



Soil Association



DUCHY ORIGINALS FUTURE FARMING PROGRAMME

An innovation support service

Dr Tom MacMillan | tmacmillan@soilassociation.org

Aim and overview



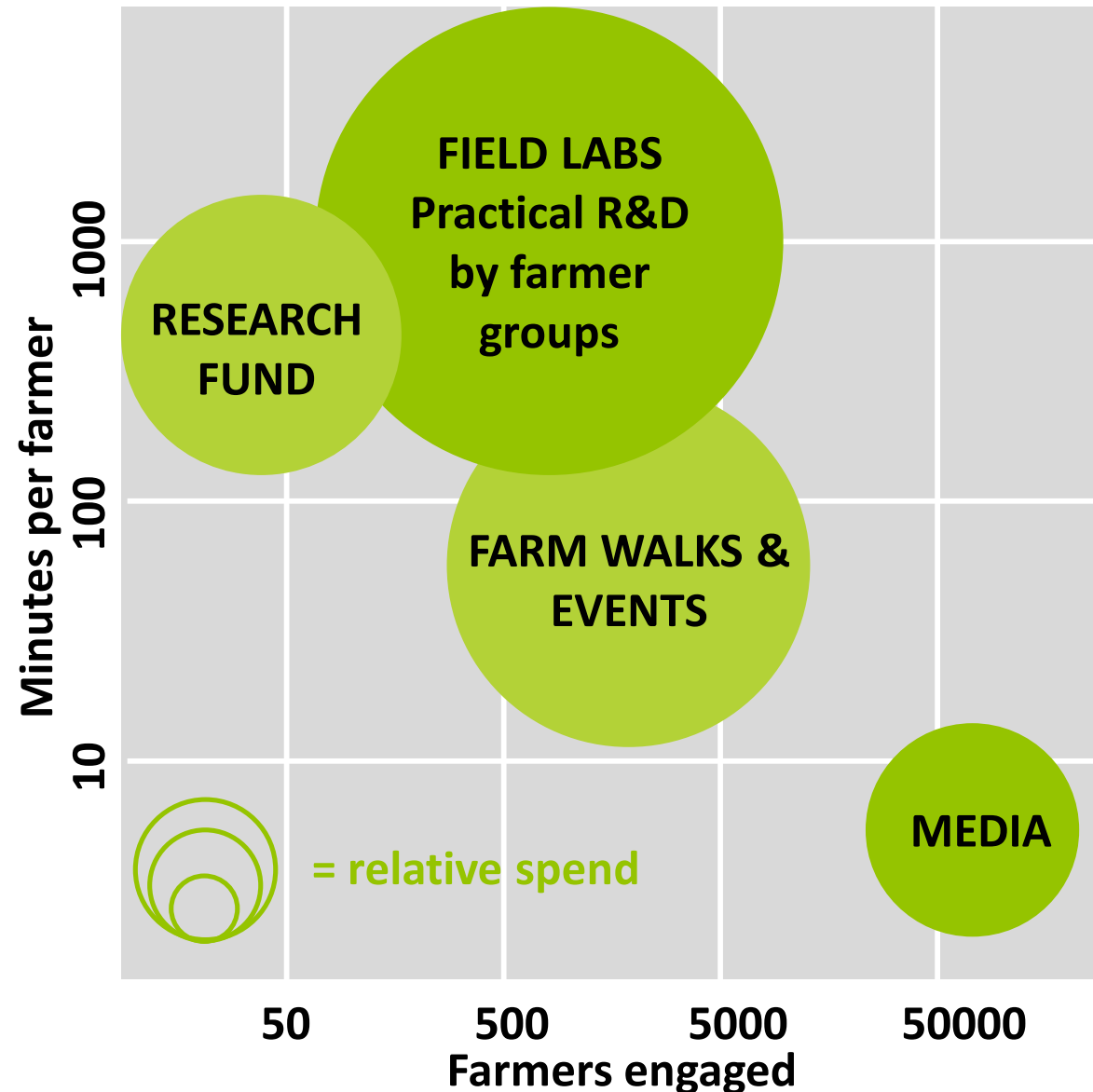
Soil Association



The aim of the Duchy Originals Future Farming Programme is to help farmers across the UK improve their resilience.

It recognises and supports farmers as innovators.

We have piloted a mix of methods since 2012 directly involving >3000 farmers.





Help farmers solve technical problems together, with help from a researcher and facilitator. **Practical R&D on the farmers' terms.**



“from
advice
takers to
advice
makers”

600
farmers

28
topics

80%
of farmers we
surveyed named
practical
improvements
they had made
because of their
field lab





Farmers:

- **Set the priorities**
- **Are project partners**
- **Peer-review proposals alongside scientists**

Supports projects that:

- **Generate new knowledge**
- **Translate into practical on-farm advantage**



£111,000
awarded to date

7
projects

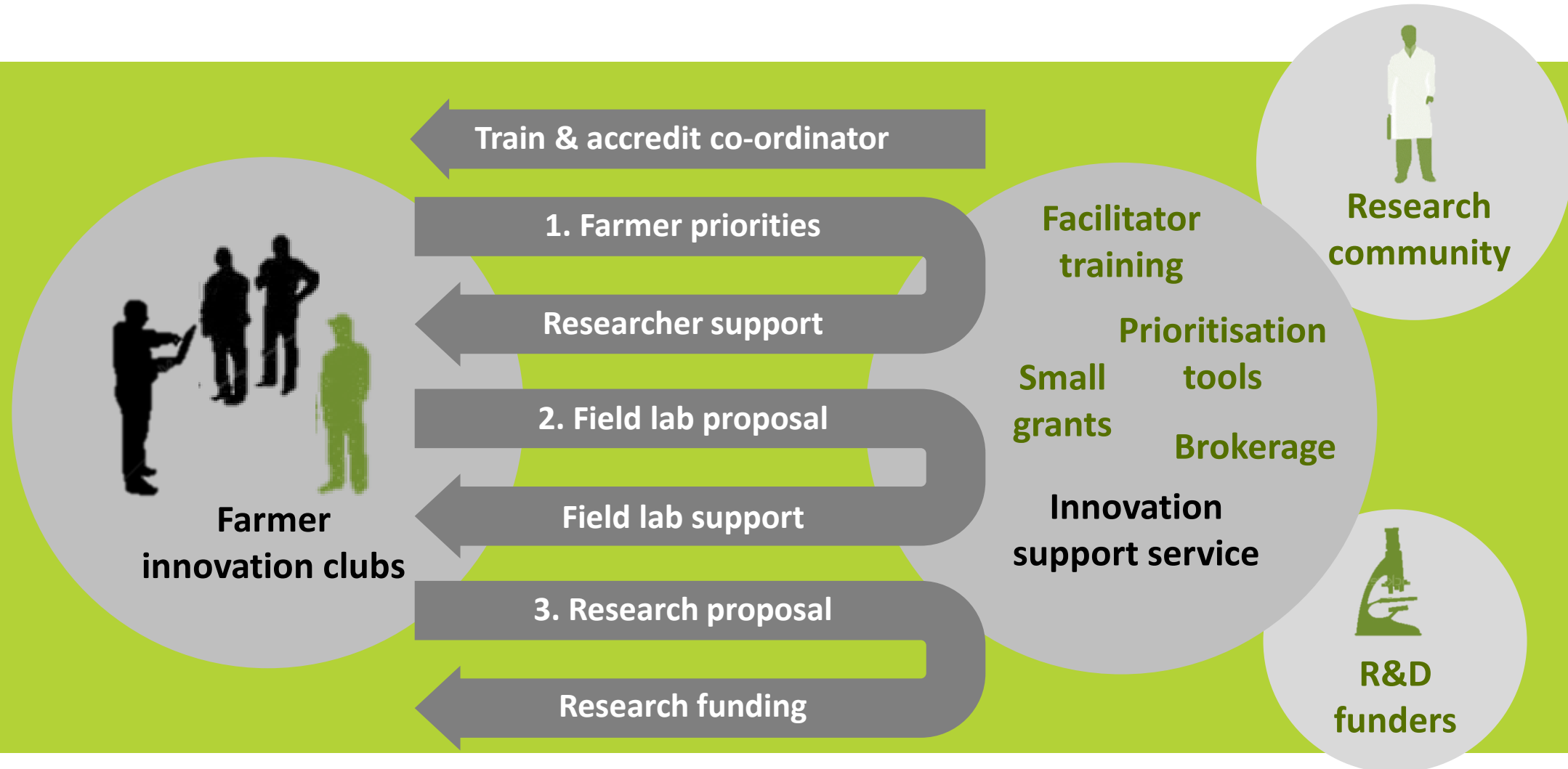
The next phase



Soil Association



In 2015 we will progress from the current pilot phase to launching a permanent innovation support service, with more structured support.





- **Farmers already make a hidden investment in R&D**
- **To make the best of this requires active support**
- **A little funding goes far – support many small projects, not few large**
- **Quality of findings meets practical expectations**
- **Let's do something special with the EIP-AGRI!**



Soil Association



Thank you! Please get in touch to find out more:

Tom MacMillan, Soil Association

tmacmillan@soilassociation.org

www.soilassociation.org/fieldlabs

Background explained in article in Nature Issue 509, May 2014

