

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM¹

Title of the evaluation ... Evaluation of the implementation of the Farm Advisory System (FAS)

- Draft final report...
- Final report

DG/Unit DG AGRI, Unit L4

- Official(s) managing the evaluation . Guido Castellano

Evaluator/contractor ADE (Aide à la Décision Economique, Louvain la Neuve, BE)

Assessment carried out by^(*):

- Steering groupX.....
- Evaluation Function.....
- Other (please specify).....

(*) Multiple crosses possible

Date of the Quality Assessment January 2010

¹ Refer to the ['Guide on Scoring the Criteria'](#) for how to assess each criterion.

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the evaluation respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The evaluation report well satisfies the main needs specified in terms of reference for this evaluation. In this respect it provides a good description of the implementation of the FAS, as well as a first assessment of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the system in view of putting forward relevant conclusions and recommendations for the future development of the instrument.

The evaluation report fully covers the geographical and temporal scope of the evaluation and addresses all the evaluation questions. The target groups of the policy are well identified, and the legal framework is soundly interpreted, including the modifications recently introduced by the Health Check revision of the CAP. Budgetary aspects are considered to the extent to which data have been made available by the different monitoring systems in the Member States.

The assessment of the effects of the instruments has been limited by the recent implementation of the instrument, in particular as regards intermediate and final impacts.

Both parts of the evaluation report (descriptive part and evaluation part) well exploit the available information sources, while the collection of primary data could have been further developed (e.g. budgetary aspects).

On the whole, the evaluator has well covered what was envisaged in the terms of reference.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the evaluation adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the evaluation questions?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The descriptive report has been designed and structured in a way which allows to cover the different aspects of the implementation of the FAS in the EU 27, based on the information available so far.

Sound judgement criteria have been defined in relation to the evaluation questions which, overall, have appropriately driven the answers to these questions.

The intervention logic of the instrument is well embedded in the context of other factors that could have an influence in the achievement of the overall objectives of the FAS identified by the evaluator.

The evaluator applied the evaluation design in a flexible manner, which has permitted, where needed, to adapt the approach in respect of the information needs (e.g. use of typology).

Case studies could have been better designed, in light of the information gaps to be covered by the evaluation.

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

While the information sources identified by the evaluator have ensured a broad coverage of the main issues of the evaluation, more efforts could have been developed to target specific aspects for which available official sources do not ensure an appropriate coverage (e.g. costs for farmers in making use of the system). In particular, case studies could have played a more important role in this respect, e.g. by collecting primary data and providing specific examples in relation to the study areas investigated.

Overall, qualitative information is prominently used, mainly due to the early stage in the implementation of the instrument.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer evaluation questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

Appropriate analytical tools have been identified and implemented by the evaluator. Due to the limited availability of quantitative data, the analysis is often complemented by sound qualitative considerations. In this respect, the descriptive report has provided good basis for underpinning the answers to the evaluation questions. Where relevant, the limitations of the analysis are transparently presented and taken into account when presenting the evaluation findings.

The links between different relevant policy instruments have been well identified and analysed.

The analysis of the potential links between the FAS and the "new challenges" that the EU agriculture has to face is considered as relevant in the context of possible adjustments of the instruments within the policy discussion on the CAP post-2013.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The findings follow logically from the analysis and are well underpinned by (mainly qualitative) information analysis and logical assumptions. Judgements are based on transparent criteria, and are prudently presented when they are not backed by sufficiently robust data sets.

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

Conclusions are logically linked to the findings observed. They are clearly developed and prudently presented, where needed. They are also well placed in the policy context and based on impartial judgements.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

Recommendations stem logically from conclusions, are well justified and relevant with respect to the policy and operational needs. They comprehensively address the main conclusions from the analysis and are detailed in a way which provides concrete elements for their implementation.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

Both the descriptive and the evaluation part are written in a clear language, and structured in way which allows the reader to easily capture and understand the key messages from the analysis.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Is the overall quality of the report adequate, in particular:

- Does the evaluation fulfil contractual conditions?

Yes

- Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?

Findings and conclusions of the report are reliable. However gaps in quantitative information are acknowledged, mainly explained as a consequence of the limited implementation period of the instrument and therefore not completely attributable to the contractor.

- Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?

Both, the descriptive part and the evaluation part provide useful hints for the future development of the policy. The analysis of the potential links between the FAS and the "new challenges" that the EU agriculture has to face is considered as relevant in the context of possible adjustments of the instruments within the policy discussion on the CAP post-2013.

The overall assessment of the report is: good