



**SIP**



SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION  
RESEARCH PLATFORM



SCIENCE, POLICY AND PRACTICE NOTE 6  
**Farmer Collaboration and Engagement**



## The Issue

Over the course of their careers, the majority of farmers are involved in collaborating or cooperating with other farmers. They often work together as members of buying or producer groups, and by sharing labour and machinery.

But what encourages farmers to collaborate? What are the barriers to collaboration? What works when engaging farmers in collaborative initiatives?

Farmers report a range of reasons why they collaborate, including financial incentives, cost-savings, efficiency savings and economies of scale. Benefits of knowledge exchange, mutual help and social learning also draw some farmers into working together. Others are motivated by environmental outcomes.

Barriers to collaboration include unexpected economic costs of participating in initiatives, additional workload, perceived unfairness in the distribution of the benefits of collaborating and problems reaching collective agreements.

## SIP's Response

To better understand what enables farmer collaboration we conducted an extensive literature review, developed case studies of 11 collaborative initiatives involving farmers relating to the environment, business and water, undertook a baseline survey with 244 farmers and managers, analysed the results of the Farm Business Survey to understand constraints on collaboration and explored collaboration in six farmer discussion groups. While the economic benefits of collaboration for farmers were apparent from these studies, there are several other factors that support successful collaborative working.

## What SIP Learnt

There are a few key ingredients that clearly enable collaborative initiatives to work:

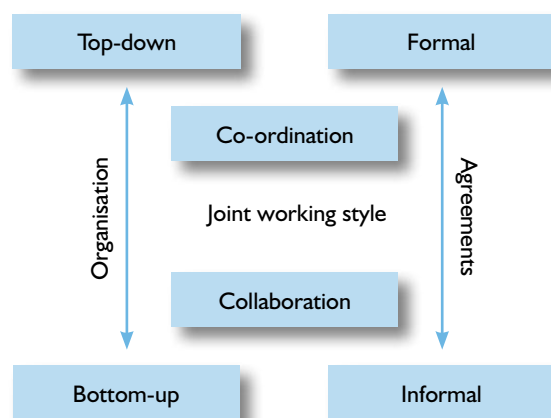
- a strong co-ordinator role
- trust between participants
- shared values
- appropriate joint working style

A strong co-ordinator is needed because many of the problems of collaboration result from differences of opinion about a course of action and different views on a given situation. Facilitation and leadership is critical to resolving differences and reaching agreement. Without appropriate co-ordination the pressures on initiatives posed by unexpected economic costs are less likely to be adequately managed. A strong co-ordinator can also help communicate the uncertainties and risks inherent in collaboration, which mitigates the conflict that sometimes arises from unexpected consequences of participating in initiatives.

Trust is key to working together. There is a general preference for informal collaboration which is flexible and adaptable, but this only works if participants can trust each other to deliver on agreed actions. Even in more formal collaborations where roles are more rigidly defined, trust is vital to success.

Shared values are more important than geographical proximity in collaboration. While geographical proximity is important and there are clear benefits of clustering in environmental collaboration, if participants have similar outlooks and motivations the collaboration is more likely to be successful and geographical proximity becomes less important.

An appropriate style of joint working for any particular initiative must be identified to encourage collaboration. There are two main styles of joint working; collaborative (more top-down and formal) and cooperative (more bottom-up and informal). Participants need to be comfortable with this style of working, and understand its benefits and risks.





## Opportunities for Policy and Practice

### Engaging With Farmers In Practice – What Works?

If you are considering developing a collaborative initiative with farmers, this will at some stage involve convening a group to discuss the proposed project. On the basis of our work we recommend you consider these tips on engaging with farmers.

1. When convening groups of farmers its vital to **ensure that the event is relevant**; the farming community need to know there is something they are going to get of the event, otherwise naturally other priorities will take precedence. An event might be relevant to farmers because it is about regulations, saving money while creating positive outcomes for the environment or accessing grant funding, for instance. Think carefully about why an event is relevant, otherwise it simply will not appeal.
2. **Use bespoke communication.** When inviting participants you may need a generic invitation, but try to tailor this to individuals or groups as much as possible. This will help ensure invitees understand how the event is relevant to them. Avoid jargon. You could use pressing issues to gain interest and secure attendance. Consider building on existing relationships with farmers; are there well-established links to local farmer groups or third sector organisations who could advise or contact potential participants?
3. As far as possible **organise events around farmers' schedules and priorities**; the more flexible you can be with the timing of an event, the better. If possible, identify or contact a group first and then set a date, rather than set a date and then try to find participants. Keep the farming calendar in mind, for instance avoid organising events during lambing and harvest. Farmers are often working both on and off farm so don't over burden them with invitations or multiple meetings. To maintain good will consider whether two meetings could be squeezed into one, for instance.
4. **Diversify the ways farmers can engage:** there's no 'one size fits all' approach that will appeal to all farmers. It is likely you will reach a broader range of farmers if you create a range of ways they can engage with your project. For instance, some may attend group discussions at a venue while others might be more comfortable at one-to-one on-farm meetings.
5. **Invest in an appropriate facilitator and create a convivial atmosphere.** An event should be facilitated by someone that farmers know and trust. Ensure facilitators have the right expertise so that participants get the knowledge they want. Create a genial mood at the event by choosing a convenient location, include a meal and some time for socialising whilst keeping meetings relatively short.
6. **Understand the reasons why farmers are engaging with your project or initiative.** They may want new knowledge or be interested in how other farmers are working; they may engage for social reasons or want to air their views and feed into government thinking. Try to ascertain what farmers want from your event before you meet them, that way it is easier to meet their expectations.

### Supporting Farmer Collaboration

Beyond the level of practical engagement there are several actions that should be taken:

1. **Allocate resources to identifying appropriate facilitators and leaders of initiatives.** The facilitator or leader is key to the success of the initiative, ensure they do not 'burn out' due to extra workload.
2. **Contemplate succession planning** for leadership to minimise the risks of periods of transition and help ensure their sustainability of collaborative initiatives.
3. **Allocate resources to evaluation.** Formal measurement of the benefits of collaboration is rare. Build in evaluation from the project planning stage and help demonstrate the value of collaboration through monitoring and measurement of outcomes.
4. **Create space to consider the difficulties of collaboration.** There can be a reluctance to talk about difficulties and our case study work suggested that few initiatives consider what could go wrong when they are set up. Risk assessment and management at an early stage of development is prudent.



## Authors

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## Further Resources

The below reports can be accessed via the Defra website. Please visit <http://bit.ly/2tYtWnx>

Morris, C., Jarrett, J., Lobley, M. and Wheeler, R. (2017). *Final report on Baseline Farm Survey*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the Environment at Landscape Scales

Wilkinson, T. (2017). *Design Criteria for Formal Collaboration between Farmers at the Catchment-Scale*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the Environment at Landscape Scales

Jarrett, J., Morris, C., Wheeler, R. and Winter, M. (2015). *Literature Review on Farming Collaboration*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the Environment at Landscape Scales

Morris, C. and Jarrett, S. (2016). *Report on Case Studies of Collaborative Initiatives*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the E Environment at Landscape Scales

Wilson, P. (2017). *Analysis of Farm Business Survey 2011-12 Business Management Practices*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the Environment at Landscape Scales

Fish, R. (2017). *Farmer Discussion Groups – Key Findings*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the Environment at Landscape Scales

Lobley, M. and Wilkinson, T. (2017). *Report on Socio-Economic Barriers to Collaboration between Farmers and Mechanisms to Encourage Collaboration*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the Environment at Landscape Scales

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*The Sustainable Intensification Research Platform (SIP) is a multi-partner research programme comprising academia, farmers, industry experts, environmental organisations, and policymakers.*

*Funded by Defra and the Welsh Government, the platform explores the opportunities and risks of Sustainable Intensification (SI) from a range of perspectives and landscape scales across England and Wales.*

*The Platform, run from 2014-17, has investigated ways to increase farm productivity, reduce environmental impacts, and increase the benefits that agricultural land provides to society.*



SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION  
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## More Information

Visit: [www.siplatform.org.uk](http://www.siplatform.org.uk)

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Awduron

Timothy J. Wilkinson and Matt Lobley (Prifysgol Caerwysg)

### Adnoddau pellach

Gellir darllen yr adroddiad isod ar wefan Defra.

Ymwelwch a: <http://bit.ly/2tYrWnx>

Morris, C., Jarrett, J., Lobley, M. and Wheeler, R. (2017).

*Final report on Baseline Farm Survey*. Report for Defra

project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research

Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming

and the Environment at Landscape Scales

Wilkinson, T. (2017). *Design Criteria for Formal Collaboration*

*between Farmers at the Catchment-Scale*. Report for Defra

project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research

Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming

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Morris, C. and Jarrett, S. (2016). *Report on Case Studies of*

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Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2:

Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the E Environment

at Landscape Scales

Wilson, P. (2017). *Analysis of Farm Business Survey 2011-12*

*Business Management Practices*. Report for Defra project

LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform

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Environment at Landscape Scales

Fish, R. (2017). *Farmer Discussion Groups – Key Findings*. Report for Defra project LM0302 Sustainable Intensification Research Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming and the Environment at Landscape Scales

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*Mechanisms to Encourage Collaboration*. Report for Defra

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Platform Project 2: Opportunities and Risks for Farming

and the Environment

at Landscape Scales

### Diolchiadadn

Dioch yn fawr iawn i bawb a wirfoddolodd eu hamser

gwerthfawr a'u harbenigedd wrth wneud y gwaith hwn.

Defnyddiwyd y lluniau yn y Nodyn Gwyddoniaeth, Polisi

ac Ymarfer hwn gyda chaniatâd caredig LEAF (Linking

Environment and Farming). Llun y clawr: CasarsaGuru.

Rhaglen ymchwil aml-bartner yw'r Platform Ymchwil i Ddwyasù

Cynaliadwy (SIF) sy'n cynnwys academia, ffermwyr, arbenigwyr y

diwydiant, sefydliadau amgylcheddol, a gwneuthurwyr polisi.

Arbenir y platform gan Defra a Llywodraeth Cymru, ac mae'n archwilio'r

cyfneodedd a'r risgiau sydd ynghlwm wrth Ddwyasù Cynaliadwy o

amrywiaeth o safbwyntiau a graddfeydd tirwedd ar draws Cymru a Lloegr.

Mae'r Platform, a oedd yn gweithredu o 2014-17, wedi ymchwilio i

ffyrdd o gynyddu cynhyrchiant ffermydd, lleihau effeithiau amgylcheddol,

a chynyddu manteision tir amgelyddol i'r gymdeithas.



Mwy o Wybodaeth

Ymwelwch â:

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## Cyflөөdd ar gyfer Polisi ac Ymarfer

### Ymgysylltu  Ffermyr yn Ymarferol – Beth sy'n Gweithio?

Os ydych yn ystyried datblygu menter gydwethredol gyda ffermyr, bydd hyn, ar ryw adeg, yn cynnwys dod  gr p at ei gilydd i drafod y prosiect artaethedig. Yn seiliedig ar ein gwaith, rydym yn argymhell eich bod yn ystyried y cnygor hwn wrth ymgysylltu  ffermyr:

1. Wrth ddod  grwpiau o ffermyr at ei gilydd mae'n hartodol sicrhau bod y digwyddiad yn berthnasol; mae angen i'r gymuned ffermio wybod eu bod yn mynd i elwa ar y digwyddiad, neu fel arall bydd blaenoriaethau eraill yn cael eu sylw. Efallai y bydd digwyddiad yn berthnasol i ffermyr oherwydd ei fod yn ymwneud  rheoliadau, arbed arfan tra'n creu canlyniadau cadarnhaol ar gyfer yr amgylchedd neu gael cyllid grant, er enghraifft. Meddylwch yn ofalus am resymau pam mae digwyddiad yn berthnasol, neu fel arall ni fydd yn apelio at bobl.
2. Defnyddwch ddulliau cyfathrebu pwrpasol. Pan fyddwch yn gwahodd cyfranogwyr efallai y bydd angen i chi greu gwahoddiad cyffredinol, ond ceiswch ei delwra i'r unigolion neu'r grwpiau cyhyd ag y bo'n bosibl. Bydd hyn yn helpu i sicrhau bod y rhai sy'n cael eu gwahodd yn deall sut mae'r digwyddiad yn berthnasol iddynt hwy. Dylech osgoi jarcon. Gallech ddefnyddio materion pwysig i enyn diddordeb a sicrhau presenoldeb. Ystyriwch ddatblygu perthnasau sy'n bodoli eisoes gyda ffermyr; a oes cysylltiadau da  grwpiau ffermyr lleol neu sefydliadau'r trydydd sector a allai roi cnygor neu gysylltu  chyfranogwyr bosibl?
3. Cyhyd ag y bo'n bosibl, trefnwch y digwyddiadau o amgylch amserleni a blaenoriaethau ffermyr; gorau po fwyaf hbylg y gallwch fod o ran amseru digwyddiad. Os yn bosibl, dewiswch grwp neu cysylltwch  grwp cyn pennu dyddiad, yn hytrach na phennu dyddiad ac yna ceisio dod o hyd i gyfranogwyr. Ystyriwch y calendr ffermio, er enghraifft, ceiswch osgoi trefnu digwyddiadau yn ystod y cyfnod wyna a'r cynhaeaf. Yn aml mae ffermyr yn gweithio ar ac oddi ar y fferm felly peidiwch  rhoi gormod o wahoddiadau iddyn nhw na nifer fawr o gyfarfoddydd. Er mwyn cynnal ewyllys da, ystyriwch a fyddai modd cyfuno dau gyfarfod mewn un, er enghraifft.
4. Amrywioch y ffyrdd y gall ffermyr ymgysylltu: nid oes un dull arbennig a fydd yn apelio at bob ffermyr. Mae'n debygol y byddwch yn cyrraedd amrywiaeth ehangach o ffermyr os

1. Y tu hwnt i lefel ymgysylltu ymarferol, mae nifer o gamau gweithredau y dylid eu cymryd, sef:
  1. Dyranu adnoddau i nodi hwylysuwr ac arweinwyr priodol ar gyfer mentrau. Mae'r hwylysuwr neu'r arweinwyr yn allweddol i lwyddiant y fenter, sicrhewch nad ydynt yn dioddef straen oherwydd y baich gwaith ychwanegol.
  2. Ystyried cynllunio ar gyfer olyniaeth arweinwyr i leihau'r risgiau bosibl o gyfnodau pontio a helpu i sicrhau canlyniadau wedd mentrau cydwethredol.
  3. Dyranu adnoddau ar gyfer gwerthuso. Anaml iawn y caiff manteision cydwethio eu mesur yn ffurfiol. Dylid cynwys y broses werthuso o gyfnod cynllunio'r prosiect a helpu i ddanngos gwerth cydwethio wrth fonitro a mesur canlyniadau.
  4. Creu gwagle i ystyried anawsterau cydwethio. Gall rhai fod yn amharod i siarad am anawsterau ac awgrymodd ein hastudiathau achos mai ychydig o fentrau yn unig sy'n ystyried yr hyn allai fynd o'i le pan gant eu sefydlu. Mae'n ddarvoudus cynnal asesiadau risg a rheoli risg yn gymmar yn y broses ddatblygu.





## Y Problem

Dros gyfnod eu gyrraedd, bydd y rhan fwyaf o ffermyr wedi cydweithio neu gydweithredu â ffermyr eraill. Maent yn aml yn gweithio gyda'i gilydd fel aelodau o grwpiau prynu neu gynhyrchu, a thrwy rannu llafur a pheirianwaith.

Ond beth sy'n annog ffermyr i gydweithio? Beth yw'r rhwystrau mewn perthynas â chydweithio? Beth sy'n gweithio o ran annog ffermyr i gymryd rhan mewn mentrau cydweithredol?

Mae ffermyr yn nodi amrywiaeth o resymau dros gydweithio, gan gynnwys cymhellion ariannol, arbedion costau, arbedion effeithlonrwydd ac arbedion maint. Mae'r manteision sydd ynghlwm wrth gyfnewid gwybodaeth, rhoi cymorth ar y cyd a dysgu cymdeithasol hefyd yn denu rhai ffermyr i gydweithio. Caiff eraill eu cymell gan ganlyniadau amgylcheddol.

Ymhlith y rhwystrau i gydweithio mae'r costau economaidd annisgwylt sydd ynghlwm wrth gymryd rhan mewn mentrau, baich gwaith chwaneogol, anhewgch canfyddedig o ran dosbarthu manteision cydweithredu a phroblemau o ran dod i gytundebau ar y cyd.

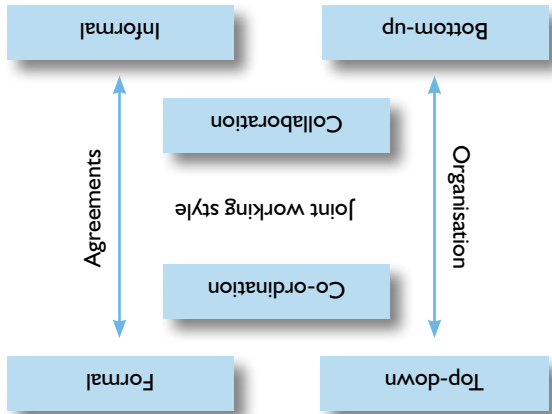
## Ymateb SIP

Er mwyn deall yn well yr hyn sy'n galluogi ffermyr i gydweithio, cynhaliwyd adolygiad helaeth o lenyddiaeth, datblygwyd astudiaethau achos o 11 o fentrau cydweithredol sy'n cynnwys ffermyr yn ymwneud â'r amgylchedd, busnes a dŵr, cynhaliwyd arolwg llinell syfnaen gyda 244 o ffermyr a rheolwyr, dadansodddwyd canlyniadau'r Arolwg o Fusnesau Ffermio i ddeall y cyfngiadau ar gydweithio ac archwiliwyd cydweithio mewn chwe grŵp trafod i ffermyr. Er bod yr astudiaethau hyn wedi dangos bod manteision economaidd amlwg ynghlwm wrth gydweithio ymhlith ffermyr, mae sawl ffactor arall sy'n cefnogi cydweithio llwyddiannus.

## Yr Hyn a Ddysgodd SIP

Mae rchydig o nodweddion allweddol sy'n galluogi mentrau cydweithredol i weithio:

- cydlynedd cryf
- ymddiriedaeth ymhlith cyfranogwyr
- rhanu'r un gwerthoedd
- dull priodol o gydweithio



Mae'n rhaid nodi dull priodol o weithio ar y cyd ar gyfer unrhyw fenter er mwyn annog cydweithio. Mae dau brif dull o gydweithio: sef y dull cydweithio (dull mwy ffurfiol o'r brig i lawr) a'r dull cydweithredol (dull mwy anffurfiol o'r gwaelod i fyny). Mae angen i gyfranogwyr fod yn gyfforddus â'r dull hwn i wethio, a deall y manteision a'r risgiau sydd ynghlwm wrtho.

llwyddiannus a daw pellter daearyddol yn llai pwysig. Mae rhanu'r un gwerthoedd yn bwysicach na phellter daearyddol wrth gydweithio. Er bod pellter daearyddol yn bwysig a bod manteision clir o weithio mewn clystrau ar gyfer cydweithio amgylcheddol, os bydd gan gyfranogwyr safbwyntiau a chymhellion tebyg, mae'r cydweithio yn fwy tebygol o fod yn llwyddiannus a daw pellter daearyddol yn llai pwysig.

Mae rhanu'r un gwerthoedd yn bwysicach na phellter hanfodol i lwyddiant. lle y caiff rolau eu diffinio'n fwy cadarn, mae ymddiriedaeth yn gweithio. Hyd yn oed mewn trefniadau cydweithio mwy ffurfiol i gyflawni gweithredoedd y cytunwyd arnynt y bydd hyn yn ond dim ond os gall cyfranogwyr ymddiried yn y nall a'r lall. fferi'r cydweithio anffurfiol sy'n hyblyg ac yn bosibl ei addasu, Mae ymddiriedaeth yn hanfodol i gydweithio. Yn gyffredinol, mentrau.

sy'n deillio weithiau o oblygiadau annisgwylt cymryd rhan mewn risgiau sy'n ymwneud â chydweithio, sy'n lleihau'r gwrthdaro Gall cydlynedd cryf hefyd gyfathrebu achosion o ansicrwydd a economadd annisgwylt yn llai tebygol o gael eu rheoli'n ddigonol. gydlynu priodol, mae'r pwyasau ar fentrau o ganlyniad i gostau hanfodol er mwyn datrys gwahaniaethau a dod i gytundeb. Heb â sefyllfa benodol. Mae'r broses o hwyluso ac arwain yn dull gweithredu a safbwyntiau gwahanol mewn perthynas ynghlwm wrth gydweithio yn deillio o wahaniaeth barn ynghylch Mae angen cydlynedd cryf gan fod llawer o'r problemau sydd

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Cydwethredu ac Ymgysylltu ymysg Ffermwyr

