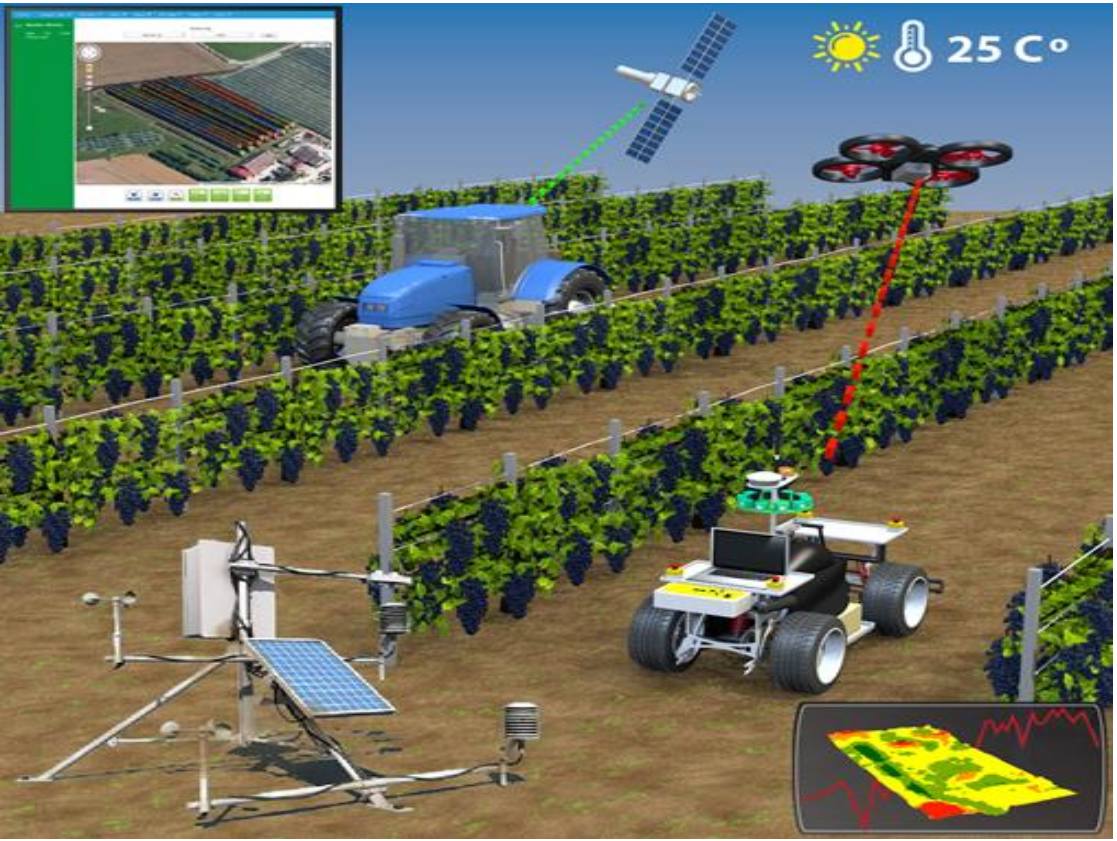
Boosting dissemination and interactive innovation - The example of the EIP-AGRI thematic network SMART-AKIS



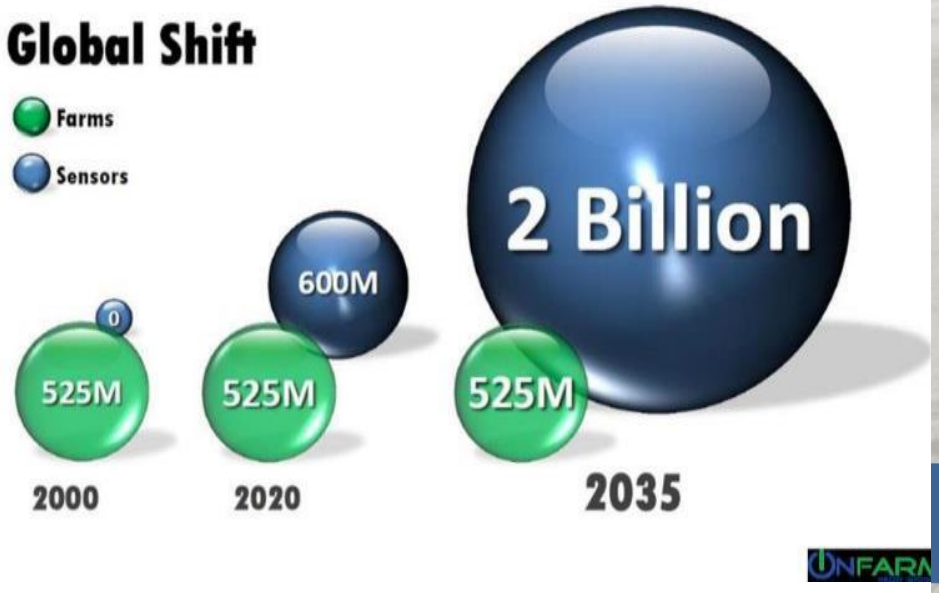
Dr. Spyros Fountas
Agricultural University of Athens

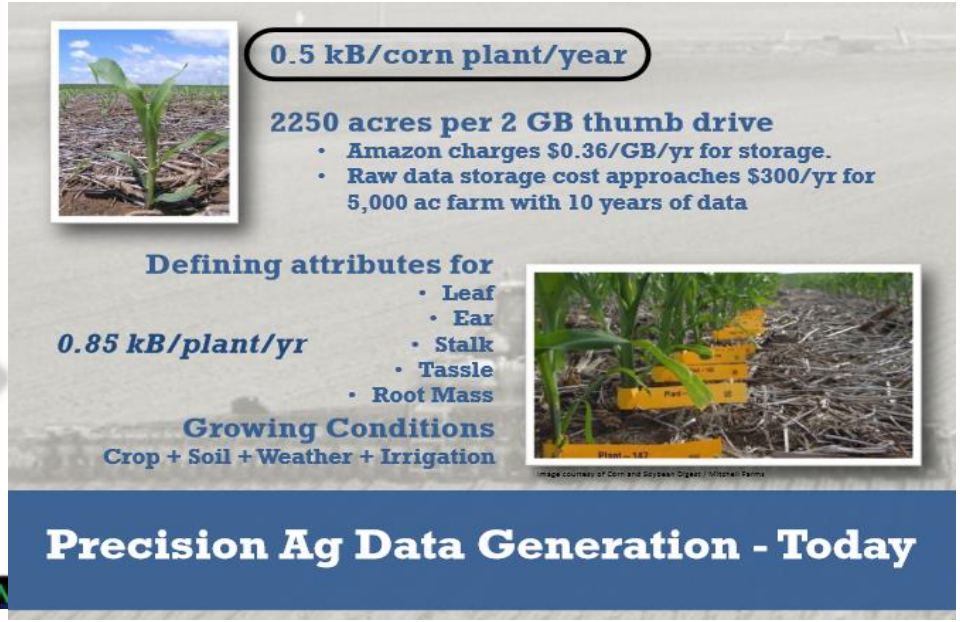
smartAKIS
Smart Farming Thematic Network

AgriResearch Conference
Brussels, May 3, 2018

#AgriResearchEU

What are we addressing?

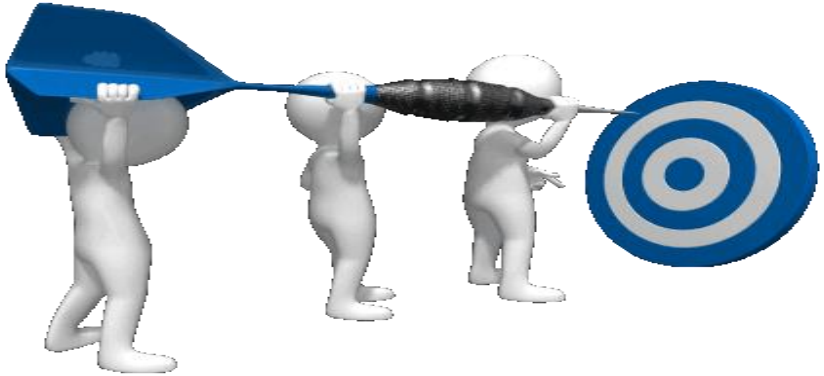




Source: http://bit.ly/1KUVVoR

What are the challenges?

Not an Easy task for the farming community



81% of the Danish and 78% of the US famers preferred to store the data themselves. 88% of the US famers preferred not to store the data in a shared Internet-based database (Fountas et al., 2005. Precision Agriculture 6, 121-141)

Need to develop an EU-wide independent, farmer-centric data repository – data security, data ownership, users agreements
(Precision agriculture in Europe (Legal, social and ethical considerations). STOA, November 2017

Main achievements

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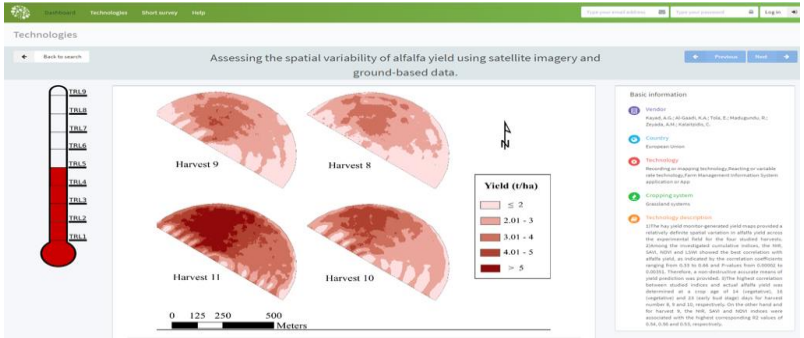
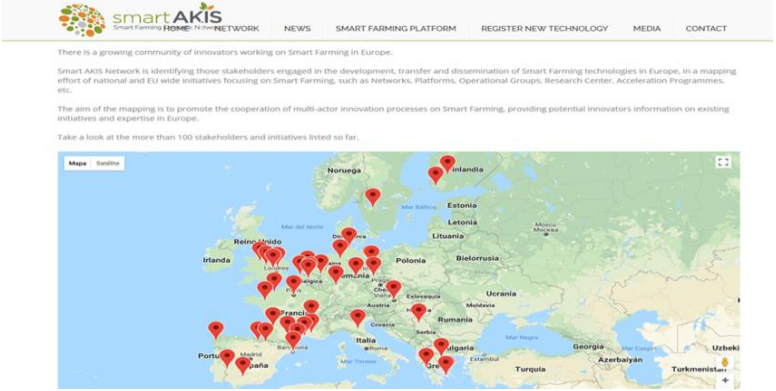
SMART FARMING PLATFORM: Free, open, online and updatable:

- A total of about 1500 entries in Platform.
  - ✓ 800 scientific articles.
  - ✓ 220 research projects.
  - ✓ 480 commercial products.



MAPPING SMART FARMING STAKEHOLDERS:

- Online interactive map with +110 stakeholders: operational groups, networks, platforms, research centers, accelerators, etc, updatable until end of project



Main achievements

FARMERS' RESEARCH:

Needs, interests, barriers about Smart Farming captured following interview

+270 Farmers

Key messages:

- **Main challenges: Crop disease reduction & soil conservation**
- **Perception: High doubts** about the ability to SFT to solve problems.
- **Most useful SFTs:**
  - **1) robots for monotonous work processes (e.g. weeding, hoeing, harvesting),**
  - **2) real-time diagnostics via drones, satellite imagery, or smart phone sensors ,**
  - **3) integration of various SFT, and**
  - **4) data for information and decision support.**
- **Areas of improvement of SFTs: turning data into useable information, reducing complexity** in data presentation), **cost and size.**

Main achievements

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MULTI-ACTOR INNOVATION:

- **20 workshops** held in target countries
- **+1000 actors** involved
- **+60 project/collaboration ideas** on **Smart Farming Technologies**

Main achievements

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Challenges:

- **Access to finance** for further update of SFT
- **Data ownership** remains a key issue for users. Data ownership rights, trust and the benefits of sharing data are key issues.

Knowledge exchange:

- importance of **proper dissemination** of innovative ideas
- foster knowledge exchange
- development of **training activities** (profitability and reliability)
- support **collaboration across borders and sectors**.

Networking:

- important to **interact and know relevant partners, initiatives and projects around SFTs**
- **Multi-actor meetings should**"***become a habit within EU projects***"
- Bring **stakeholders outside project partnership**, especially farmers and **private companies**, which provided new insights to the discussion.

Multi-Actor lessons learned – Synergies with other H2020 instruments

MAA added value

-MAA has transformed research projects within H2020 in comparison to FP7 projects

-The projects and the results are directly communicated with the end-users

-Competition among commercial companies with similar products to come to the same table

- 70% of famers have done innovations in their farms (grass-root research)

-Actors attitude, roles and skills

Farmers were more open to discuss their problems and concerns regarding SFTs with the commercial vendors, while more actors were involved (agronomists, researchers, peer farmers)

Commercial vendors tried to adapt their attitudes and be more pragmatic, when all actors were in the table

Researchers tried to talk in practical terms and not superficial research outcomes, when commercial vendors and farmers were involved

Connecting with National/ Regional Initiatives

EIP-AGRI Service point helped us identifying all OGs related to SFTs and we have contacted them regarding our project. Great!

The problem is how the National/Regional projects get to know the results of TN or H2020 projects! This is a bottleneck! No connection and communication, especially when project partners are not from the country or interest.

OGs should be obliged to participate in TN project mtg.

Uptake of end-user material produced by H2020 projects

Practice Abstracts is a very good idea, as it will be easily accessed! However, they should be easily accessed by search engines (google, firefox, etc)

Too many platforms and projects websites with so valuable information, but not interconnected!

Projects should be funded to gather the generated knowledge, at least for the TN.

Final outcomes.. look ahead..

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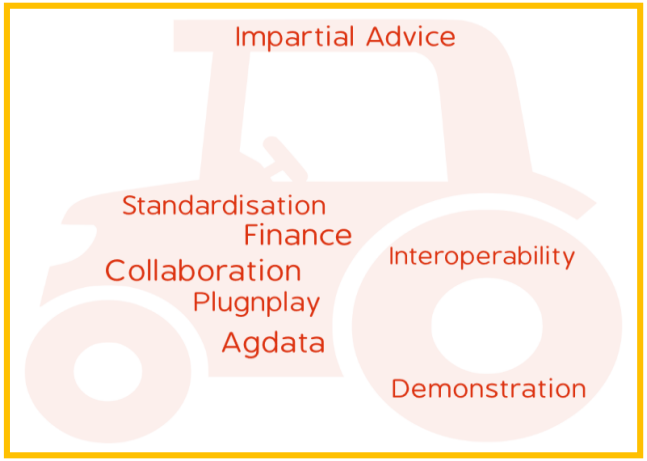
SFT SUPPORT STRATEGIES:

- Resulting from Workshops.
- Drivers identified in Keywords.



RECOMMENDATIONS & POLICY BRIEFS:

- Coming up in June 2018.
- Final Conference: June 27th 2018, Brussels

LOOKING AHEAD: Smart AKIS 2.0.

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Submitted to RUR 15 Call 2018. Evolution:

✓From 7 to 10 Innovation Hubs (Denmark, Estonia &Poland).

✓From SFT to Agricultural Data management issues.

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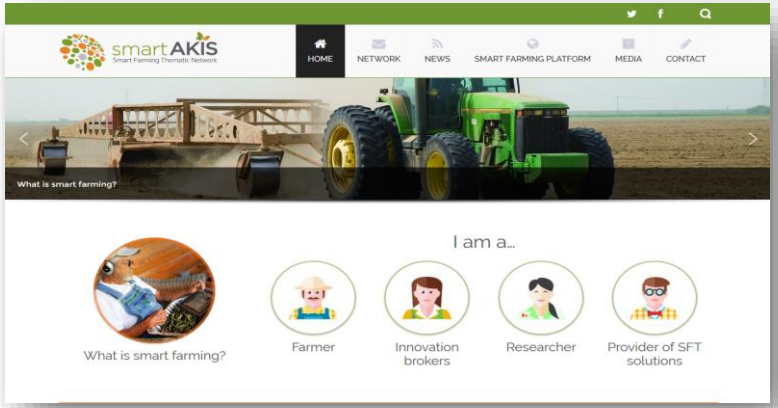
- **WEBPORTAL: www.smart-akis.com**



- **FACEBOOK: @SmartFarmingNetwork**

- **TWITTER: @smart_akis**