

GETTING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

GRIP in Ontario's Livestock Sector



Getting Research into Practice (**GRIP**) is a priority across industry; academia; the Ontario Ministry for Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs; and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. When done well, GRIP helps to drive innovation in a cyclical nature, which is represented here as the growth cycle of a tree.

Recent initiatives have aimed to better understand the current situation, needs, challenges, and suggestions for improvement in GRIP in Ontario's livestock sector. Here we provide an overview of the key components of GRIP and some of the findings to date.

THE INNOVATION CYCLE

Branches & leaves

- Adoption of practices by farmers
- Identification of new research needs and ideas

Falling leaves

- Feedback to academia and funding agencies regarding priorities

Trunk

- Effective delivery of information and recommendations to farmers

Roots

- Strong collaboration between industry, academia, and funders to establish research priorities and GRIP efforts
- Long term planning, infrastructure, and people capacity and applied/basic research are key

GRIP: RECENT FINDINGS

Ontario Livestock Sector



KEY SURVEY RESULTS

GRIP COMPONENT	MINISTER SURVEY ¹	LRIC SURVEY ²	LRIC DIRECTOR/STAFF SURVEY ³
Adoption & growth	Identified research needs as stated by farmers (see word cloud on next page)	N/A	Farmers consider the investment (money & time) as well as risks of implementing changes
Connecting farmers with information	Clear differences seen in delivery of information between supply managed & non-supply managed livestock	64% of faculty & 80% of industry respondents rated GRIP effectiveness poorly If faculty are to play a role in GRIP, they require training and reward for excellence	Language matters & is now a hindrance GRIP is an excellent umbrella term for all components from research to implementation and incorporates KTT, KM, Advisory Services, & more
Collaboration & research between industry, academia, & funders	Closer relationship is needed between academia & industry	Strong call for collaborative approach to establishing research priorities	Relationships & trust matter
GRIP COMPONENT	ATA POLICY BRIEF ⁴	LRIC PRODUCER INTERVIEWS ⁵	NAAAN ⁶
Adoption & growth	N/A	Research that connects with farmers at the beginning will have a better chance of adoption of results	N/A
Connecting farmers with information	Many actors involved in GRIP, lack of coordination & vast differences by sector. Veterinarians, feed & pharmaceutical manufacturers, & building engineering services invest heavily in GRIP	A wide range of preferred GRIP methods exist from which to learn of innovation opportunities	Challenges to accessing programs include: awareness of programs & services; poor internet service; & perception of the value of services
Collaboration & research between industry, academia, & funders	The public sector advisory service needs to play a stronger role in supporting the governance of the systems	Researchers need to get out & talk to farmers to understand on-farm realities	The role of public extension in GRIP is not clear

KEY and CONSISTENT FINDINGS

(From across all surveys¹⁻⁶)



- 1** The current system of GRIP for livestock in Ontario involves many players but lacks planning, coordination, and capacity
- 2** As public extension services diminished, private actors became engaged in GRIP but followed the money making services which differ across sectors
- 3** A new level of collaboration between industry, academia & government is needed, both in setting research priorities & defining & implementing a new system for GRIP
- 4** Researchers need to get onto farms in order to understand day-to-day realities, challenges, & opportunities; likewise, farmers need to be involved and provide commentary on research projects
- 5** Any effective GRIP system will need to address the vast differences in species, geography, access to internet, personal learning styles, & the “de-risking” of testing new approaches on farm

WHAT DO FARMERS SAY THEY NEED?

(Findings from the Minister survey¹)



NOW WHAT?

- 1** The many parties now interested in GRIP need to coalesce in order to ensure action. This document is aimed at helping to develop a common understanding of where we are today
- 2** At the GRIP Roundtable to be held April 19, 2023, participants will discuss how to move forward toward an improved system of GRIP for Ontario livestock. For more information on this Roundtable, contact Jean at jhowden@livestockresearch.ca
- 3** The Roundtable, as well as LRIC’s International Research Advisory Committee will be using an A2B approach where A is where we are today, B is where we agree to move to, and 2 are the steps we need to take individually and collectively in order to create a better system of GRIP
- 4** OMAFRA, industry organizations, and academia must be open to change and actively involved in resourcing and implementing a new system

1. LRIC 2022 surveys of faculty and livestock organizations, directors, and staff ; 2. OMAFRA Minister 2022 KTT survey of producers; 3. LRIC/UofG/PIC 2022 producer interviews; 4. Dr. Ataharul Chowdhury Policy brief; 5. What’s the Holdup? BMP report by ACER Consulting, 2023; 6. North American Agricultural Advisory Network survey results 2022