

 **March 19, 2025**
 10h-11h30 CET
 Online

— **AKISConnect** —
WOW
 WEBINARS on WEDNESDAYS



AKIS in action:

Fostering knowledge flows & innovation - Aligning research with practice needs

Join us for an insightful event, where we'll explore how research can achieve real-world impact through multi-actor and co-creation approaches, bridging science, and practice. At this webinar key multi-actor concepts and strategies, including Thematic networks and EIP AGRI Operational Groups in agricultural knowledge and innovation systems, will be highlighted.

Agenda

10:00H-10:15H

Introduction to the event and to modernAKIS

Elena-Teodora Miron, Austrian Chamber of Agriculture (Moderation)

10:15H-10:30H

How can research in the agricultural and agri-food sectors be directed toward meaningful impact?

Sergio Ponsá, Beta Technological Centre, Spain

10:30H-10:45H

Network "Focus on animal welfare"

Katja Brase, Network "Focus on animal welfare", Germany

10:45H-11:00H

Bulgarian experience in designing the EIP-AGRI projects and involvement of farmers and advisors in the operational groups

Dimitar Vanev, National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAAS), Bulgaria

11:00H-11:30H

Q&A Session

Elena-Teodora Miron, Austrian Chamber of Agriculture

Key Learnings

- Explore multi-actor and co-creation approaches
- Explore the concept of EIP-AGRI
- Explore the concept of a Thematic network
- Gain inspiration from expert experiences across different countries.

Who should join?

- Researchers and academics
- Advisors, innovation support services, and other providers of specialized services
- AKIS coordination bodies
- Networks (CAP network or other)
- Managing authorities and Public authorities



Meet the Speakers



Sergio Ponsá
 Director,
 Beta technological center

Sergio Ponsá, PhD in Environmental Engineering, has been the Director of the BETA Technology Center at UVic-UCC since 2014. His expertise lies in the circular economy and bioeconomy, with a strong focus on driving sustainable development in rural areas and across the agri-food value chain. He has extensive experience in technology and knowledge transfer, actively bridging the gap between research, practitioners, and policymakers. Over the years, he has contributed to more than 200 R&D&I projects in collaboration with companies and public administrations at regional, national, and international levels, with a particular emphasis on the Mediterranean Basin. Additionally, he has a deep understanding of interregional and international research and innovation programs, further reinforcing his commitment to impactful, practice-oriented research.



Katja Brase
 Coordinator of the Network
 "Focus on animal welfare"

Katja Brase is an experienced veterinarian specializing in pig farming. With 16 years of practical experience in veterinary medicine, she brings extensive knowledge and expertise to the table. Additionally, she serves as an expert in the "Animal Welfare Plan" at the Ministry of Agriculture in Hannover, Germany. Furthermore, she is a board member of the Lower Saxony Veterinary Chamber and has been coordinating the nationwide network "Focus Animal Welfare" since 2020.



Dimitar Vanev
 Director, Directorate "Analysis,
 Planning and Information
 Provision" NAAS

Dimitar Vanev has 24 years of experience in rural development and holds a post-graduate specialty in Economics and Management of Agro-Industry. He specializes in Strategic Management, Rural Development, and Agricultural Policy. He worked for nine years at the Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture and Food, focusing on CAP strategy and rural development programs. Since 2010, he has been with the Bulgarian National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAAS), now as Director of "Analysis, Planning, and Information Provision". His work covers CAP, EIP-AGRI, AKIS, farmer training, advisory services, and knowledge transfer. He has 40+ publications and has contributed as an expert in multiple EU projects, including NEFERTITI, Climate Farm Demo, and modernAKIS.



Presentations

How can research in the agricultural and agri-food sectors be directed toward meaningful impact?

Research impact is often measured by academic metrics, but these do not always reflect real societal change. To ensure meaningful contributions, research must engage with stakeholders, build trust, and foster collaboration between science, policy, and practice. Policy influence happens through strategic meetings, advisory groups, and targeted research projects that inform decision-making. Beyond policy, research must drive practical change by integrating into professional networks, engaging practitioners, and promoting innovation adoption. Rather than simply transferring knowledge, research should be a dynamic, participatory process where multiple actors co-create solutions. Multi-actor platforms help bridge gaps and foster collaboration. Adaptive research prioritizes implementation, scalability, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring research moves beyond theory into action. A shift in mindset is needed, focusing on collaboration and real-world application. By aligning science, policy, and practice, research becomes a catalyst for lasting societal change.

Network “Focus on animal welfare”

Funded by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture since 2020, the “Fokus Tierwohl” network project aims to improve the transfer of knowledge on the topic of animal welfare in agricultural practice, taking sustainability and environmental protection into account. It also has the task of promoting networking between experts and farmers. Specialist knowledge is bundled and made freely available, an exchange of experience between practitioners, scientists, consultants and other groups is organized, thus enabling and promoting knowledge networking within the industry. The website www.fokustierwohl.de offers links to research results, from funded research and development projects or the model and demonstration projects on animal welfare as well as other stakeholders.

Bulgarian experience in designing the EIP-AGRI projects and involvement of farmers and advisors in the operational groups

This presentation will provide an overview of Bulgarian experience under designing the EIP-AGRI projects under Bulgarian Rural Development Programme for the period 2014 – 2020 and Bulgarian CAP strategic plan for the period 2023-2027 with focus on involvement of farmers and advisors in the operational groups. The special attention will be put on good practices and examples applied by National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAAS) for involvement of farmers and advisors in operational groups under the last Bulgarian CAP strategic plan call for setting up operational groups. The call was held in period December 2024 – February 2025.