



PRACTICE ABSTRACT

Digital technology

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iFARMING: LIVESTOCK INTEGRATED FARM MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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The iFarming system developed by Fancom is a tool or management system used worldwide. In Belgium several farmers are using (parts of) this system to manage their farms in new ways and improve their farm management.

iFarming is developed with a focus on intensive livestock production, such as poultry or pigs. The iFarming tools is used to automate barn management, such as ventilation, feeding and herd management, integrating them into one farm management system.

This enables farmers to increase productivity, while improving housing conditions.

With the increasing number of intensive livestock operations, coupled to societal demands on sustainability and pollution, it is increasingly important to reach maximum efficiency in livestock farming. Systems like iFarming, allow farmers to reach these goals more consistently with a reduction in labour demand, while potentially also reducing costs. The technology is developed with intensive livestock farming in mind. This means larger and more intensive operations will likely benefit the most from this technology.

Application scenario

Smart farming for livestock. Herd management using climate control and feeding data.

Digital technologies

Integrated sensor and network technology, fusion of data streams for real-time information.

Socio-economic impact

- Social: farmer wellbeing, skills; access, information
- Economic: increase income, optimise value chain, improve food quality, enhance resource efficiency; market concentration
- Environmental: animal wellbeing and welfare

More info: <https://www.fancom.nl/smart-farming>



Purpose of the tool

The purpose of the iFarming tool is to automate and integrate intensive livestock farming. The management system's software collects the data and integrates it on a platform which the farmer can access. This allows farmers to increase the size of their operations with a reduced labour cost, as well as improving livestock management, both increasing productivity and reducing the incidence of diseases or other problems.

Description of the tool

iFarming provides a comprehensive barn management system that automatically collates and analyses data on climate control and automated feeding, and continuously monitors animal behaviour. It allows farmers to optimise both their livestock management and their labour needs. This technology is particularly suitable for the intensive livestock farming sector since it responds to the needs of farmers with large operations in terms of reaching sustainability and animal welfare goals. Smaller farms, or farmers with less intensive operations, will most likely not gain a benefit from this technology.

Areas of socio-economic impacts

Social	Farmers benefit from workforce optimisation, which can also improve their wellbeing. The tool also requires farmers to have increased knowledge of digital systems and management systems, changing the skillset farmers need.
Economic	For individual farmers, iFarming can lead to increased income, by reducing management costs and making more efficient use of resources such as water. The increased intensification of agriculture both enables, and requires, the automation of livestock management. This intensification impacts the value chain and market concentration, which is important to consider in assessing this technology.
Environmental	There is potential for improving the health and wellbeing of animals in intensive livestock production. Sophisticated livestock management systems like iFarming enhance the farmer's capacity to respond quickly and adequately to avoid diseases and other problems in livestock.