Crops & Animals Together

Network
CANTOGETHER brings together data from an network of existing field research platforms across Europe. These platforms include research farms and commercial farms at an individual farm level and at a district scale. Different systems will be investigated including organic farm systems, integrated farm systems and low input farming systems.

Contact
Project Coordinator:
Philippe Leterme
INRA/Agrocampus Ouest
Agrocampus-Ouest
65, rue de Saint-Brieuc
35042 RENNES CEDEX
FRANCE
http://www.agrocampus-ouest.fr/
philippe.letterme@agrocampus-ouest.fr

Project Manager:
Aurelie Faure
INRA transfert
Aurelie.Faure@paris.inra.fr

For more information about this project please visit
www.fp7cantogether.eu

Acknowledgment
The CANTOGETHER project is supported by the European Commission through the Seventh Program for Research and Technological Development with a grant up to 3.0 million euros under contract number FP7-289328. The project started on the 1st of January 2012 and has a duration of 4 years with a total budget of 4.2 million euros.

There are 28 organisations across 10 countries in Europe involved in CANTOGETHER. The project combines research institutes with small to medium sized companies to ensure the project produces results that are industry relevant.
CANTOGETHER Overview

CANTOGETHER will develop, evaluate and promote innovative mixed crop livestock systems at farm and district levels. The project promotes sustainable agriculture by combining valuable agricultural production systems and promoting the preservation of the environmental and social quality.

Key Issues

European agriculture has become increasingly specialised with large distances between areas of crop production and areas of animal production. This has resulted in a number of problems including:

- High synthetic fertiliser use and less recycling of nutrients in manure;
- A decline in biodiversity due to the specialisation of crop and animal production and low crop diversity; and,
- Increase in the cost of transport between animal producing areas and the location where the crops for feed are produced.

Specialisation has occurred through a number of factors which include economic drivers, social constraints and labour difficulties.

The CANTOGETHER Concept

By combining systems of crop and animal production at both a farm scale and district scale, CANTOGETHER will optimize energy, carbon and nutrient flows, will conserve natural resources and will promote production. CANTOGETHER will combine agronomic practices (crop rotations, legume development, organic fertilization etc) and livestock practices, (feeding, waste management etc.) into novel mixed farming systems.

This will result in a number of benefits including:

- Improvement in biodiversity and resource use by the introduction of mixed farming systems;
- Landscape diversity due to the combination of animal and crop production;
- Reducing transport costs;
- Improvement of the use of manure as a fertiliser for crops; and,
- Increasing the volume of legumes produced locally and decreasing the reliance on imported products such as soybeans.

The CANTOGETHER Approach

CANTOGETHER will devise a strategy to counterbalance the current drivers of specialization. This will be done by designing innovative cost and labour-efficient systems which will, for example:

- Improve the volume of home-grown feed to reduce reliance on imports and exposure to price volatility on farms; and,
- Improve the exchange of goods between feed producers and organic manure producers within districts.

CANTOGETHER will assess the economic, social and environmental impact of these mixed farming systems and will provide policy recommendations. CANTOGETHER will promote the adoption of these innovative mixed farming systems through participative and modelling approaches by scientists, technicians, farmers and other stakeholders and a dynamic dissemination strategy of results to relevant stakeholders.

CANTOGETHER therefore increases sustainability and competitiveness of European agriculture contributing to increase food security and environmental quality.