

# FARMER-LED RESEARCH: Evaluating a KTT Best Practice for Driving Environmental BMP Adoption

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DEPARTMENT OF  
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**PROBLEM**

Insufficient adoption rates for environmental  
Best Management Practices





# **(PARTIAL) SOLUTION?**

## Farmer-Led Research

Farmers are given tools and support to design and conduct scientific studies on their own farms, to evaluate and analyze results, and to apply and share findings (see Ashby et al. 2000; Braun et al. 2000; Humphries et al. 2015).

- Observational studies
- Side-by-side demonstrations
- Randomized and replicated trials
- Plant-breeding trials

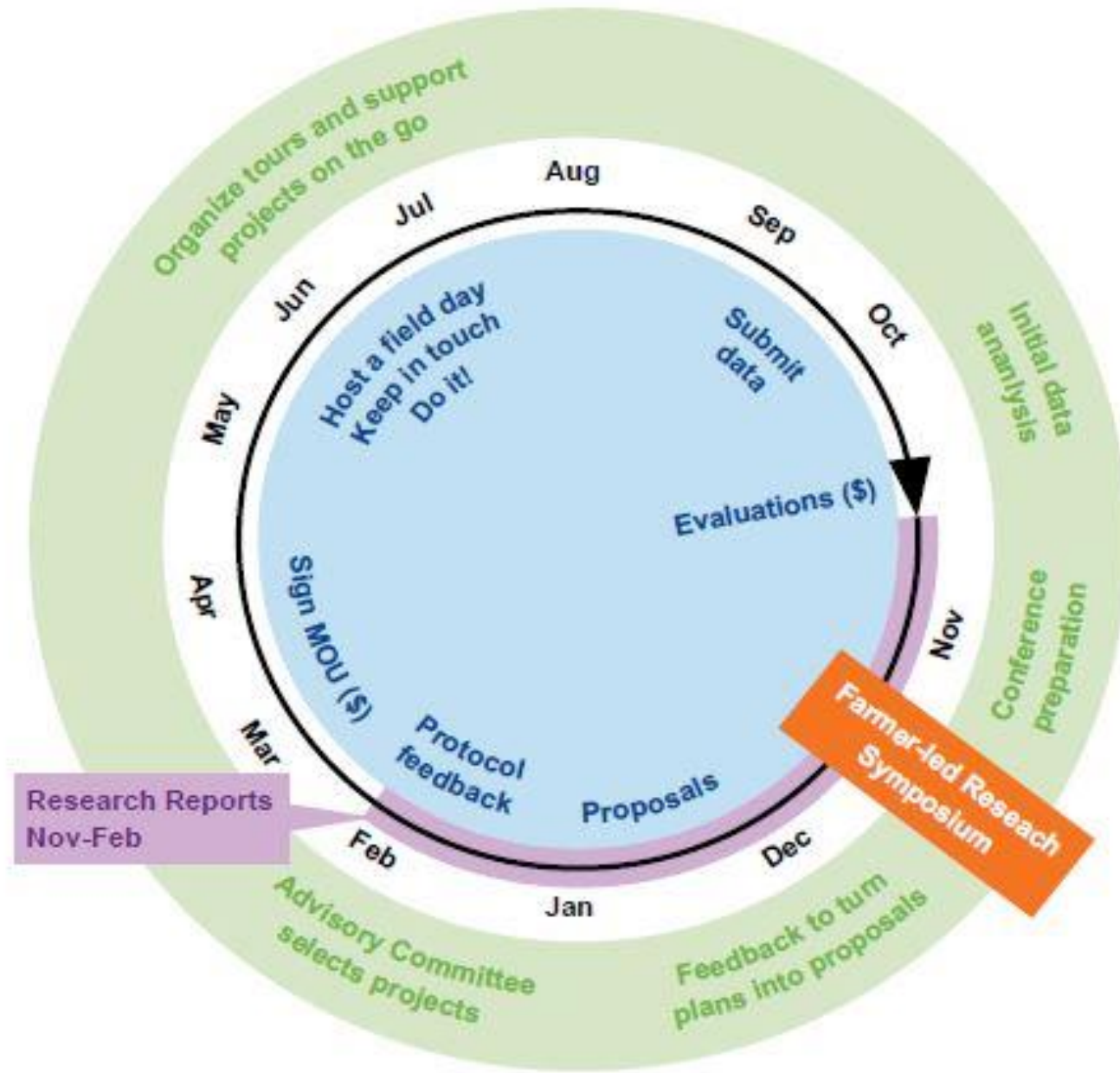




Aerial view of Ken Laing's research trial at Orchard Hill Farm, Elgin County, fall 2018  
Photo taken with a Mavic Pro drone by Drake Larsen



# FARMER-LED RESEARCH AS KTT GOOD PRACTICE



## Farmers!

\$500 given to farmers in two installments. Research expense receipts are submitted as incurred.

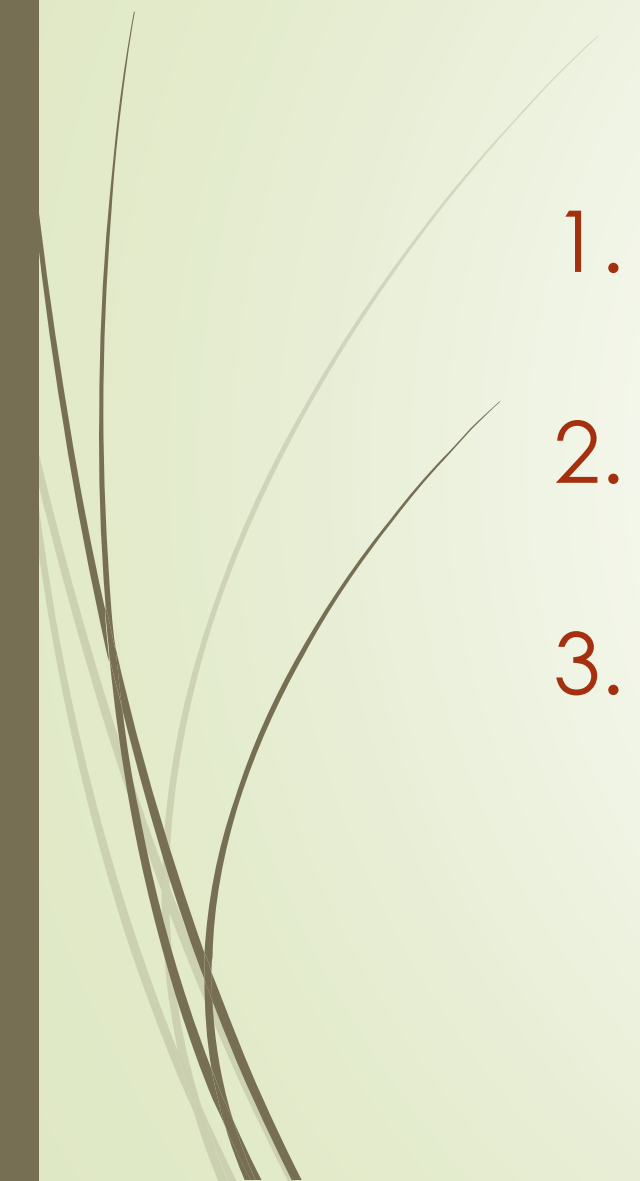
## EFAO Staff

- Ongoing staff activities:
- Farmer training
  - Quarterly e-news
  - Experimental support

Figure 1. An annual cycle of EFAO's FLR begins in the fall. In November, the previous season's research reports are presented at the Farmer-led Research Symposium.




# PROJECT GOALS

1. Evaluate impacts of Farmer-led Research as practiced in Ontario
  2. Synthesize information on Farmer-led Research best practices
  3. Develop strategy for expanding Farmer-led Research in Ontario as a KTT best practice for driving environmental BMP adoption
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# PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- ❖ Logic model for evaluating EFAO's FLRP
  - ❖ Online survey of EFAO members (N = 139)
  - ❖ *Follow-up interviews*
  - ❖ Literature review on farmer-led research
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# PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

*“EFAO helps me to **connect with other farmers** that are experimenting with soil health practices. Presentations via the conference and online materials offers great food for thought and **builds confidence to try something new**. The farmer-led research project gives me **robust knowledge** to lean on and helps me **manage risk** when taking on new practices.”*

*“Feeling **inspired** by other farmers' ideas, commitment and passion for improving soil health **strengthens my own commitment**.”*





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# THANK YOU

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