

Three major farm carbon calculators outline a roadmap to harmonisation

The three major farm carbon calculators featured in the Defra Report [Harmonisation of Carbon Accounting Tools for Agriculture – SCF0129](#) have announced a collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), intended to harmonise the methodologies used in calculating the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture.

Farm Carbon Cutting Toolkit, Cool Farm Alliance Community Interest Company and Agrecalc Limited have reached an agreement to work together to support UK agriculture to measure GHG emissions using the most up-to-date and accurate tools possible, harmonising the methodologies and outputs of their carbon calculation tools.

The three companies are looking forward to their joint work on this major challenge, to fulfil the requirements outlined in the comprehensive Report, compiled by ADAS throughout 2023. It is generally agreed that the overarching goal should be to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture through resource efficiency improvements, optimising production practices and mitigating environmental impacts.

Liz Bowles, Farm Carbon Toolkit CEO, said: “We are not seeking to reach a point where all three calculators will produce the same answer for any given dataset. As the Defra report put it, “there is no single ‘right’ answer”. Rather we are striving to make it possible for users to fully understand why different calculators produce different answers.

“We plan to align with the Science-Based Targets initiative Forestry Land and Agriculture Guidance (SBTi FLAG) and draft Greenhouse Gas Protocol Land Sector Removals Guidance (GHGp LSRG) through our collaborative actions. This commitment underscores our dedication to maintaining high-quality standards and ensuring environmental sustainability in our operations, and in calculation outputs.”

Scott Davies, Agrecalc CEO, said: “It is intended that we agree on a common set of data sources which all three calculators will use. All calculators can go beyond these baseline requirements, and all parties to this MOU will retain their commercial independence. We will also involve the relevant government and other organisations’ teams with our work plan as we develop it.

“This collaborative approach supports a joint understanding of industry requirements and advancing consistency in our tools and methodologies. Our goal is collaboration with industry, trade bodies, and fellow calculator providers in the UK and internationally, so that we can actively contribute

to the development of more consistent approaches to on-farm carbon calculation.”

Richard Profit, Cool Farm Alliance CEO, said: “We are looking forward to this collaboration, as it will help align methodologies where that makes sense and that will especially allow us to look into new areas that require attention. How we then incorporate the new information in our calculators will vary from calculator to calculator as a result of our different base approaches.

“We will also ensure that the tools include the latest and most robust scientific findings into their frameworks and roadmaps.”

The calculators are seeking that this joint work become the “agreed way” and at some point, become a minimum required standard for all calculators to adopt. The companies will engage in consultations with Defra, Welsh Government, Scottish Government, and Northern Ireland Government to reach a practical and realistic form of ongoing validation of their harmonisation work.

Methodologies or other harmonisation solutions developed as a direct result of the MOU will be published transparently, or will otherwise be made available for others to use.

Although this MOU currently only involves the three major companies in this space, the group is open to other calculators joining the coalition so long as they publicly provide transparency in their Calculator methodologies.

We will be holding a joint webinar on the 11th September 2024 at 1pm - 2pm to share more details of the work we are doing together. Please register here if you would like to join us

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlpde2srTwuH9zIiacVxKNUrKGS hWSvEodf>

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Notes to Editors

Farm Carbon Toolkit is an independent, farmer-led Community Interest Company, supporting farmers to measure, understand and act on their greenhouse gas emissions, while improving their business resilience for the future.

The Farm Carbon Calculator uses the IPCC 2019 and UK GHG Inventory methodologies and is aligned with the GHG protocol agricultural guidance. Recent development has allowed us to provide greater interoperability

with other data platforms through our Report Export API and Carbon Calculation Engine API. This represents a step-change in the industry's ability to provide trustworthy carbon footprints with transparent methodologies on platforms where farmers already collect data, thus reducing the data inputting onus on farmers. This new functionality has been warmly welcomed by supply chain businesses who are now using our Calculation Engine to support their customers without need for further data entry.

The Farm Carbon Calculator is used across the UK and on four continents with global usage growing at around 20% per year.

For over a decade, Farm Carbon Toolkit has delivered a range of practical projects, tools and services that have inspired real action on the ground. Organisations they work with include the Duchy of Cornwall, First Milk, Tesco, Yeo Valley and WWF. The Farm Carbon Calculator is a leading on-farm carbon audit tool, used by over 8,000 farmers in the UK and beyond. To find out more visit www.farmcarbontoolkit.org.uk

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Agrecalc, a carbon footprint tool developed by combining practical expertise with world-class agricultural science, is a precise instrument that offers both breadth and depth of on-farm and through-the-supply-chain calculations of GHG gas emissions.

Agrecalc is the largest source of collated farm benchmark data from thousands of farms, having been used as the designated tool to deliver carbon audits under various schemes since 2016. It is recognised as the preferred carbon calculator in many of the emerging government programmes.

With a mission to increase efficiency and business viability of food production, the scientists, consultants, and developers who work on Agrecalc, strive to constantly upgrade the calculator according to the most up-to-date available research results and recommendations.

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Cool Farm Alliance is a science-led, not-for-profit membership organisation (community interest company) that owns, manages, and improves the Cool Farm Tool and cultivates the leadership network to advance regenerative agriculture at scale.

For over fifteen years, the Cool Farm Alliance has worked to put knowledge in the hands of farmers and empower the full supply chain to understand and support agro-ecological restoration by providing a respected, standardised calculation engine to measure and report on agriculture's impact on the environment. The Cool Farm Tool has established widely endorsed, science-based metrics for water, climate, and biodiversity, supported in 17 languages and used in more than 150 countries around the world.

Cool Farm Alliance members share the need for a respected, consistent, standardised, independent calculation engine and have joined the Alliance to ensure the Cool Farm Tool meets this need, now and in the future. To find out more visit <https://coolfarm.org/>

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