



# Cool Farm Tool wins awards for taking sustainable agriculture to scale

**Winner of the hotly-contested 'Practice with Science' Award and used by major agri-food businesses, the Cool Farm Tool establishes new legal footing with the Cool Farm Alliance CIC to further scale sustainable agriculture.**

January 20 – Winning the Oxford Farming Conference/Royal Agricultural Society of England [Practice with Science award](#) in the first week of the year isn't the only high profile recognition the Cool Farm Tool has received lately. Just a few weeks earlier, The Cool Farm Tool was cited as an example of University of Aberdeen research that placed the University [top in the UK](#) in the 'Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science' category. This finding was under the Research Excellence Framework (REF) carried annually out by the UK government to assess the quality of research in publically funded institutes.

In both cases the tool was recognized for impact.

The recognition comes as The Cool Farm Tool moves into its new legal home: the Cool Farm Alliance, a Community Interest Company registered in the UK and incorporated in June 2014 (the project was formerly called 'The Cool Farm Institute').

Along with a new home, The Cool Farm Alliance (CFA) announces the addition of seven new members: McCain Foods, Soil and More, Kellogg, Borealis, Solidaridad, EuroChem and the GFZ German Research Center for Geoscience.

These new members join the founding partners and members including PepsiCo, Unilever, Heineken, Marks & Spencer, Tesco, Yara, Fertilizers Europe, the University of Aberdeen, ADAS, Royal Agricultural University and Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform.

The Cool Farm Tool is an online greenhouse gas calculator for agriculture, now being extended to include water and biodiversity. The tool identifies hotspots and allows farmers to run 'what if' scenarios. The Cool Farm Tool was originally developed by Dr Jon Hillier at the University of Aberdeen in collaboration with Unilever and the [Sustainable Food Lab](#). The online version was developed by Best Foot Forward/Anthesis Group. The new metrics are expected online in the second half of this year.

"I am delighted to accept this award on behalf of the Cool Farm Alliance," Hillier said. Hillier is a researcher at the University of Aberdeen supported by a knowledge exchange fellowship from the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC).



“The Cool Farm Tool today is the product of a multi-sector collaboration over several years to deliver science-based environmental decision support to farmers,” Hillier said.

### **The Cool Farm Tool is widely used**

The Cool Farm Tool has been successfully used by farmers of all sizes and types across the world to understand the carbon footprint of their production systems and adapt management to improve their performance, from smallholder cotton and coffee farmers in India and Kenya to egg and potato producers in the United States and United Kingdom.

To date, Unilever has collected 413 assessments including data from 6,529 farms across 46 countries and expects to grow the program to 15,000 farm assessments annually as part of the metric reporting requirements for their Sustainable Agriculture Code. McCain Foods is rolling out the implementation of the Cool Farm Tool in all their agricultural regions across eleven countries and modeling at least 50 representative farmers around the globally.

Jan Kees Vis, Global Director, Sustainable Sourcing Development at Unilever, said, “The Cool Farm Tool brings practical benefits for farmers, to help reduce carbon emissions on their farms. The aim is that more and more companies in the agricultural sector start using this tool, so that we can see real industry transformation.”

The Cool Farm Tool has been central to Pepsico’s low carbon farming programmes across Europe and Pepsico has worked closely with McCain and the University of Aberdeen to develop specific potato features into the generic tool. Mark Pettigrew Agricultural Sustainability Manager PepsiCo Europe said, “The Cool Farm Tool enabled us to set our “50 in 5” GHG emissions reduction target from agriculture [50 percent reduction in 5 years] and measure progress against it. I’m pleased to say we’re on target.”

Richard Burkinshaw, Senior Sustainability Manager and Origins Project Manager at Kellogg Company said, “We find the Cool Farm Tool very useful especially in identifying drivers, modeling and understanding pathways to improvements. Its transparency makes it much better than simply getting a figure as a result. The way you can play around with options and see what difference the changes will make in the overall result makes it a very valuable and engaging tool with an ongoing role.”

Tobias Bandel (Managing Partner of Soil & More Intl.) said, “As a sustainability consultancy we believe in offering our clients services, which combine scientific robustness with pragmatism. The Cool Farm Tool has been invaluable for us in the past and the recent developments (such as the new online version) encouraged us to strengthen our relationship even further.”

Like the Cool Farm Tool greenhouse gas metric, the water and biodiversity metrics go beyond assessing users’ performance to providing them with quantified feedback on the benefits of implementing better management practices. The Cool Farm Alliance and University of Aberdeen are collaborating with Reading University, GFZ German Research Center for Geoscience



(supported by the Climate-KIC PhD programme) and the Conservation Science Group at Cambridge University in the development of these new metrics. All metrics are compliant with SAI Platform 'Sustainability Performance Assessment' (SPA).

### **Notes for editors**

Cool Farm Alliance members quoted above are available for further comment - please contact Daniella Malin at the Sustainable Food Lab for more information: [info@coolfarmtool.org](mailto:info@coolfarmtool.org) or +1 (802) 436-4062 ext 107

The tool is free to use for individual farmers and with a charge-able fee for commercial or organizational use. The tool and fee details can be accessed at [www.coolfarmtool.org](http://www.coolfarmtool.org)

The web tool is based on an Excel model originally created by the University of Aberdeen in partnership with Unilever and the Sustainable Food Lab. The Cool Farm Tool has the backing and support of leading academics and NGOs working on sustainability in agriculture. More information about the Cool Farm Alliance – including case studies – is available at [www.coolfarmtool.org](http://www.coolfarmtool.org)

The sustainable management of agricultural systems is one of defining challenges of the 21st century - with greenhouse gas emissions a major priority for action with governments and businesses. Recent studies estimate that agriculture contributes up to 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions - and is the main source of emissions in food supply chains.

The news comes as other major agri-food businesses are announcing investments in smart technology, big data and software to target improvements in resource efficiency, productivity and climate resilience.