

## Towards a collaborative programme in sustainable agriculture: Workshop Outputs

### Introduction

BBSRC and NERC are working together to develop a precompetitive funding programme to provide new solutions for sustainable agriculture. This industry-academic collaborative programme will focus on nutrient and water related challenges in agriculture. It will support innovative research and research translation that is both scientifically excellent and industrially relevant. The programme will drive innovation through effective knowledge translation between the science base and industry, and will strengthen the research community to underpin the long-term needs of industry through interdisciplinary research, the provision of training, and knowledge exchange.

On the 20th February 2013 NERC and BBSRC held an industry-focussed workshop, *Towards a collaborative programme in sustainable agriculture*, to determine and prioritise the research and knowledge translation needs of industry as they relate to the challenges of water and nutrients. The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Announce plans for a multi-million pound investment in research and knowledge translation for sustainable agriculture
- Engage industry in determining the scope of this pre-competitive funding programme and its strategic direction
- Introduce options for the proposed programme's delivery model and industry contribution

### The Workshop

Chaired by Christine Tacon, the workshop commenced with a number of presentations. Prof Peter Gregory (East Malling Research) set the scene with a big picture talk, followed by presentations from Anglian Water, Marks & Spencer, National Farmers Union, NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Rothamsted Research, and Newcastle University. These presentations introduced some of the key industry challenges and associated innovative science. These presentations can be found on either the [BBSRC](#)<sup>1</sup> or [NERC](#)<sup>2</sup> website.

The presentations were followed by two breakout sessions where delegates were posed the question "*What are the challenges where new solutions are required to address (water/nutrient)- related issues in agriculture?*" and asked to identify precompetitive research and translation challenges that would help shape the focus of this new programme. For this exercise, delegates were split into groups representing sectors of the agri-food supply chain.

### Outputs and way forward

The challenges identified by each breakout group can be found in Annex 1. These will now be analysed, along with input from prior consultations, to identify recurring themes and their alignment to NERC's and BBSRC's strategic priorities. Potential alignment with the BIS Agri-Tech strategy and Defra's Sustainable Intensification Research Platform will also be considered. This analysis will enable BBSRC and NERC to determine the focus of the collaborative programme and identify the most appropriate funding mechanism for its delivery (e.g. a Research and Technology Club or a collaborative initiative). A full report will be released in May 2013.

If you have any comments on the research challenges posed, please contact Murray Gardner or Katie Tearall.

### Contact

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/news/events/1302-sustainable-ag-club-workshop.aspx>

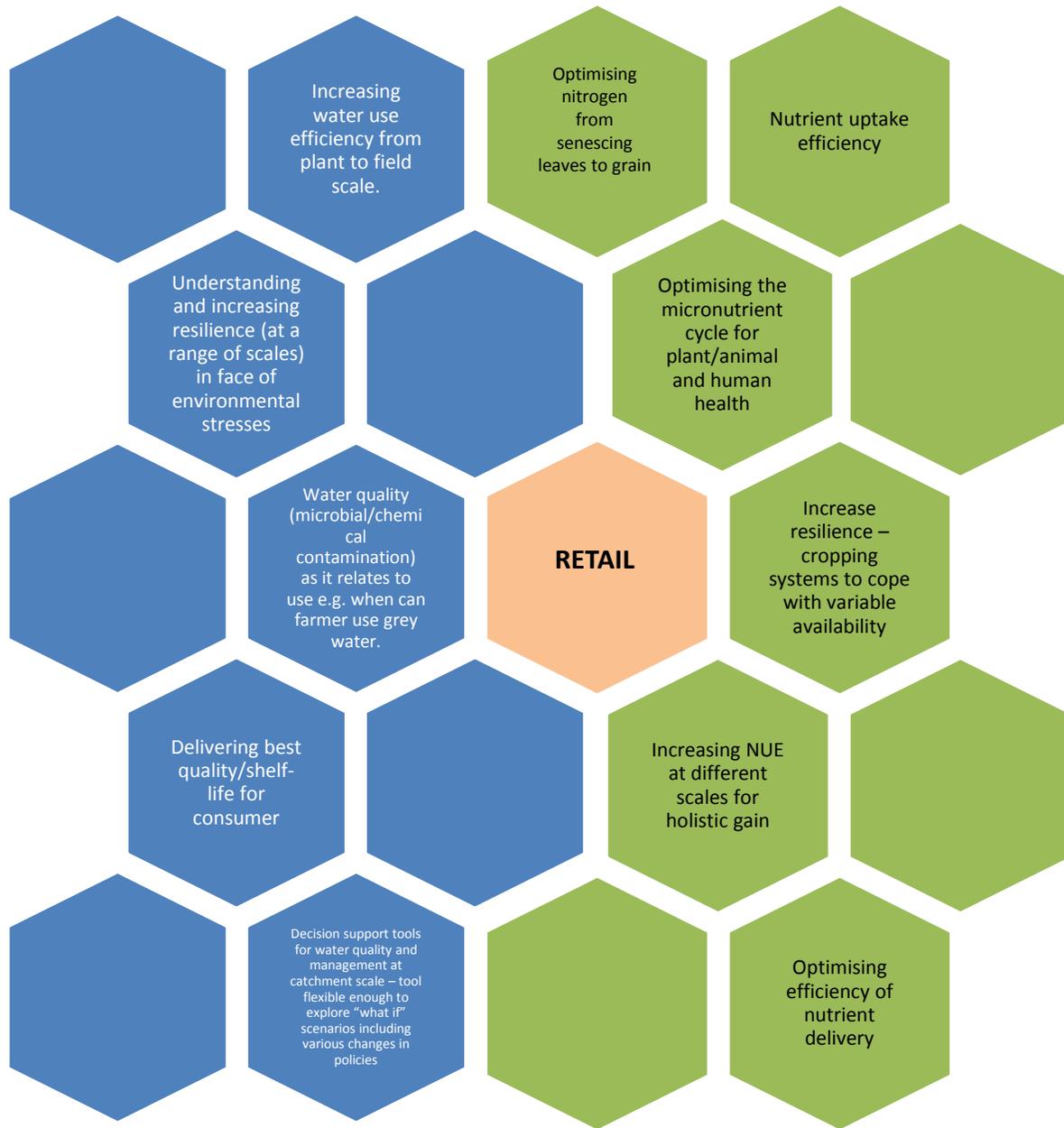
<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/business/club.asp>

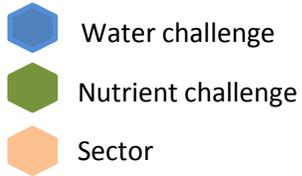
# Annex 1: Sustainable Agriculture priorities by sector

-  Water challenge
-  Nutrient challenge
-  Sector



-  Water challenge
-  Nutrient challenge
-  Sector





-  Water challenge
-  Nutrient challenge
-  Sector



-  Water challenge
-  Nutrient challenge
-  Sector



-  Water challenge
-  Nutrient challenge
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-  Water challenge
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