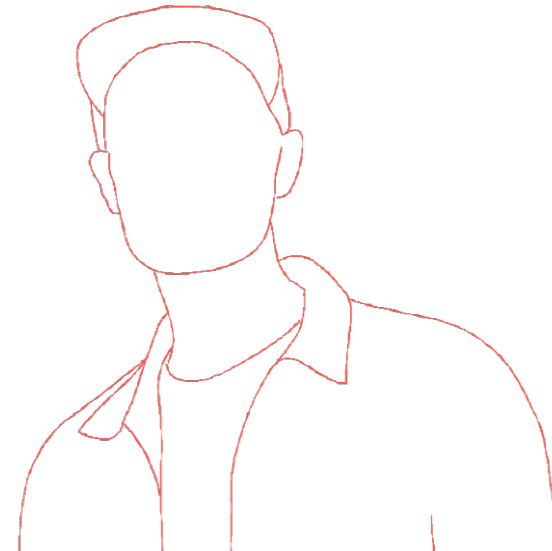
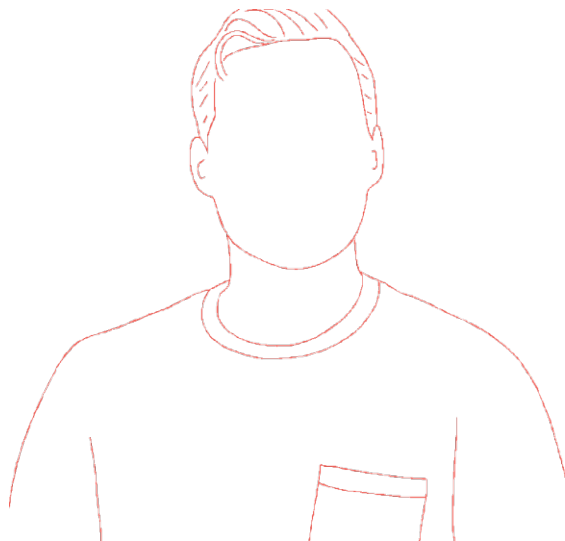


30.5.2022

Evaluation of Farm Advisory Services in Finland

Sari Rannanpää



Background and scope

- FAS was introduced to the Mainland Finland RDP in 2014, although the system had existed before in a different form
- Non-compulsory evaluation geared towards MA information needs
 - Information about the implementation, outcomes and preliminary results of the FAS measure so that the MA could make necessary adjustments early on
 - Covered the supply and the demand of FAS, as well as the implementation
- Developmental and exploratory in nature
 - Some issues emerged from data
- Evaluation conducted in three parts
 - Reports in 02/2017, 03/2018 and 03/2019
 - Final report based on data up to 12/2018

Data sources and methodology

Data sources

- Document analysis
- Interviews
 - Administration
 - Farm advisors
- Electronic surveys
 - Farmers
 - Farm advisors
- Statistics from the Finnish Food Agency (PA)

Methodology

- Qualitative analysis
- Descriptive statistics
- Correlations

e.g. location of farm advisors / number of advisory events per region



Evaluation findings and recommendations

- FAS has been mainly a vehicle for spreading technical knowledge. Seeking and applying new information has been left to the advisers.
 - FAS should be an integral part of the agricultural innovation system, where the advisers receive information and disseminate it to the farms.
 - Access to new research should be improved.
 - Connections between advisors and research should be improved
- Clarification between FAS, training and cooperation measures in spreading and supporting of innovation & clear objectives for each measures are needed
- FAS assumes uniformity in supply, demand & subjects – but this is not the case
 - In general, the spread of advisers around the country is uneven
 - Coverage of FAS topics (environment, economy, animal welfare etc.) by advisers even more uneven
 - Long distances deter the use of FAS as payment does not cover advisers' travel time
 - FAS topics are not similar in terms of time needed to complete the advisory action
 - FAS payments should be more tailored to the subject / time use and equal access / supply should be ensured



Challenges in evaluation

- Access to data
 - Could not get access to some data at farm level (e.g. results of control visits, farm economic accounts) even though it should have been possible to get the data
 - No permission to combine certain data from different registries at farm level
- ⇒ Modification of the plan for the evaluation by the evaluators
 - Had to remove planned quantitative elements from the evaluation
 - e.g. difference in results of control visits for farms which used FAS and farms which did not
 - e.g. difference in economic outcomes/growth in farms which used FAS and farms which did not
- Evaluation FAS measure
 - New measure in RDP but existed before – baseline?
 - Mainly indirect impacts
 - Complex causal chains
 - How to verify whether the farm followed the advise?



Suggestions for evaluation of AKIS

- Theory-based evaluation
 - Creation of theory of change for the AKIS measures and verifying the expected changes through evaluation
- Mixed methods evaluation possible if data is accessible
- Early planning of data for evaluation by the MA/PA
 - Access to data
 - Combining data from different registries





Thank you!