

Improving Farm Stewardship Programs through Understanding Farmers



Melisa Luymes
Tuesday Nov 19, 2019
Latornell 2019 Conference



No till ③
(10 years)
(corn-soy-
wheat)

No till ④
(10 years)
(corn-soy)

① Conv tillage
(10 years hay -
corn-soy-corn)

Conv tillage
(wheat-soy)

Perennial ⑤
Pasture
(corn-soy-wheat
- 3 years alfalfa)



Research 2017-2019

- Luymes (2017). Social Factors Influencing the Adoption of On-farm Environmental Practices in the Lake Erie Watershed, Ontario, Canada
- Roche and Luymes (2018). Understanding Policy and Program Factors to Increase Best Management Practices Adoption in Agriculture in the Lake Erie Basin
- Roche and Luymes (2019). Developing a Tool to Develop and Evaluate Programs Designed to Influence the On-Farm Adoption of Agricultural Best Management Practices in the Lake Erie Basin





Agricultural Communications & Epidemiological Research

Understand. Inform. Influence.

Agricultural extension and scientific communication
Health and disease research
Education and training



Steven Roche
PhD, MSc



Dan Shock
PhD, DVM



Dave Renaud
PhD, DVM



Rachel Genore-Roche
RVT



Melisa Luymes

- Farm family
- MA Rural Sociology, Guelph
- Farm organizations
- Boots-on-the-ground, soil conservation, erosion control
- 150+ farm kitchen tables



What drives a farmer?



How do farmers see the 'P problem'?



What are farmer attitudes about BMPs?



What are farmer attitudes towards BMPs?



What are the constraints to BMPs?



- **Agronomic**
- **Economic**
- **Social**

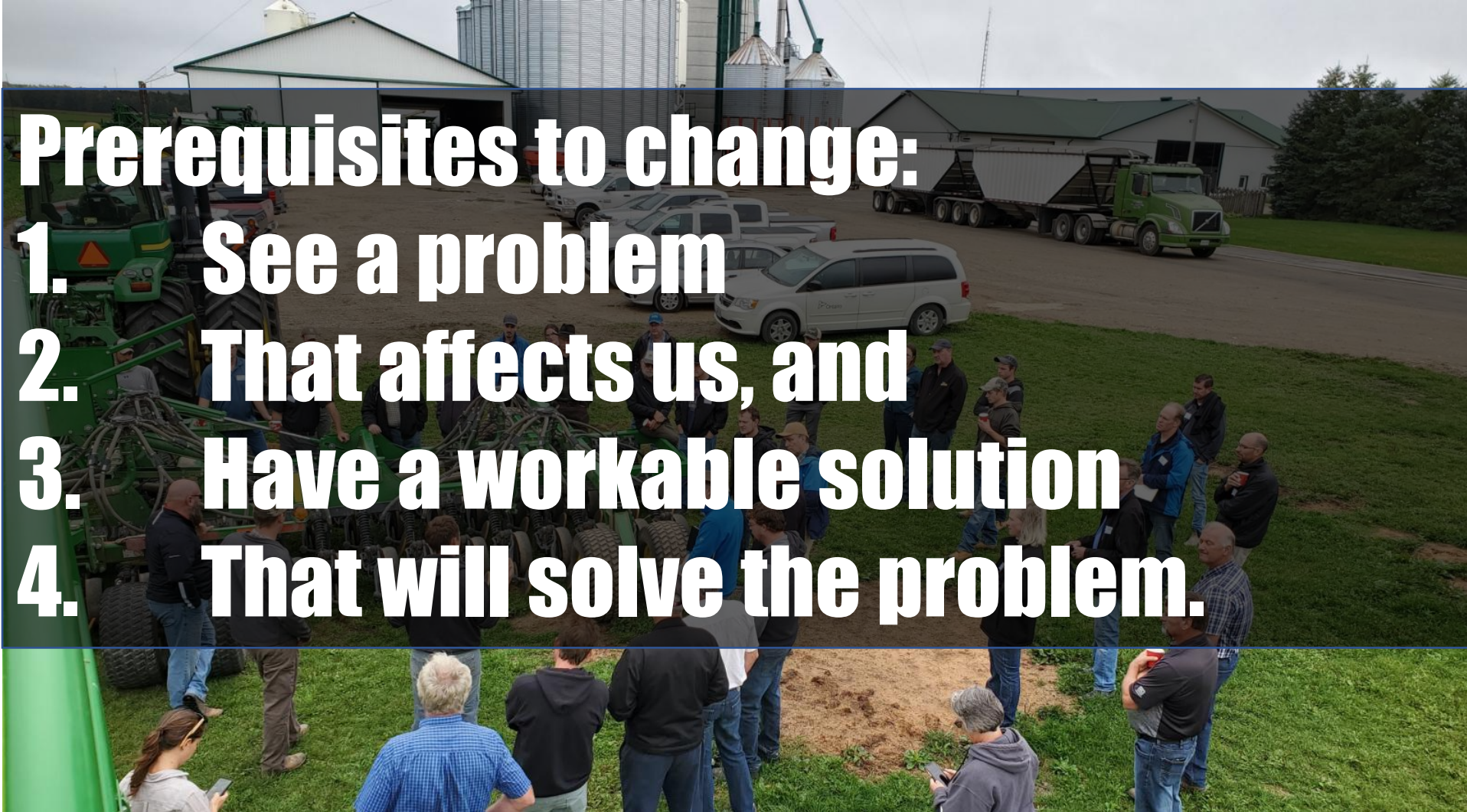
What do farmers think about cost-share?



How can we increase BMP adoption?

Prerequisites to change:

- 1. See a problem**
- 2. That affects us, and**
- 3. Have a workable solution**
- 4. That will solve the problem.**



What's in a good extension program?

Institutional Trust



An NCGA Initiative

Support from

- Bayer CropScience
- Foundation for Food and Agriculture
- The General Mills Foundation
- Midwest Row Crop Collaborative
- National Wheat Foundation
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- The Walton Family Foundation

Adult Learning



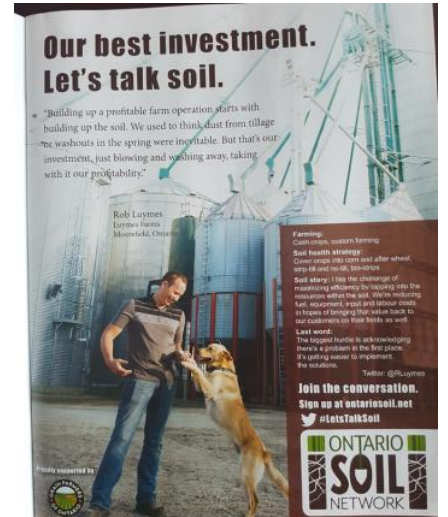
Bridging Social Capital



Tools & Resources



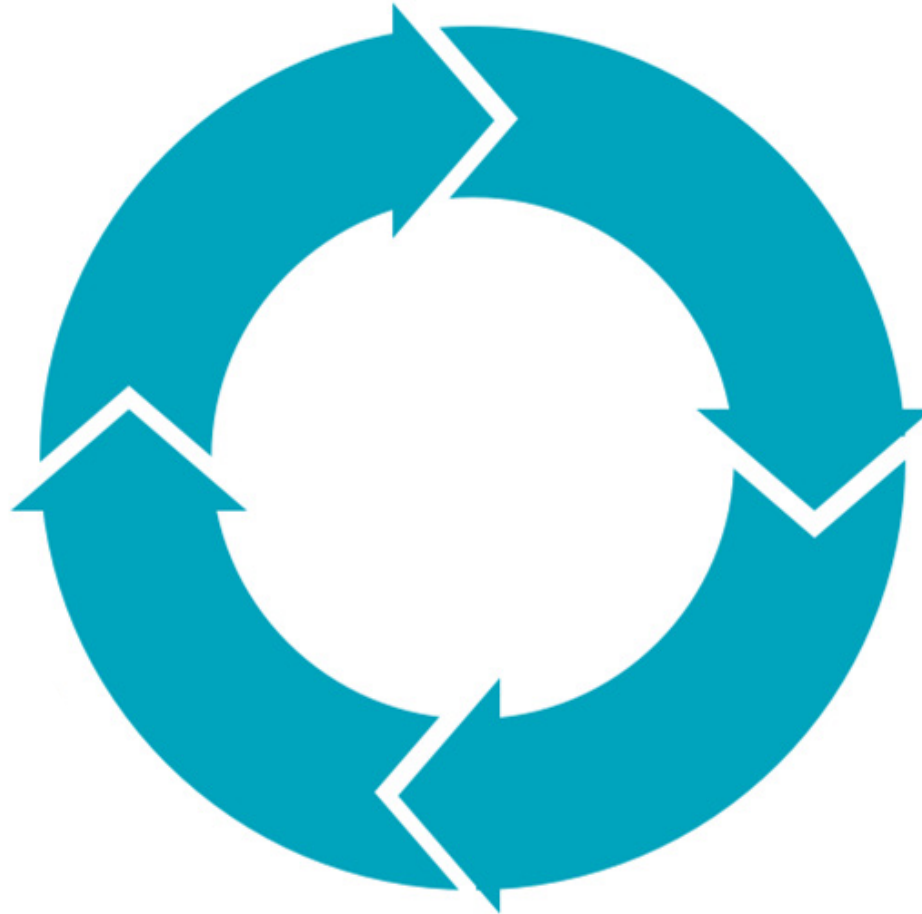
Clear & Consistent Messaging



How can we improve extension programs?

Design

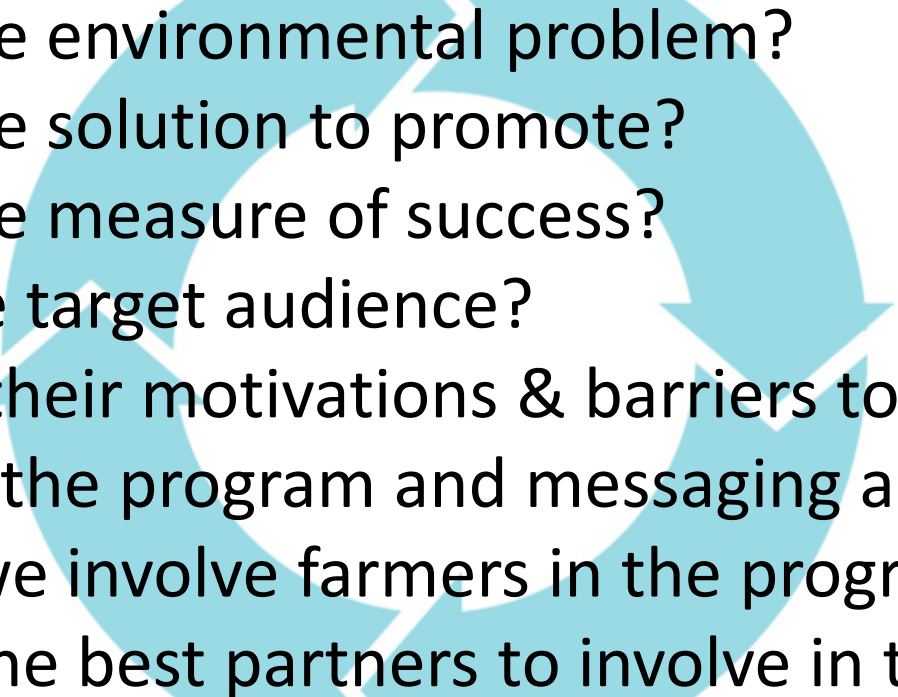
- Pre-testing
- S.M.A.R.T. goals
- Tailor program & messaging to address the barriers



Evaluation

- Standardized?
- KPIs
- Social indicators
- 3rd party
- Ground truthing

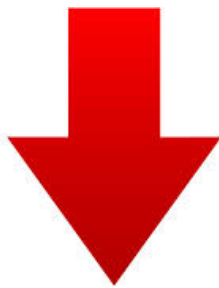
What goes into program design?

- 
- What is the environmental problem?
 - What is the solution to promote?
 - What is the measure of success?
 - Who is the target audience?
 - What are their motivations & barriers to the solution?
 - How does the program and messaging address the barriers?
 - How will we involve farmers in the program design?
 - Who are the best partners to involve in the program?

What messages work with farmers?



- Other farmers are doing it
- You'll save money
- It's best for your farm
- It solves a problem



- It's the right thing to do
- There is funding available
- 'Just try it'
- Lake Erie needs your help

Next steps: Learning *with* farmers!



**Grassroots,
farmer-led
approaches**

W2B ROOM 7

Wed 10:15-11:45

Contact us



Melisa Luymes

mel@headlands.ca

www.headlands.ca



Dr. Steven Roche

sroche@acerconsult.ca

www.acerconsult.ca