Innovate UK

Results of Competition: Satellites to improve Agri-food systems - CRD
Competition Code: 1511_CRD_SAT_AGRI_SATFOO

Total available funding for this competition was £3,175,000 from Innovate UK

Note: These proposals have succeeded in the assessment stage of this competition. All are subject to grant offer and conditions being met.

Participant organisation names	Project title	Proposed project costs	Proposed project grant
AgSpace Agriculture Ltd Cranfield University The James Hutton Institute Courtyard Agriculture Ltd Agri-EPI Centre Ltd	Precision soil mapping	£744,665	£457,160
Project description - provided by applicants			
The benefits of precision farming (PF) - dividing land into management zones according to soil characteristics -has been proven to yield better results when compared to conventional farming. The perceived high entry costinto PF has long been a barrier to entry for some smaller arable farmers. This project aims to make thefinancial entry into PF more affordable whilst not compromising on the high resolution data required toproduce meaningful soil management zones. This large-scale collaborative project aims to integrate satellitedata with the UK's most comprehensive soil datasets to produce a'precision soil map'. The resultant mapwould present an economically viable alternative to the current labour intensive methodology of soil surveyingand represents a very exciting opportunity for arable and vegetable farming to embrace precision farming.Growers will be able to increase yields with lower input costs and reduced environmental impact.			

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VTOL Technologies Ltd Harper Adams University Micron Sprayers Ltd Bayer PLC Rockwell Collins UK Ltd	VTOL Crop-Sprayer	£1,257,737	£586,721

Project description - provided by applicants
This project will develop a precision crop-spraying 'drone' system initially targeted at the UK market, securingboth HSE and CAA compliance, but with global market reach and market opportunity. The crop-spraying'drone' will be based around VTOL Technologies VTOL Flying Wing patented 'drone' platform whose uniqueFlying Wing feature will provide the 'tank' for the chemical containment, delivering crop-spraying systems thatare perfectly adapted to the different UK geographic constraints and UK agriculture. Such a system, wouldsubstantially reduce precision crop-spraying costs, improve crop-spray quality when compared against personcrop sprayers and enabled improved point-location spraying when compared against current farm machinerymethods or manned aerial crop-sprayers. Leading UK developed emerging sub-system technologies will beused to provide the advanced capabilities needed for this unique, potentially disruptive system. The eventualsystem will be a breakthrough in the industry and provide a platform for new high-technology jobs in the UKwith great potential for substantial exports particulary in Europe and North America.

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Rezatec Ltd University of Reading	Monitoring and prediction of pasture quality and productivity from satellites	£692,483	£416,516

Project description - provided by applicants
Grassland is the dominant land use in the UK and throughout the world. No other habitat is as agriculturallyuseful to humans, providing food for ruminants (e.g. cattle and sheep), as well as numerous other benefits (e.g.hosting diverse grass and plant species that attract bees). Grazed grass is one of the cheapest feeds on mostBritish dairy farms, yet the most poorly utilised. This project executed by University of Reading and Rezatec Ltdprovides grassland farmers with a management tool that uses the latest information gathered by satellitesensors, combined with mathematical models that calculate (grazed) grass crop behaviour. Together they allowfor assessment and near-future prediction of grassland status, in terms of productivity, quality, and plantspecies composition. This will inform the farmer and advisors how to better manage their pastures, especiallyin terms of grazing and cutting, agrochemical application, and which pasture plant mixtures potentially deliverthe greatest benefits to ecosystem services such as pollination. The project outcomes have the potential tosignificantly improve productivity and competitiveness for dairy farming businesses in the UK and beyond.

Note: you can see all Innovate UK-funded projects here
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/innovate-uk-funded-projects Use the Competition Code given above to search for this competition's results

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Ecometrica Ltd Environment Systems Ltd Rothamsted Research Limited	Advancing EO Applications in Agriculture	£748,018	£459,228
Project description - provided by applicants			
A 2 year, collaborative R&D investment by Ecometrica, Envsys and Rothamsted Research aims to develop initialwall-to-wall applications of Sentinel Earth Observation (EO) derived information products for environmentalcompliance and productivity monitoring in agriculture. Innovation is needed to develop the processingmethods, calibration / validation processes and demonstration applications that be scaled-up to run acrosslarge areas on a continual basis, producing actionable content to be used by national agencies and businesses.The project will make use of a new Earth Observation data management facility (EO Lab) being established atAgrimetrics and will be an early demonstrator of how content management systems can be used to manage IPand realise commercial opportunities for agricultural information services in UK and export markets.			

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