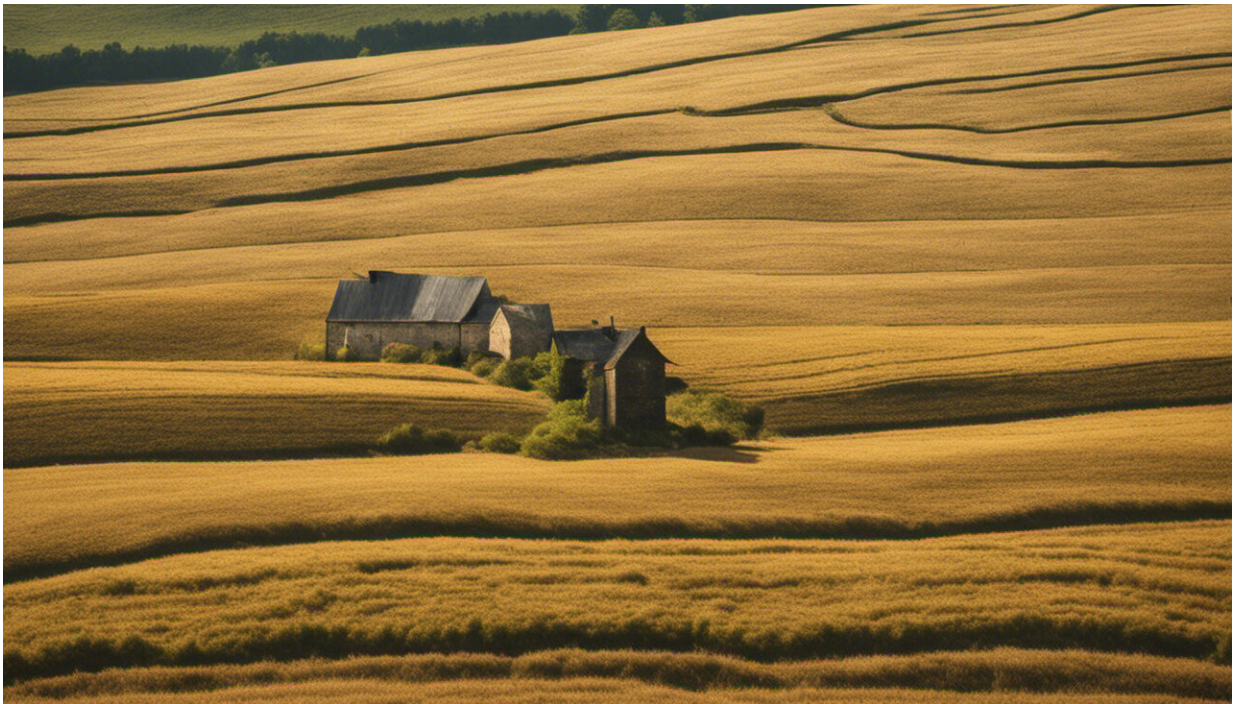


Farming practices good for the environment and the farmer's pocket

February 1 2022



Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

New research conducted as part of the EU-funded LIFT project has shown that ecological practices are the way forward for Europe's farmers. Carried out at LIFT project partner Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), United Kingdom, it suggests that such practices help farmers increase their profits and meet sustainable agricultural goals.

The research involved the [economic assessment](#) of four different ecological [management](#) practices maintained on livestock farms in Scotland. Data was collected from 31 livestock farms as part of a survey of Scottish farmers held in early 2020.

The economic impact of the different ecological practices was then analyzed using a [farm](#)-level [economic model](#) called ScotFarm. The model is based on the assumption that all farm activities are interlinked and serve to maximize the farm's profit.

Proposed measures: the pros and the cons

As reported in a news item posted on the "FarmingUK" website, the study sought to gain insight on whether economically feasible management practices would result in better uptake by farmers. They discovered that two potentially easy-to-adopt measures, namely converting some farmland into an ecological area and reducing farm inputs, could result in up to a 7 % increase in farm profits. However, ecological approaches such as setting aside farmland to plant trees and switching to an organic farming system require capital investment, making it challenging for livestock farmers without any financial support.

"The Scottish government has put forward a long-term Climate Change Plan to achieve a cleaner, greener and healthier Scotland by 2032," stated Dr. Shailesh Shrestha of SRUC in the same news item.

"Adaptation of agro-ecological management practices by farmers is a potential approach to support these plans. However, a critical issue is the economic impact of adoption of these practices. Our research provided a snapshot of the economic impacts of a number of ecological management practices and economic challenges farmers face in adopting those practices on farms. However, a better understanding of the economic feasibility of these agro-ecological management practices

would be very useful in maximizing the uptake of these management practices by the Scottish farming community."

Agriculture needs to meet the world's changing consumption and environmental needs. A better understanding of ecological principles is changing people's views on how farms function. However, as interest in ecological practices grows, we need to establish what they will contribute to farming, how they will be best implemented and how willing farmers will be to adopt them.

The LIFT (Low-Input Farming and Territories—Integrating knowledge for improving ecosystem-based farming) project has sought to determine the benefits of ecological farming in the EU and to understand how socioeconomic and policy factors affect the adoption, performance and sustainability of ecological management practices at various levels, from a single farm to an entire territory.

More information: LIFT project website: www.lift-h2020.eu/

Provided by CORDIS

Citation: Farming practices good for the environment and the farmer's pocket (2022, February 1) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2022-02-farming-good-environment-farmer-pocket.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--