

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

21 November 2024

Dear Baroness Bennet,

Thank you for your contribution to the stimulating debate on 31st October on the contribution of science and technology to the UK economy. You asked about how much of agricultural research is dedicated to agro-ecological approaches.

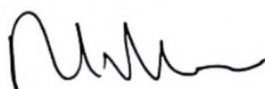
UKRI's Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) has a strategic priority relating to Bioscience for Sustainable Agriculture and Food and invested £674m in this space between 2019 and 2024. Agro-ecological research & innovation has accounted for between 21.7% and 29.3% of BBSRC's agriculture investments annually during this time. These BBSRC investments include agro-ecological programmes such as AgZero+ (co-funded with NERC), and Growing Health delivered by Rothamsted Research and partners, initiatives such as Transforming Land Use for Net Zero Nature and People, and international collaborations such as the European Joint Programme SOIL.

UKRI's Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) also has a significant portfolio of agro-ecological research and innovation and invested £44m, or just over 43%, of its wider investment of £101m in Agricultural Research since 2019.

UKRI's other Research Councils, Innovate UK and Research England also invest in Sustainable Agriculture and Food, with funding supporting Institutions and Partnerships focussed on agro-ecological approaches including Centre for crop science, Food & Agriculture - STEPS Centre, Lincoln Agri-Robotics (LAR), the STFC Food Network, Centre of Research Excellence in Intelligent and Sustainable Productive Systems (CRISPS) and The Ceres Agri-Tech Knowledge Exchange Partnership.

I hope this information is helpful. I will place a copy of this letter in the libraries of the House.

Kind regards,



LORD VALLANCE
Minister of State
Department for Science, Innovation & Technology