



# Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection – England & Wales Research Priorities

## ADR UK Research Fellowships 2024

### Background

Farming underpins the UK's food security, generates economic benefits for the rural and broader economy, and has a major influence on the natural habitat and wider environment. Farming households – who may have lived in the same location for generations – are important local actors, strengthening the social fabric of rural areas.

Despite these contributions to life in the UK, profits in the farming sector are uncertain and volatile. This has consequences for farm household income and financial stability. In recognition of this, farmers have received subsidies aimed at supporting and stabilising incomes, improving productivity, encouraging farm diversification, and the adoption of farming practices that are more environmentally sustainable.

In particular, following EU Exit, but also for other reasons, major policy changes are underway for UK agriculture. However, much of the data used to develop policy has, up to now, related to farm business activities and the impacts farming has on the environment. Less is known about farming households.

### About the dataset

The Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection (AD|ARC) aims to join the dots between farm businesses and farming households by linking de-identified data about the individuals living in farming households with data on farming activities. This will enable research into the demographic, health, education, and economic characteristics of farming households associated with different types and sizes of farm businesses. The datasets also include three control groups of non-farming individuals living in similarly rural areas. The dataset allows researchers a unique opportunity to better understand farmers, their households and communities, and to provide critical policy insight into how these families can be better supported.

The first release of this dataset links de-identified electronic records across the 2010 EU Farm Structure Survey (EUFSS), Rural Payments dataset, Census of Population 2011, and the Inter-Departmental Business Register (currently England only; Wales to follow). Although separate versions of the dataset have been created for England and Wales, they have been harmonised to ensure they are as comparable as possible in terms of content and variable names, in order to facilitate federated querying. Methods for cross-UK federated analysis are in development. For details on coverage, linkage methodology and restrictions for each country, please read



the [user guides](#) carefully. While data currently available only covers England and Wales, data for Scotland is coming on stream in 2024 and Northern Ireland will follow.

For this funding opportunity, which is focused on the analysis of a range of ADR England Flagship Datasets, projects using AD|ARC **must** use the English data, which is available in the Office for National Statistics Secure Research Service. They **may also** choose to use the Welsh data in the SAIL (Secure Anonymised Information Linkage) Databank.

## Research themes

For the AD|ARC Datasets, we welcome applications looking at the following research topics for this round of ADR UK Research Fellowships:

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of farm households? Can these be integrated with farm business data to develop a new typology (classification) that incorporates both individual/household and business circumstances?
2. What are the characteristics of farm households and how do these affect things such as engagement with environmental programmes and land use patterns?
3. What are the estimated off-farm incomes of farming households? What is the importance of on-farm income (using estimated data on farm turnover and profitability) as a share of total farming household income, compared with estimated incomes for households of various non-farm occupations?
4. How does the health of farmers and farming households compare with that of a rural control group?
5. What is the relationship between the educational attainment of farmers and farmers' spouses or partners, and that of adults in a rural control group?

This is not an exhaustive list and other questions are also welcomed providing you can demonstrate policy-relevance and likelihood of impact and uptake. The AD|ARC team can provide applicants with an initial indication of the likely policy relevance of proposed research questions.

For further ideas, please see the [areas of research interest database](#) which was developed with UK governmental bodies. Projects that investigate areas of interest to the Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs are particularly encouraged.