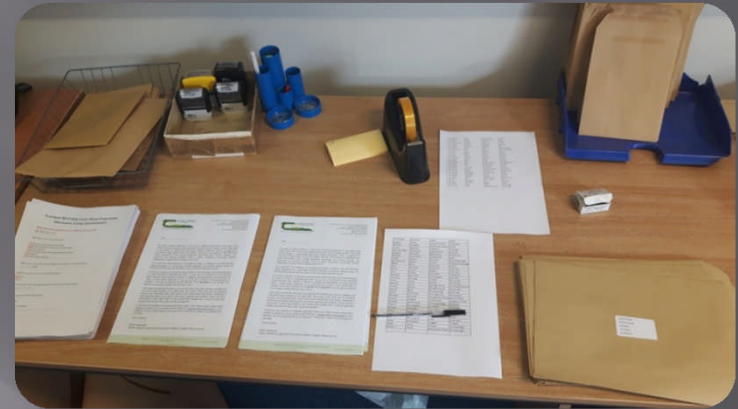
Key Findings-Interviews

- ▣ Farmers motivations
- ▣ Confidence
- ▣ Continuation of practices
- ▣ PEOU and PU of 6 key technologies
- ▣ Influence on other farmers
- ▣ Role of incentives



Key Findings-Surveys

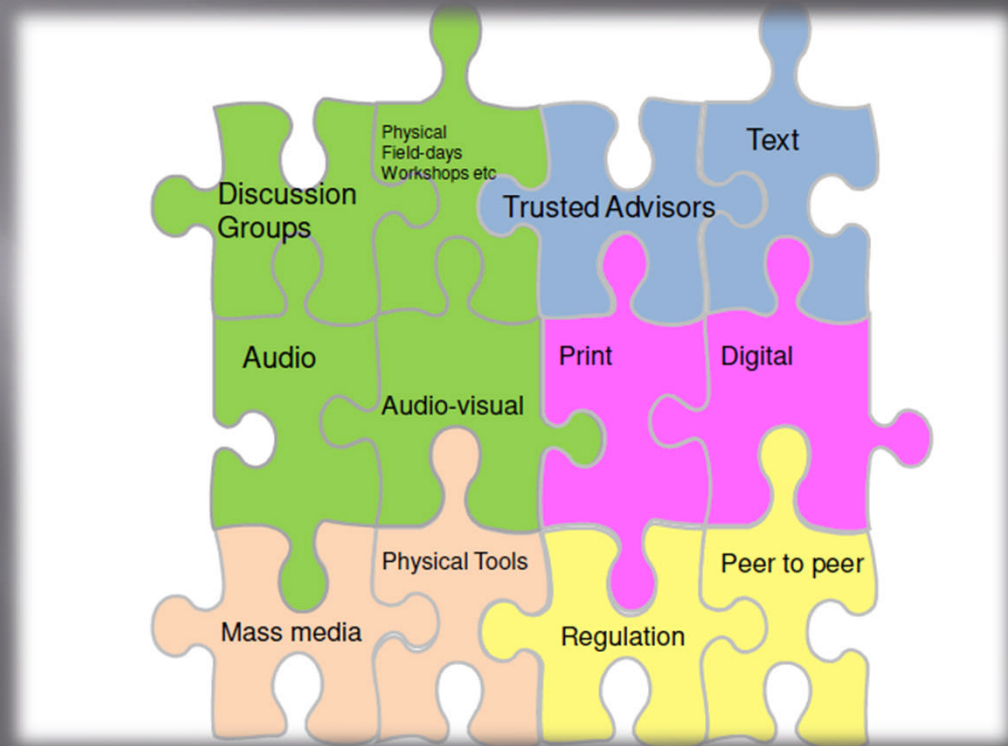
- ▣ Influence of BETTER farmer
- ▣ Technologies being used
- ▣ “Barriers” to adoption
- ▣ Picking a farmer applicable to the group
- ▣ Preferred methods of learning



Key findings-New Zealand



Farmer “Buy-in” is the “making or breaking of it”.



Monitor farms are part of a “jigsaw” of extension methods impacting on farmers decisions

Sheep Conferences 2017

Q12. Read below and tick as many as apply to you:

- I have been on one of the BETTER Sheep Farms with my discussion group
- I have been at an open day on a BETTER Sheep Farm
- I have read articles about the BETTER Sheep Farm Programme
- I have heard about the BETTER Sheep Farm Programme through word of mouth
- Today was the first time I became aware of the BETTER Sheep Farm Programme

Q13: Would you consider implementing any of the changes/practices discussed today by the BETTER farmer on your farm? Yes No

If "yes" please list the change(s)/practice(s)?

Q14: Your comments on today's conference or the

• 107 respondents
• 86 farmers
• 84 said yes to Q13

Diffusion of innovations- Influence

Five Stages in the Decision Inno Process



What should
the expectation
be from a
BETTER farm?

BETTER
Farm(er) may
get a farmer
to here



Conclusions to date

- ▣ Changes have had a positive impact on BETTER farmers
- ▣ PU and PEOU of technologies can influence adoption
- ▣ BETTER farmers do have an influence on the wider farming community
- ▣ If we want the BETTER farms to have an even greater influence farmer “buy in” and/or different approaches may be needed to enhance farmer learning and confidence.

Steps to completion

- ▣ February- Literature review and interview transcription
- ▣ March-Analyse Surveys and profit monitors
- ▣ Early April-Focus Group if needed?
- ▣ April and May Complete write up

