

Background

Research can help to solve social, economic and environmental problems. Research has defined objectives and intended users, however, many targeted user groups are unaware of the resulting information available.

This project seeks to develop an understanding of how scientific information regarding water quality is transferred between and within the agricultural and research communities in Essex County, Ontario, Canada.

Methods

- The project is based on qualitative research which was designed to meet the needs of partner organizations (see Figure 1 and 2).
- 30 interviews conducted with key stakeholders from the agricultural sector of Essex County, Ontario.

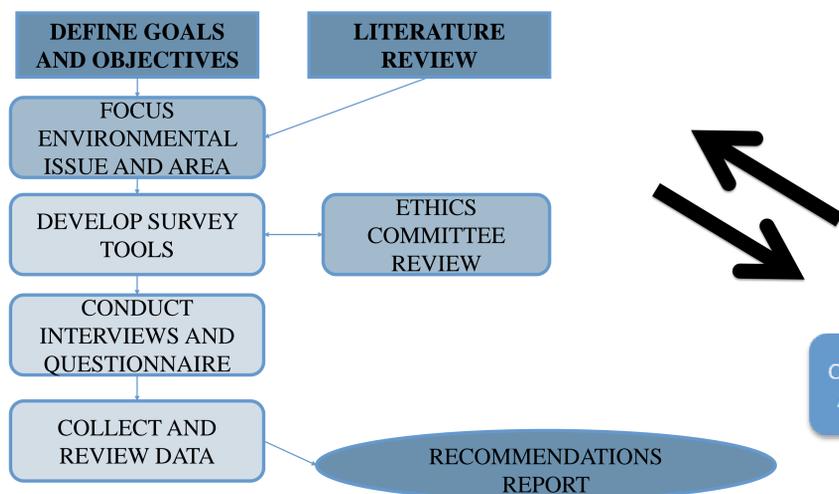


Figure 1: Research Process Diagram

Partner Organizations

This work assists the knowledge mobilization work of:

- Environment Canada (EC);
- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA);
- Office of Research, Agri-Food and Partnerships; U of G.

What this research means

Results encourage action on:

- Improving local connectivity (in person engagement).
- Continuing research which relates to local conditions.
- Marketing research results in a user friendly way (e.g. Ontario Farmer, synthesized reports).
- Improving connections between universities, governments and agricultural community.
- Adapting to changing user needs and accessed formats.
- Continuing commitment to knowledge translation and transfer efforts within research funding requirements.

Results

- 92% of agri-business is **aware** of local water quality research and issues.
- Local** participation and influence by researchers is important for developing **credibility** and **relationships**.
- Research information is already provided in multiple formats, **adapting** research to new formats based on user demand is needed.
- Marketing** of research information needed to increase access and uptake.
- Required research communication** and outreach is encouraging greater participation and initiating change in how research is acquired.
- Agricultural information is frequently provided by **farm organizations** and **supply companies** which already have local credibility and knowledge.
- Farmer observation and discussion at conventions, meetings and through on-farm dialogue are identified as **existing knowledge exchange** pathways.

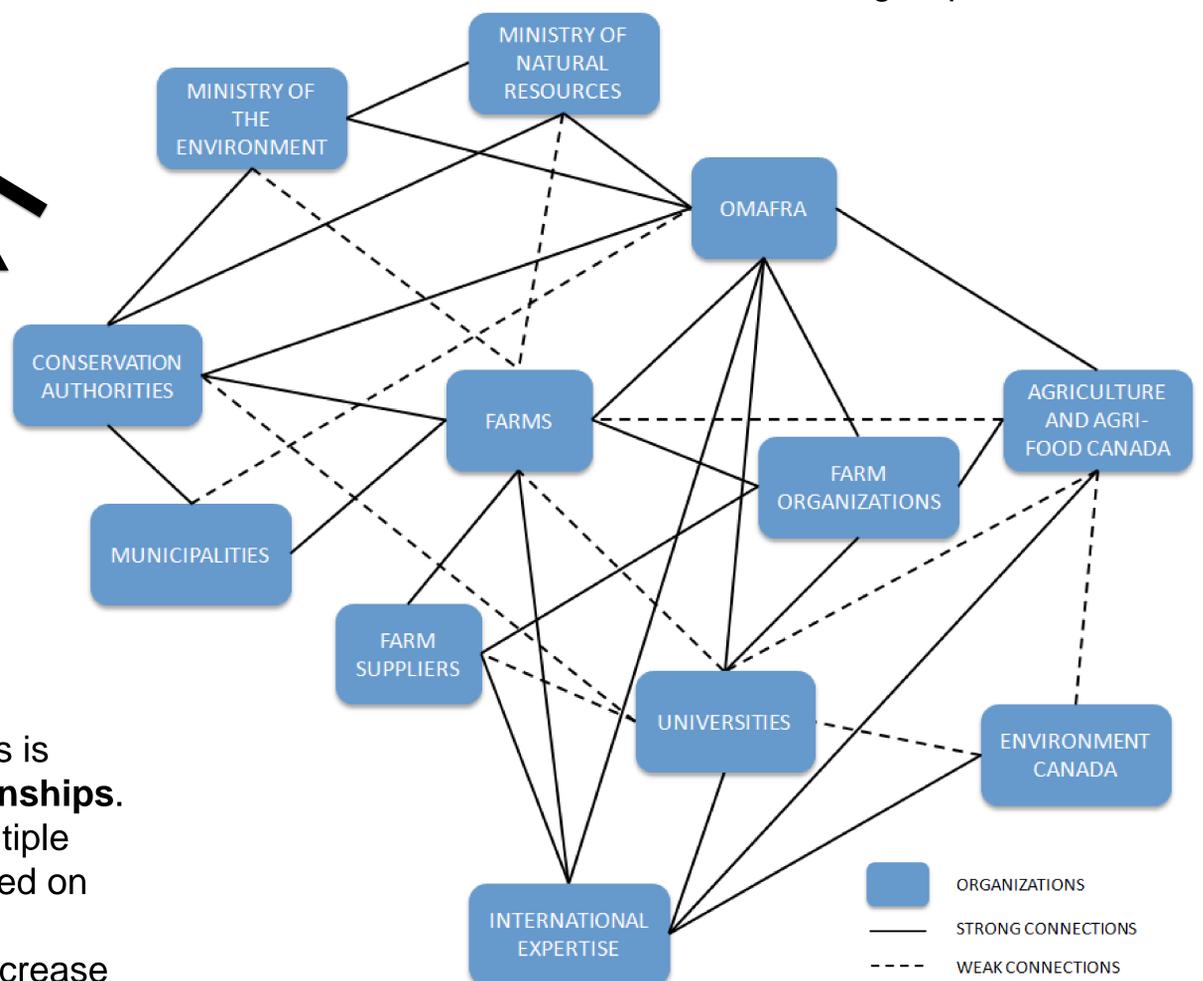


Figure 2: Agricultural information network

References

- Blackstock, K., J. Ingram, R. Burton, K. Brown, B. Slee. 2010. Understanding and influencing behaviour change by farmers to improve water quality. *Science of the Total Environment*. 408: 5631-5638.
- Sykanda, P. 2007. Quality of information sources in agricultural extension for poultry farmers in Southern Ontario. Unpublished master's thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Guelph.

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