

Practice Abstract #21

How to present scientific results to practitioners

Scientific results are usually presented and/or published in the form of a scientific article with a typical structure and a very detailed and scholarly description of the rationale, methodology, presentation and interpretation. This usually makes them so specific that they are rarely read by farmers, technicians, advisors or the general public. To reach practitioners, the message must be focused on their problem or issue of interest, it must be short, clear and easy to understand, but at the same time, it must not oversimplify.

However, researchers face a dilemma because the credibility of their scientific result(s) depends not only on the reputation of the institute or scientist(s) generating the result but also on the quality and impact of the journal. It is therefore important to maintain the rigorous peer-review of the scientific results and to communicate them in reputable journals to fellow researchers, but at the same time complement them with a more accessible form of presentation.

For example, a summary of the highlights and practical implications, making use of audiovisual aids such as infographics, factsheets, videos, or podcasts, which can make scientific information more visual, accessible and comprehensible. Similarly, while it remains important for researchers to share the information about scientific result(s) through professional channels such as ResearchGate and LinkedIn, or even to attract attention through social media such as Facebook or Twitter, the most effective communication with farmers remains through personal contact. This underlines the need for interactive exchanges, in line with the policy of the multi-actor approach of the EU's Horizon research and innovation programme.

