

Meeting of the SWG SCAR AKIS Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems

AKIS Strategic plans for the CAP post 2020

Webinar 24-26/3/21 - Switzerland
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SCAR
Standing Committee
on Agricultural Research



A) Characteristics of the Swiss AKIS












The Swiss AKIS is described as

- **rather strong and effective,**
- **fairly financed; public and private funds,**
- **fragmented, diverse, heterogeneous,
with many players, interfaces and knowledge flows.**

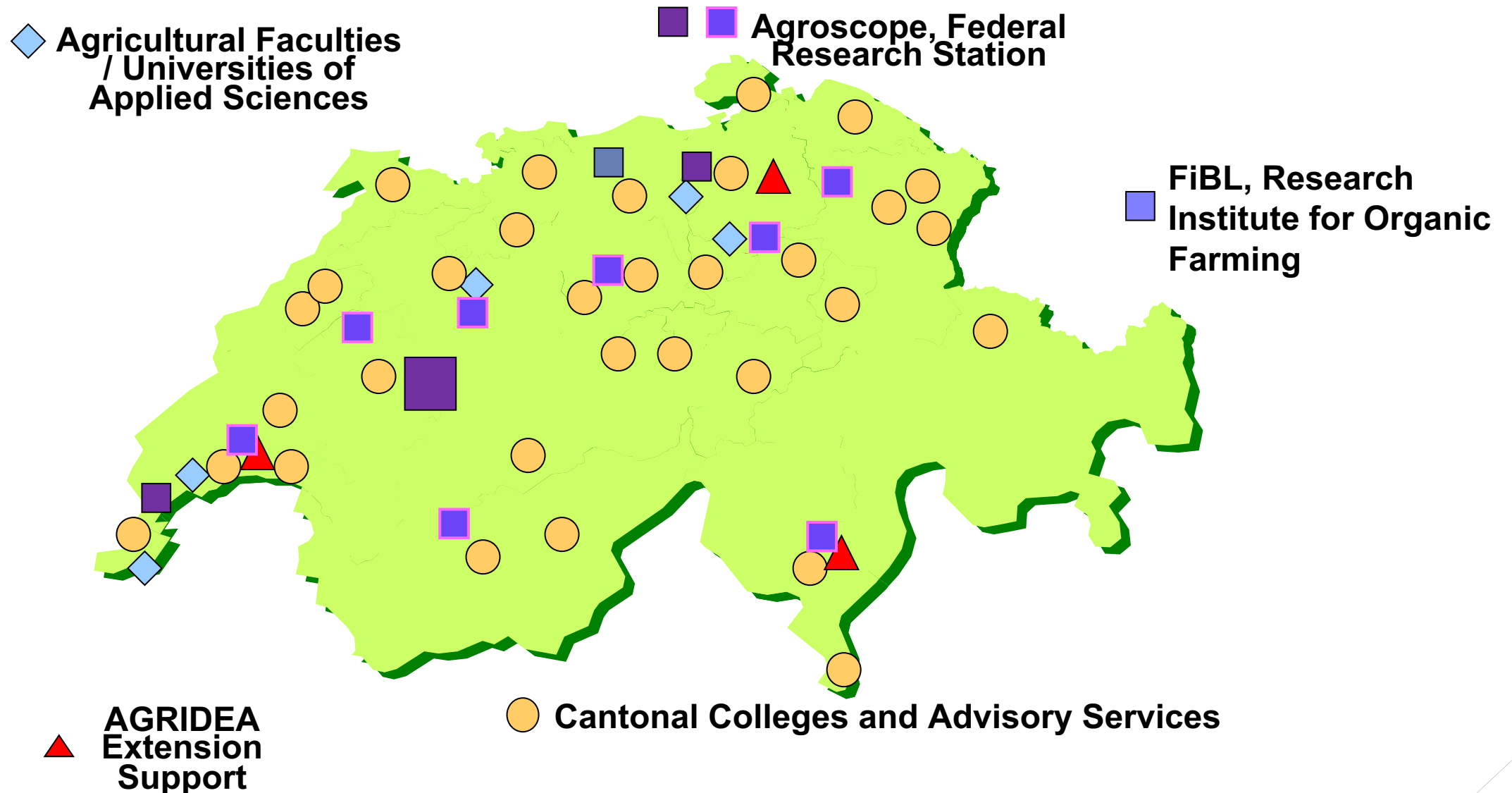
=> improve the interfaces and ensure the interactions between players
national ↔ cantonal
research / science ↔ practice / experience

Source: i2connect country report Switzerland, 2021

A) Functions and Responsibilities in the Swiss AKIS

	Research		Education		Extension / Advice	
Function Responsibility	Basic / Fundamental	Applied	University Level	Vocational Training of Farmers	Extension Support	Advisory Services for Farmers
Confederation National Level	§ 	§ 	§ 	§	§ 	§
Cantons		§ 	§ 	§ 		§ 
Private Players		§ 			§	§ 
§	Responsibility enacted by law or – in case of private players – by by-laws					
	Public or private funds					

A) Main Players in the Swiss AKIS with Public Funds



A) Characteristics of the Swiss AKIS

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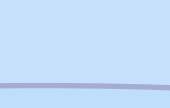

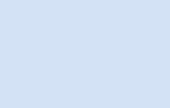







C) Policy Reform Steps – Accomplished and Pending

Main Interventions Undertaken or Planned:

1. defining the activities of extension support
2. promoting networking as well as pilot and demonstration projects
3. reform of vocational training
4. pending popular initiatives



C) Reform Steps in the Swiss AKIS

	Research		Education		Extension / Advice	
Function	Basic / Fundamental	Applied	University Level	Vocational Training of Farmers	Extension Support	Advisory Services for Farmers
Responsibility						
Confederation National Level	§ 	§ 	§ 	§ 	§ 	§ 
Cantons		§ 	§ 	§ 		§ 
Private players		§ 			§ 	§ 

1) Extension Support

2) Networking, Pilot and Demonstration Projects

3) Vocational Training

4) Popular Initiatives

C) Policy Reform Steps – Accomplished

Defining the Activities of Extension Support

- **AGRIDEA is an association supporting the cantonal advisory services. The Cantons are members and “clients”, it is financed mainly by the Confederation.**
- **The type of activities is defined by a federal ordinance, e.g. developing methods, training of advisors, documentation (print and digital) exchange of knowledge...**
- **Since 2020, the Cantons define the priority fields of action, e.g. entrepreneurial skills, innovative capacity, resource management, climate change...**
- **The Federal Office for Agriculture and the Cantons have signed a **common agreement fixing AGRIDEA’s tasks and priority fields.****

C) Policy Reform Steps – Pending



Reform of Vocational Training

- Vocational Training is a common responsibility:
 - a) the Confederation sets the legal framework
 - b) the Cantons offer the training courses, e.g. in agricultural colleges
 - c) professional organizations define the content of the vocational training e.g. objectives, requirements, subjects...
- The professional organization responsible for the vocational training in the field of agriculture, consisting of several players of their respective domains including the Farmers' Union, has recently started a reform process.
- The process should **consider and take into account new emerging concerns and issues**, e.g. digitisation, entrepreneurial and innovation skills, resource management, biodiversity...
- Different Federal offices, e.g. for agriculture, for the environment, for economic affairs are invited to contribute.

C) Policy Reform Steps – Pending



Promoting Networking, Pilot and Demonstration Projects

- The multitude of interfaces and the lack of exchange are seen as main obstacles for a more effective AKIS.
- For the next policy reform period, the Federal Government intended to include into the Federal Act on Agriculture two changes concerning the AKIS:
 - a) fostering networking between players,
 - b) promoting pilot and demonstration projects carried out by the cantonal advisory services.
- Unfortunately, for other reasons, the Parliament has decided to postpone the reform for several years.
- Luckily, the Federal Office for Agriculture may promote networking as well as pilot and demonstration projects within the existing legal framework by
 - a) **financing multi-actor-projects** or
 - b) **supporting networking within a certain branch** in agriculture.

C) Policy Reform Steps – Pending



Pending Popular Initiatives

- In Switzerland, 100'000 citizens may demand a change in the Swiss Constitution; such popular initiatives must be submitted to the electorate.
- Two initiatives are scheduled for voting in June 2021:
 - a) “drinking water initiative”: Farmers must renounce the use of pesticides and the prophylactic use of antibiotics if they want to continue to get direct payments; no import of animal feed,
 - b) “pesticide initiative”: The use of synthetic pesticides in agricultural production, in the processing of agricultural products and in soil and landscape conservation is prohibited; no import of such products.
- If adopted, both initiatives will have a considerable impact on the AKIS and will **lead to fundamental changes in research, education and extension work.**

Discussion:

All comments, questions and suggestions very welcome!



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Thank you for your attention!



Switzerland. Naturally.

