IFA Digital

Adoption & Attitudes Report

IFA

Skillnet IRELAND

amárach research

Farm Business Skillnet

IFA

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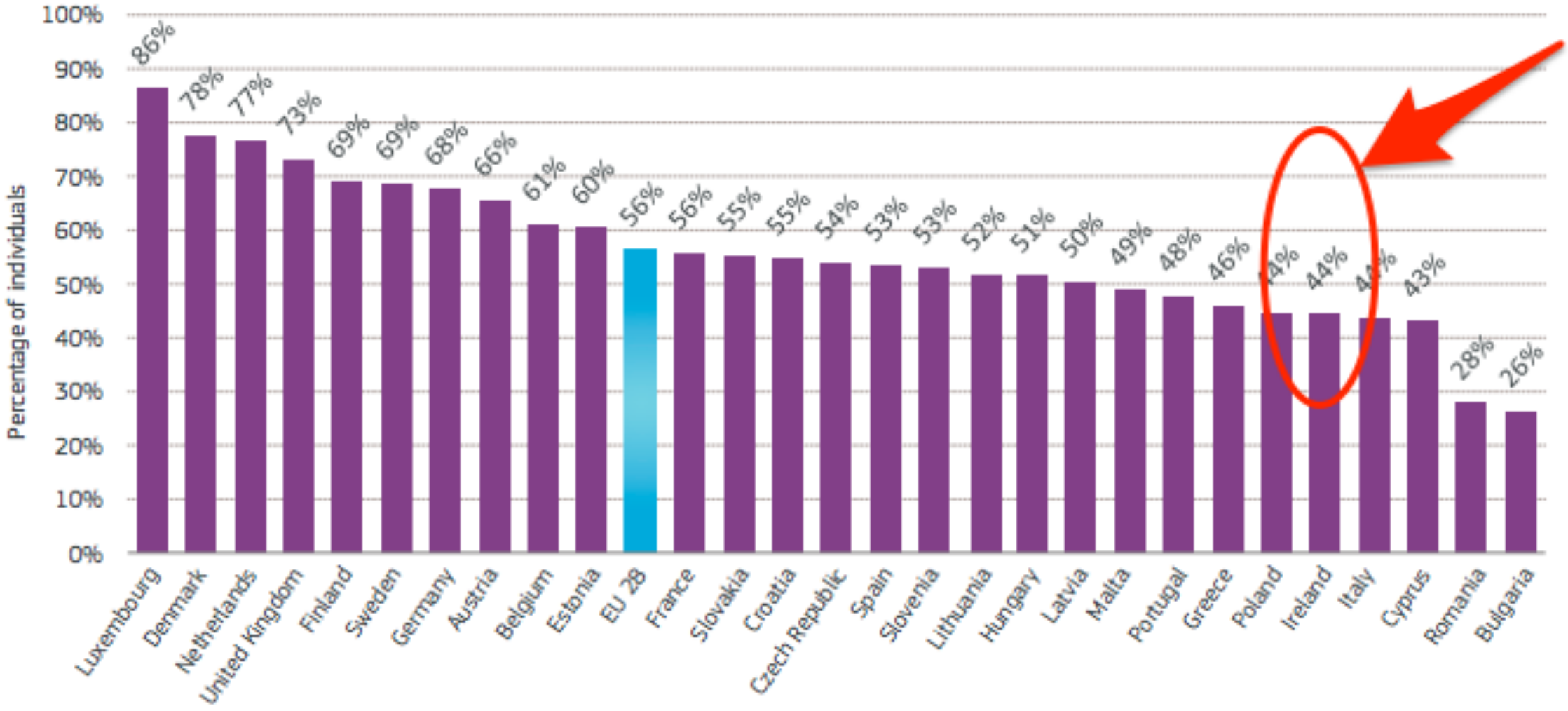
Access for every farmer to the digital skills and technologies they need to participate in the digital economy

“Only 44% of Irish people have **basic** digital skills”



Source: The Digital Skills Gap in Europe, October 2017, European Commission

In the near future, 90% of jobs will require digital skills

Source: The Digital Skills Gap in Europe, October 2017, European Commission

Global agriculture is increasingly becoming more technologically advanced.

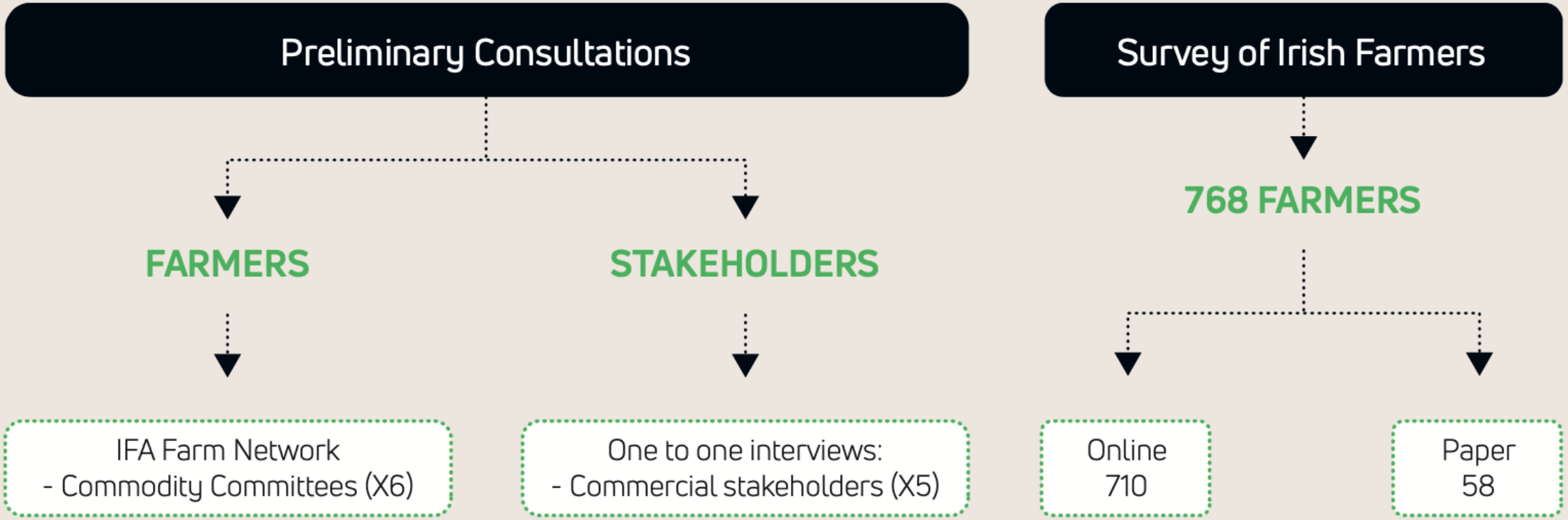
A core objective of **IFA** & **Farm Business Skillnet** is to:

- equip farmers with the **skills & knowledge** of how to use this technology
- and in turn **increase technological adoption** on farms in **Ireland**.

Farm Business Skillnet undertook a research project with **Amárach Research** to survey farmers and relevant stakeholders in Ireland.

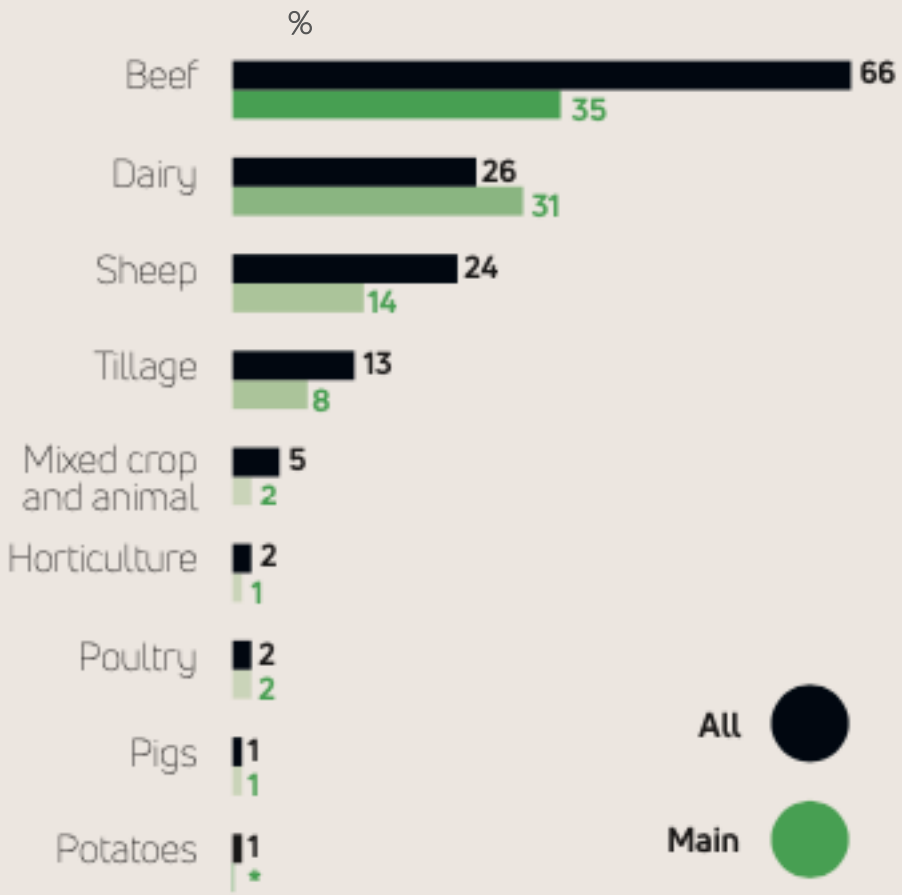
- **Current awareness** and usage of farm technology.
- **Barriers** and **positives** to using farm technology.
- **Training** and **education**.

Research Methodology

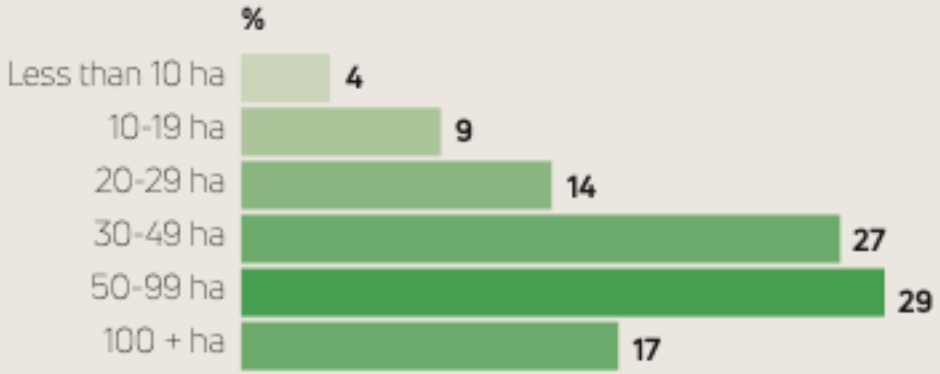


Overall Profile

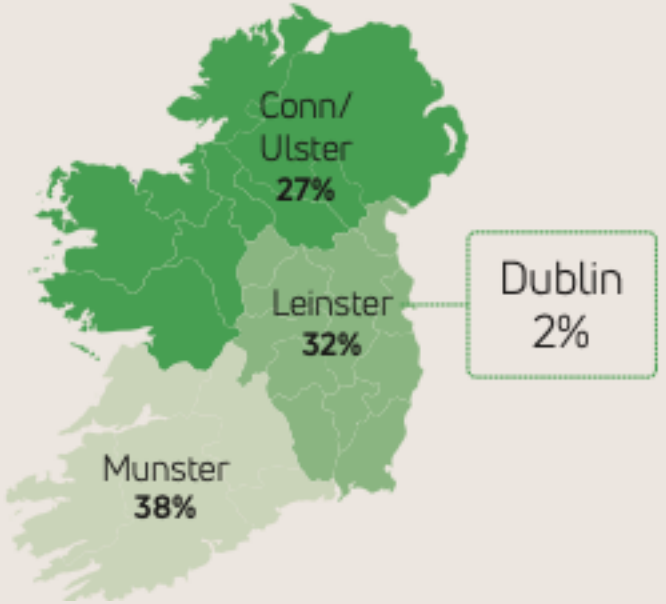
FARM ENTREPRISE



FARM SIZE

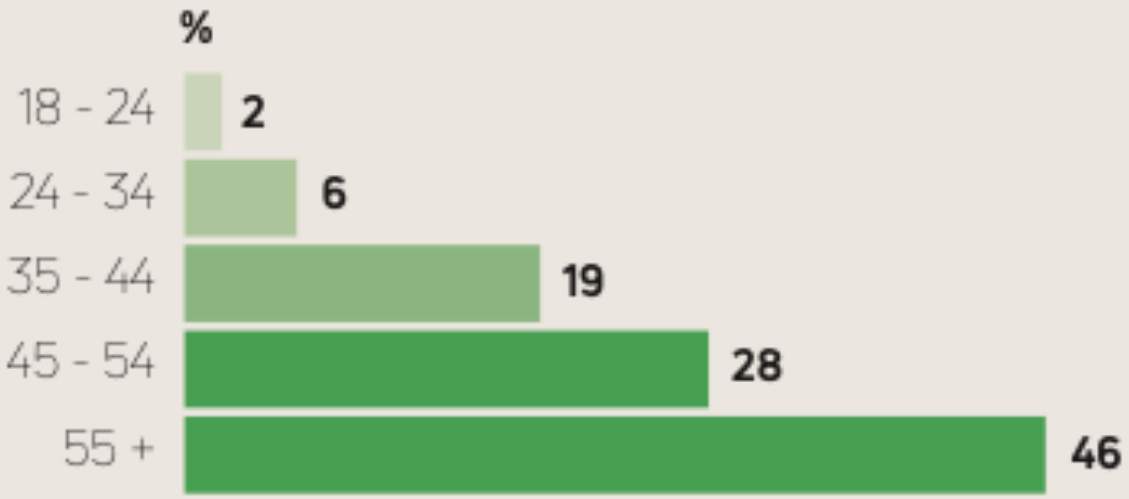


REGION

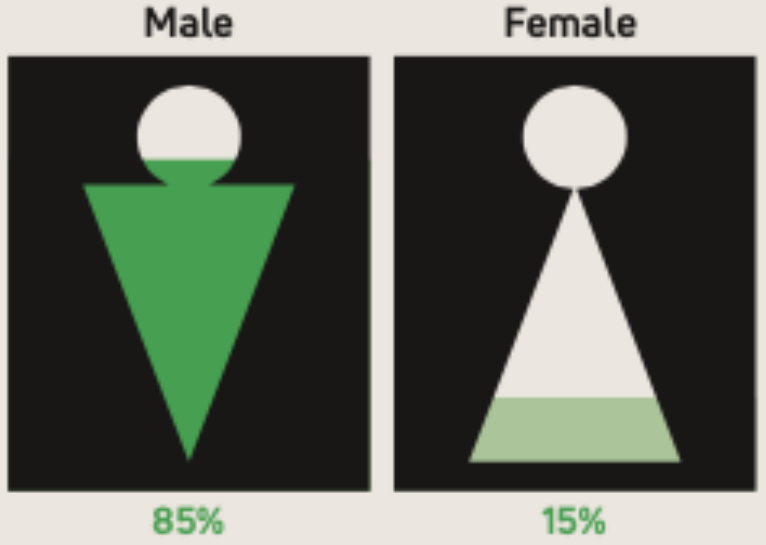


Overall Profile

AGE



GENDER



Key Takeaways

Technology Confidence

There is a strong use of **technology** among a widespread group of those surveyed.

The **majority** have a **smartphone (84%)** and a **laptop (69%).**

70% use farming related apps with **dairy** and **tillage** farmers most likely to use **farming apps**.

Unsurprisingly **younger cohorts** are more **confident** in tech.

Confidence in everyday tech and **likelihood to invest** in tech go hand in hand.

There is a **positive attitude** towards tech:

- **46%** of farmers claim to be **already using** tech on-farm
- **40% plan** to embrace in the future

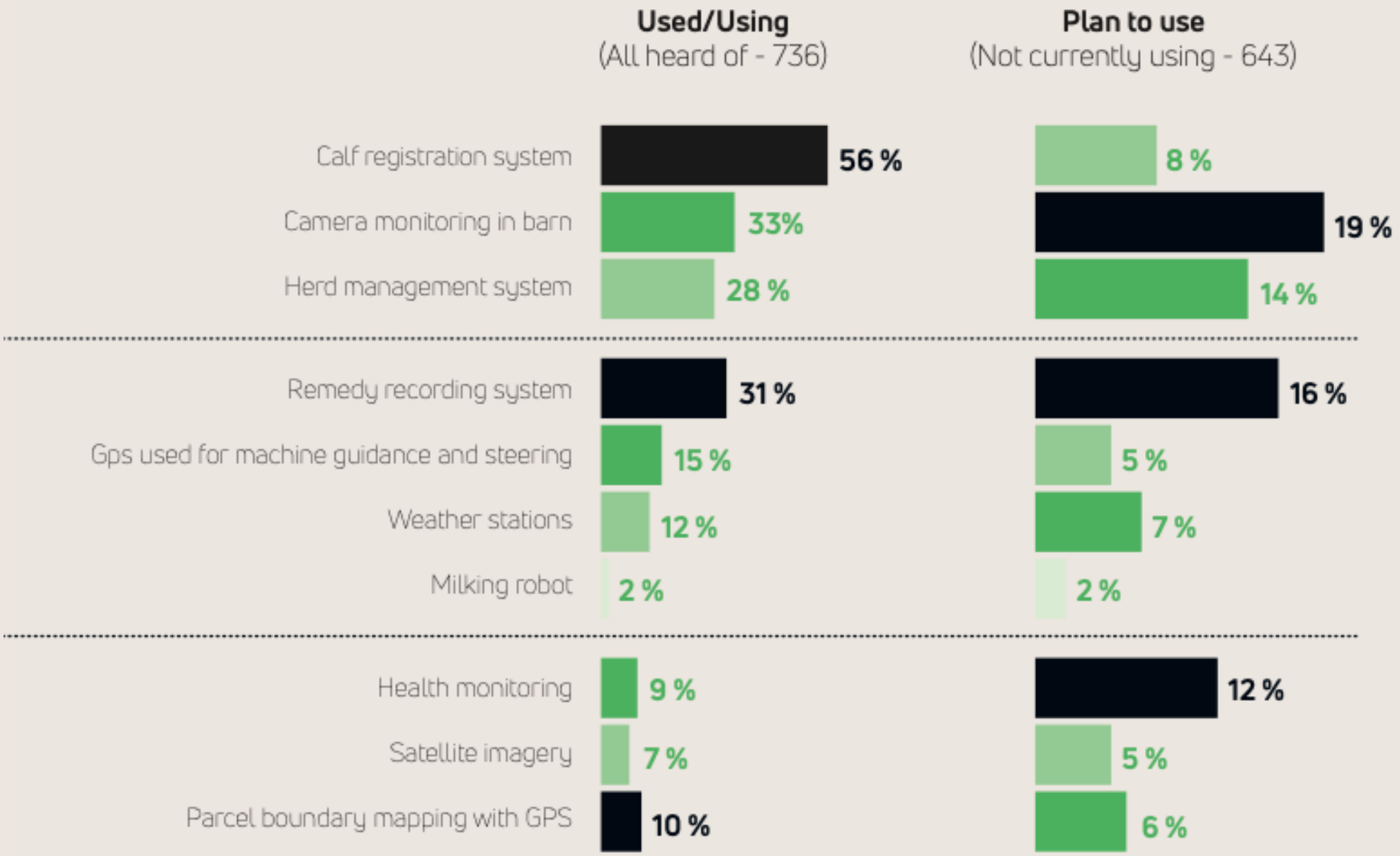
BUT lots of work to do!

Only **two systems** have **over 75%** adoption in a relevant sector:

- **Calf registration system** in **Dairy** with **86%**
- **GPS** machine guidance in **Tillage** with **77%**

Current Technology Usage

Current Technology Usage



Barriers to Adoption

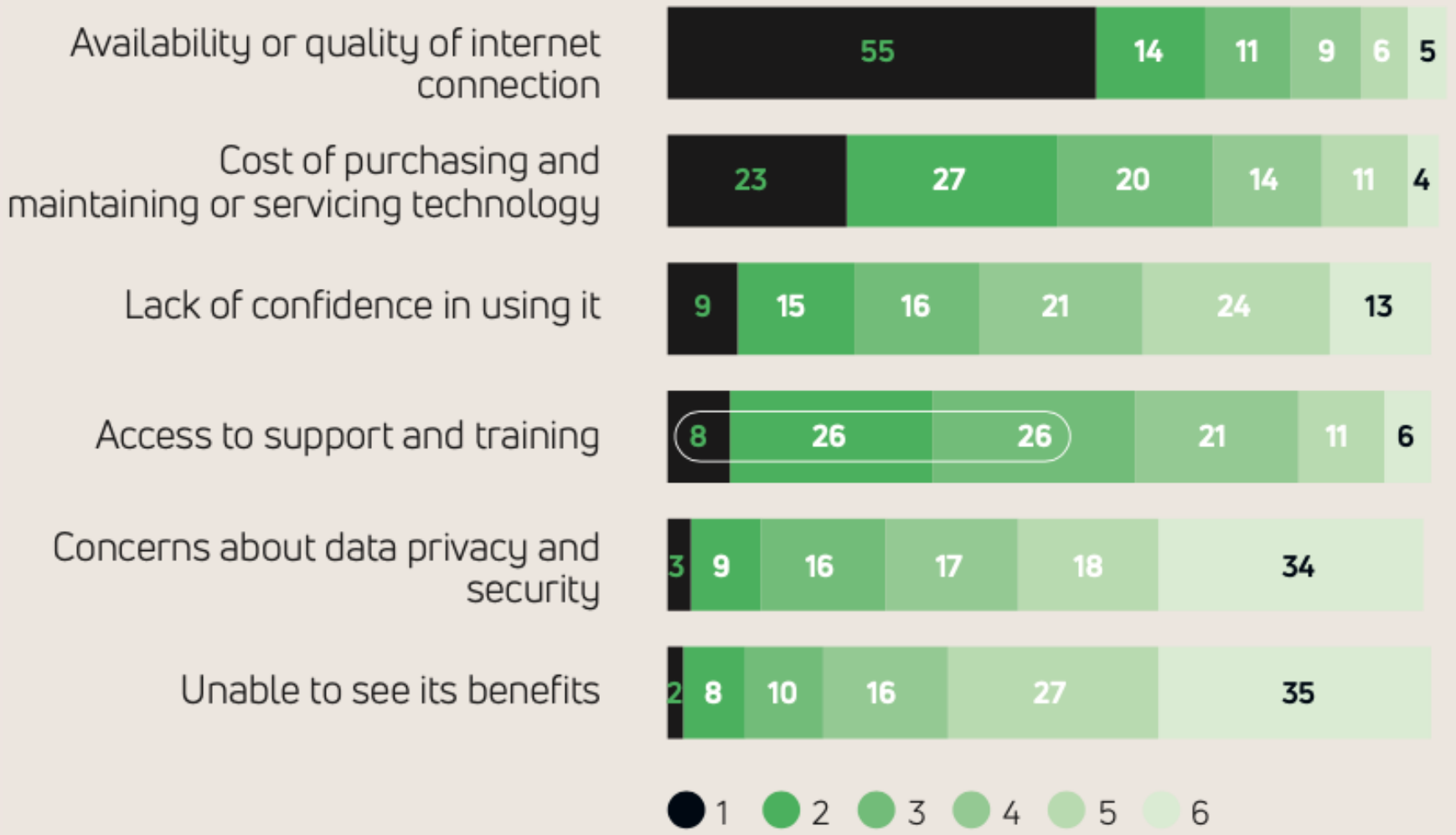
55% identify the lack of, or quality of, **broadband** as the **main barrier.**

This is followed by the **cost of the initial investment** and the **support** and **maintenance costs** of **technology.**

60% included access to **support** and **training** in their top **three barriers.**

Confidence in usage is key for many – those who are **not confident** in everyday technology are more likely to **see access to support** and **training** as a **barrier.**

Barriers to Adoption



Base: All respondents - 732

Agricultural media has a strong influence on farmers' ag tech adoption **(42%)**

- This rose to **52%** for the **35s**

Close collaboration and buy-in from **farm advisors** is important – a key channel to increase adoption.

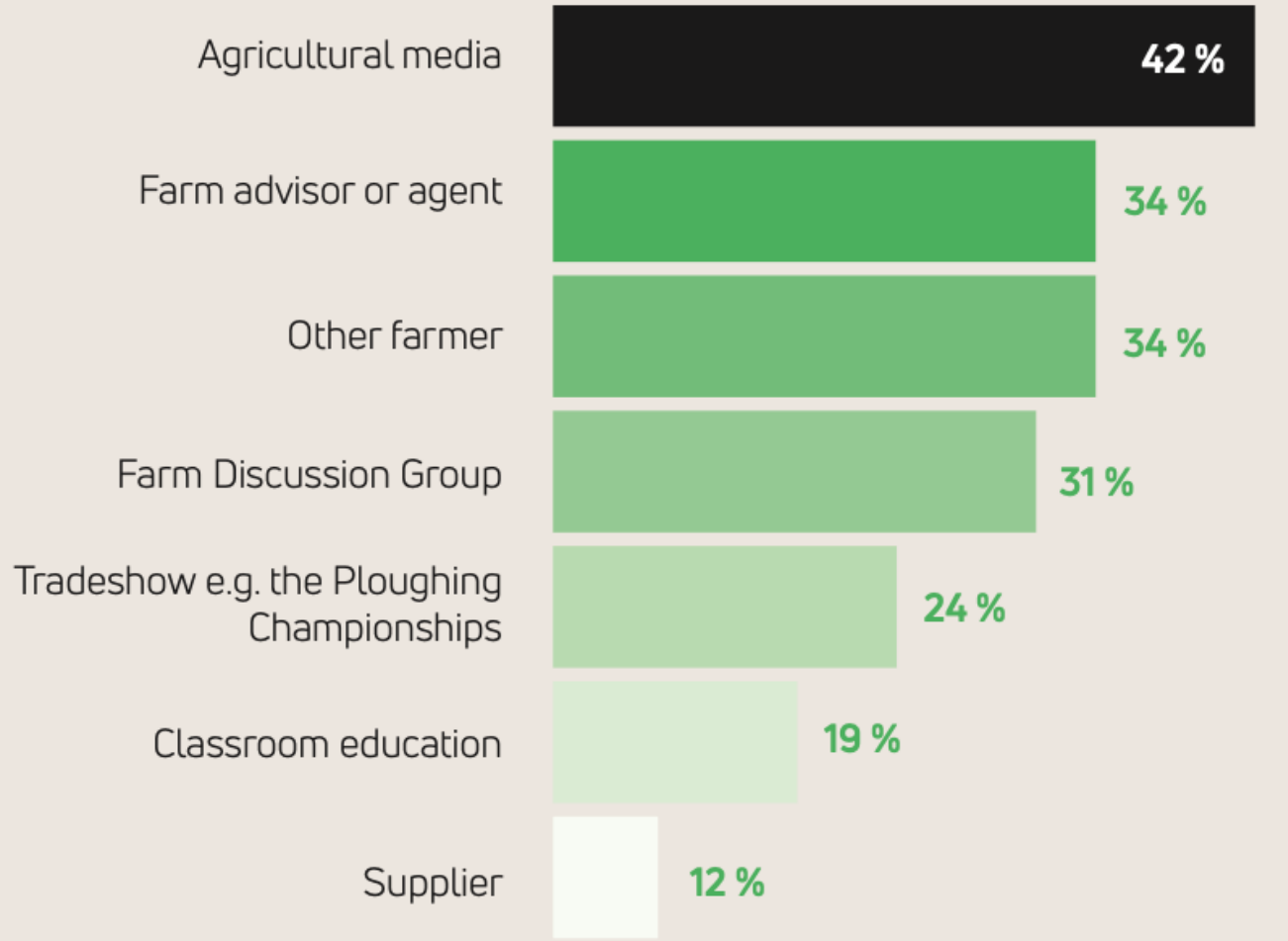
Social relationships should be leveraged where farmers get the opportunity to see how **peers** are using tech and **learn** from one another.

Leveraging Current Farmer Experiences

> "There is an acceptance that farmers will need to see first-hand evidence of technology working and of claims made by software providers."

Leveraging Current Farmer Experiences

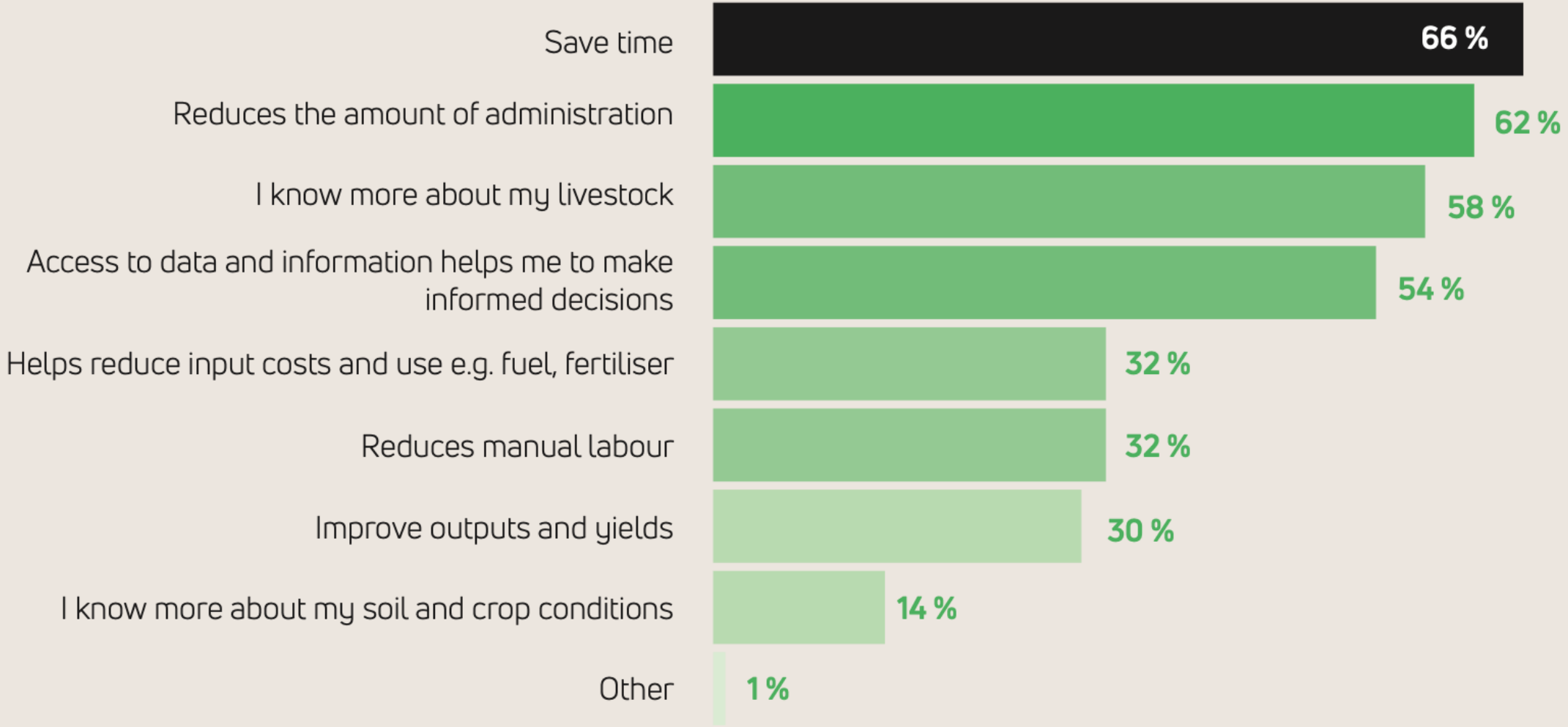
What or who influenced your decision to use farming technologies?



Base: All that have or are using some - 581

Leveraging Current Farmer Experiences

How does using technology help you in your daily work on the farm?



Base: All that have or are using some - 573

Education & Training

> “One of the core aims of this report is to analyse and define the digital skills gaps and requirements.”

25% of those who have completed training, have **completed courses** in **digital farming technology.**

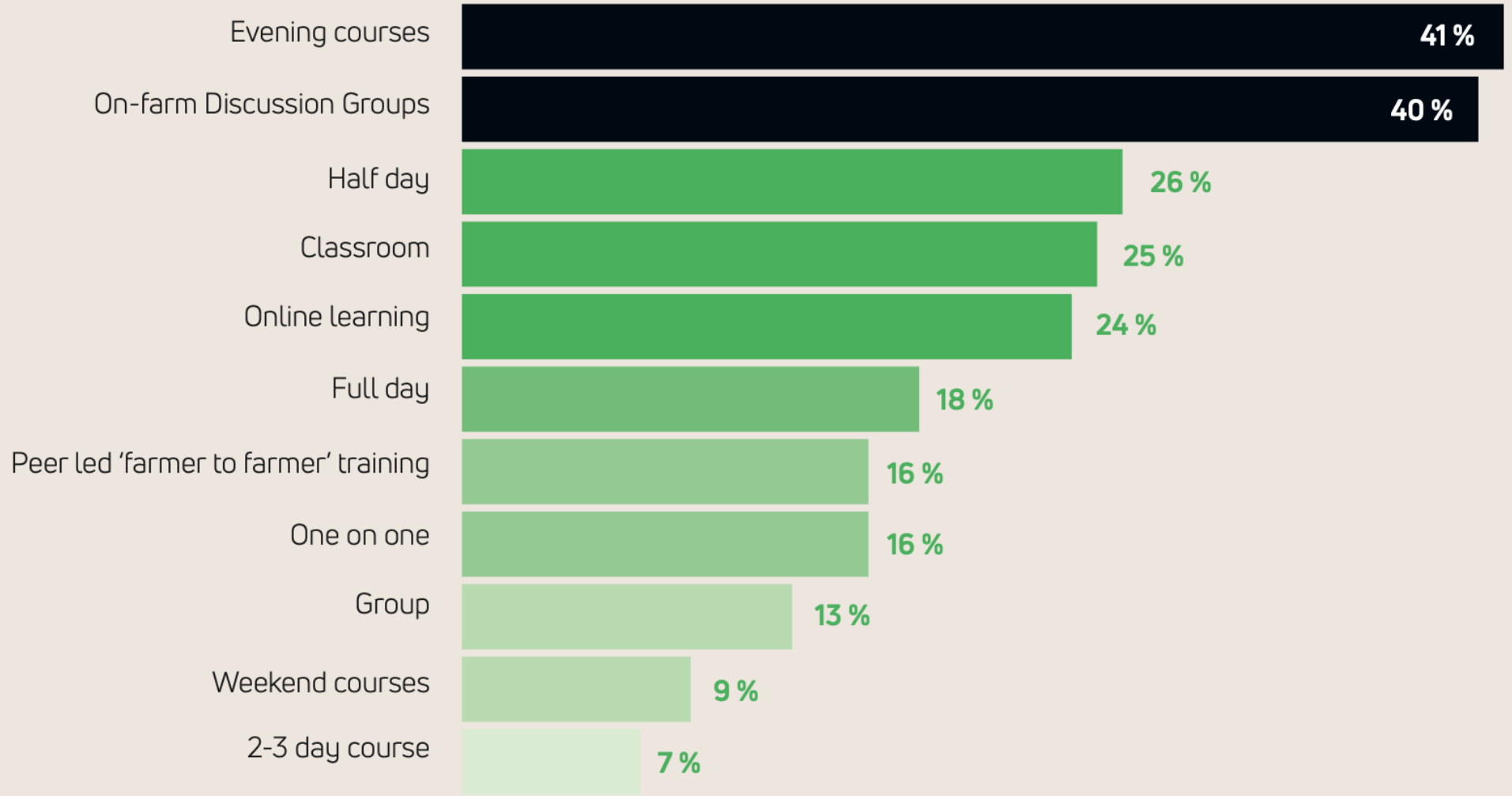
Those who have **completed digital training** courses are more **likely to invest** in **technology** in the future.

In an ideal situation, farmers feel **on-farm Discussion Groups** are a **better learning environment**, with **evening** the most suitable.

Under 35s feel most **comfortable** with **online learning** but still are just as likely to value DG.

Education & Training

What type of learning environment would work best for you?



Base: All respondents - 759

Tailored face-to-face training, **KT groups** and **ag-tech** advisors are the **preferred** forms of **support** to help farmers **adopt tech**.

An openness to **video-based training** is also evident, particularly amongst **tillage farmers**, and those **under 45**, both of whom are also receptive to **online documentation.**

Supports & Incentives

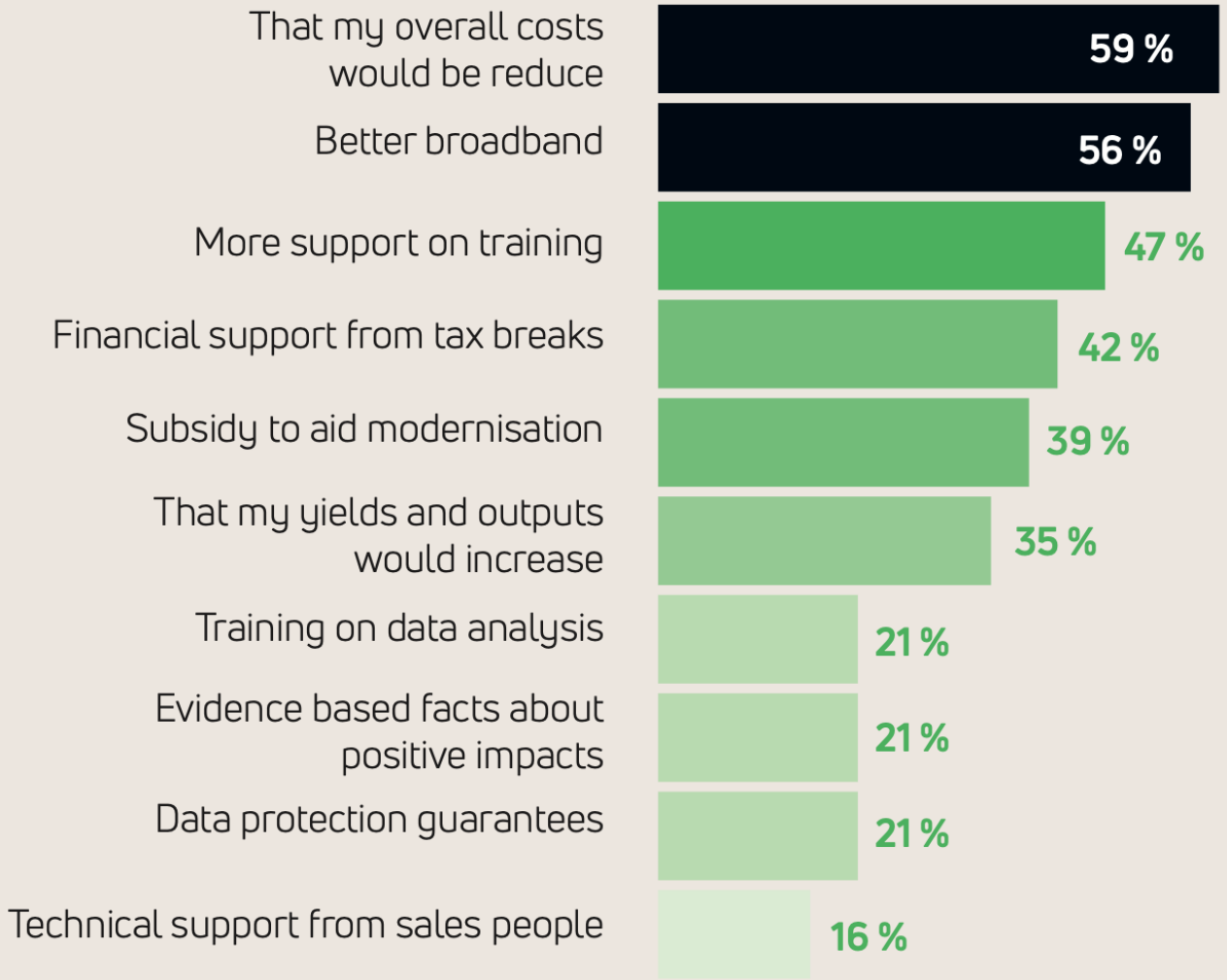
> “Aside from broadband, increased support on training would have one of the most positive effects.”

Financial incentives would be the most likely factor to **increase use** or **adoption.**

Aside from broadband, **increased support** on **training** would have one of the **most positive effects.**

Supports & Incentives

What incentives would encourage you to use/ increase use of digital?



Base: All respondents - 749

Sharing Data

> “There should also be a focus on existing users to leverage their positive experiences.”

40% of farmers said they would be **happy** for their **data to be collected** in **exchange** for a reduction in the **cost of on-farm technology.**

A **further 44%** say more **information** and **assurances** are needed.

Future Investments

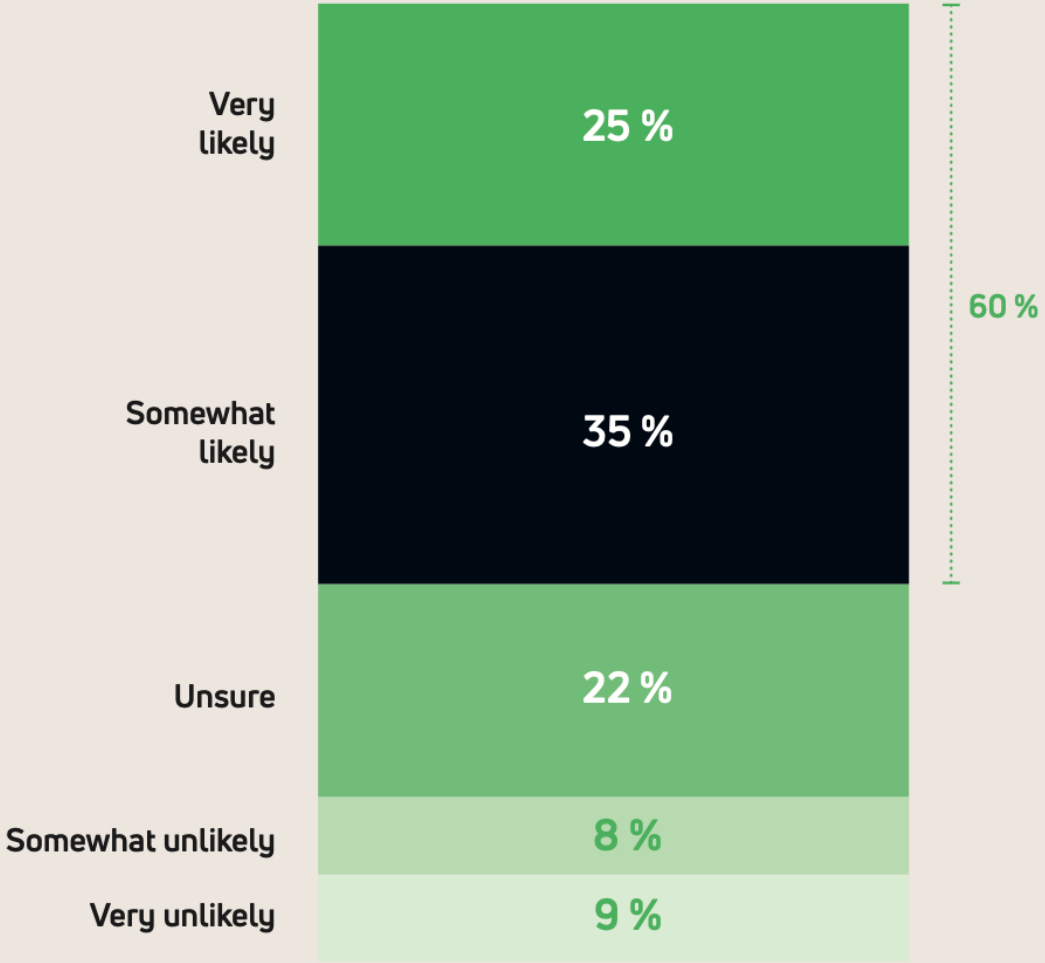
60% of farmers said they are likely to **invest** in **digital technology** in the near future.

The **majority (42%)** are planning to do so within the next **2 years** – **tillage farmers** and **under 35s** the most likely to invest in the next **12 months.**

> “Dairy farmers are most likely to invest. Those who have completed digital training are more likely to consider investing than those who have not.”

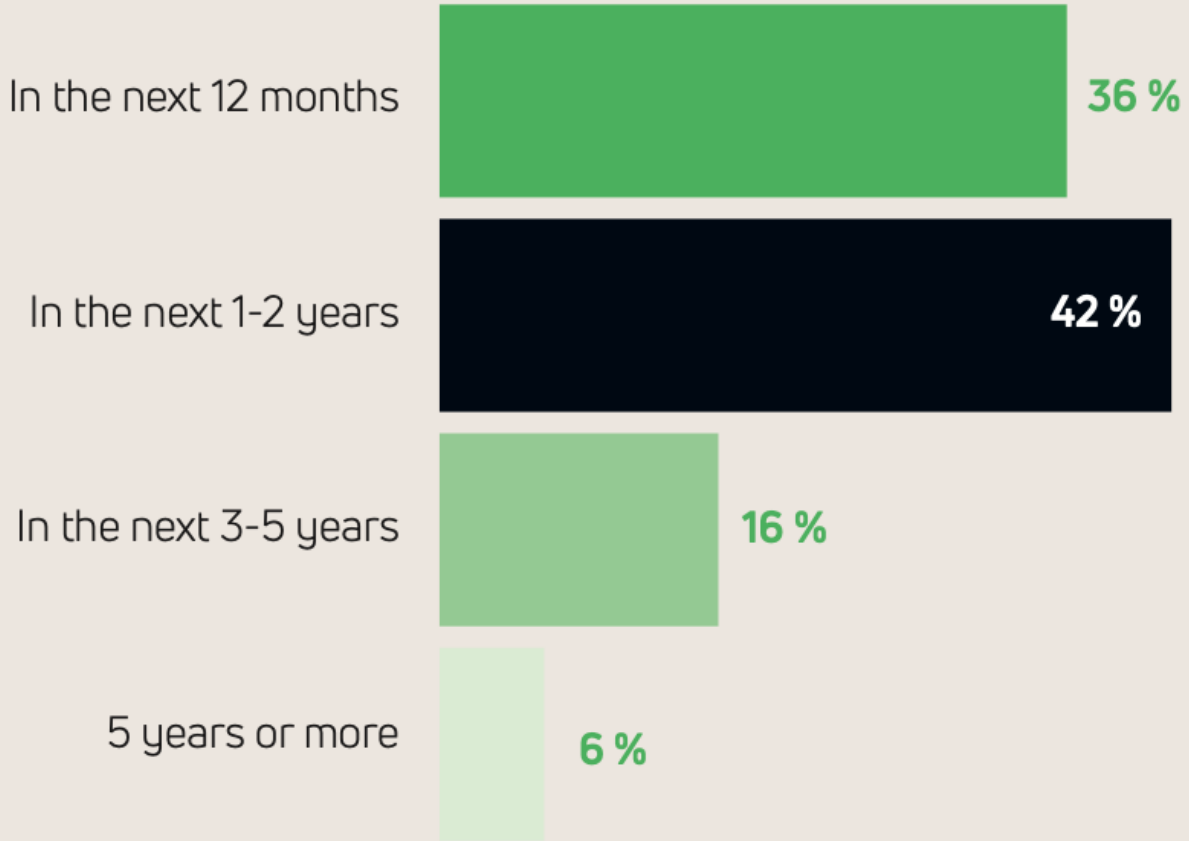
Supports & Incentives

How likely do you think it is that you will invest in digital technology on your farm?



Base: All respondents - 761

If you are going to invest in technology, when do you plan to begin?



Base: All that are unsure or likely that they will invest in digital technology on the farm - 624

Key Drivers

> “A smartphone is a farmer’s office computer - software/apps and other technologies should be designed and managed through the smartphone.”

1. **Increase confidence**
2. **Build appreciation** of **cost vs benefits**
3. Provide **hands-on practical** and **peer-led** approach to **learning** and **support**
4. **Support** through **financial incentives** are **valued**
5. **Support** for **training & development**
6. **Rural broadband** accessibility is **key**


So, What Next?

Roadmap for Digital Skills Development

None or very low level of digital competency.

No or very low confidencein using digital and online services.

Lack of connectivity or access to digital technologies.

No or low motivation to go online or learn how to go online.

Recent access to connectivity and sporadic willingness to learn.

Local projects and peers generate interest i.e. purchasing group peers.

Digital upskilling driven through necessity i.e. regulatory or legal compliance such as BPS online.

Informal, short-term courses.

Tailored courses drive contextual learning using peer-to-peer and trust networks (communities of practice).

Easier discoverability and access to programmes and impactful courses for upskilling.

Longer-term commit-ment to digital upskilling.

Increased digital upskilling inclusion in business and farm life.

Clear pathway for farmers to get the upskilling required whether that be one-off, sustained or customised.

Digital upskilling programmes closely aligned to policy and market forces increasing relevance and impact for the farmer.

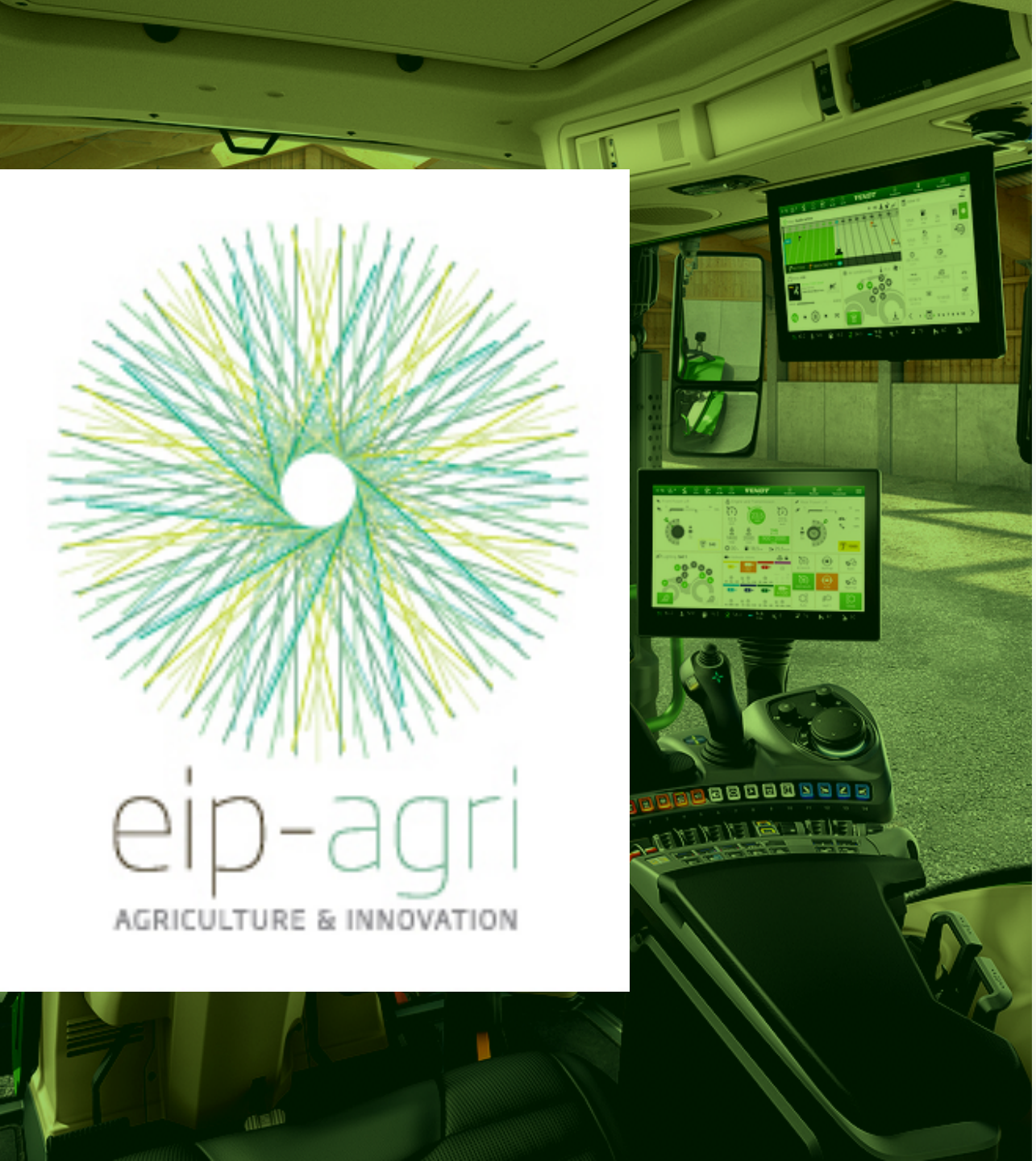
Digital upskilling embedded into farm and business life.

Organisational and institutional roles in digital upskilling explicit and well-known.

Lifelong learning model established and implicit part of farmers' workflow.

Skills based learning complements existing relationships and support contracts with extension agents.

Digital skills advocacy with peers and trust networks.



EIP-AGRI Seminar

'New Skills for Digital Farming'

February 2020

The seminar aims to contribute to the design and implementation of approaches and tools that can help farmers and farm advisers develop the skills required for the digital transition in agriculture.

Access for every farmer to the digital skills and technologies they need to participate in the digital economy