The Role of Commercial Agronomists in the Agricultural Knowledge and Information System

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Rationale for the study

• The AKIS is defined as a system that links people and organisations to promote mutual learning, to generate, share and utilise agricultural related technology, knowledge and information.

• Components of an AKIS are diverse actors from the private, public and non-profit sectors relating to agriculture.

• As a young professional working in the private sector, the importance of the commercial agronomist within the AKIS was chosen for this thesis.
Methodology and Data Collection

*Surveyed*
forty five farmers in the North East of Ireland

*Interviewed*
Senior Agronomist with Glanbia Ireland
Key Findings

Information sources that farmers use for crop husbandry (n=45)

Number of farmers that use commercial agronomists for crop husbandry (n=45)

Farmers perception of advice given by commercial agronomists (n=41)
Motivations of Commercial Agronomists

- Crop performance
- Farmer profitability
- Delivering high quality grain for ruminant livestock feed and distilling industries
- Being sustainable
- Building the trust between the farmer and their commercial agronomist
Commercial agronomists’ sources of information

- Chemical and fertiliser companies
- Teagasc Tillage Crop Reports
- Networking with other commercial and independent agronomists
Recommendations- 'Shaping the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) - Through the Eyes of the Next Generation'

- Suggest that Teagasc joins up with local merchants to create a joint programme where specific benchmarks can be set for tillage farmers nationwide.

- The importance of the commercial agronomist at farm level needs be acknowledged by other organisations in the AKIS to ensure that the flow of technology and information among people, enterprises and institutions is achieved.
Thank You