

Supplementary materials: interview guide

AQ refers to additional question that was posed to increase the focus if needed.

1. Opening and motivation; innovation adoption and risk assessment.
 - a. Thinking back, how did you get started working with mixed cultures?

AQ: Were there specific events, experiences, or moments that led you to start mixed cropping?
 - b. How risky does a farmer have to be to start mixed cropping compared to monocropping?
2. Characteristics of mixed culture compared to monoculture from the expert's point of view.
 - a. What are the advantages and disadvantages of mixed culture compared to monoculture based on your experience using a specific example?
 - b. In which areas can mixed culture be of particular advantage compared to monoculture?

AQ: What advantages or disadvantages do you perceive with regard to plant protection, plant health (fungal attack, viral diseases, pests) in mixed culture?

AQ: What advantages or disadvantages do you perceive regarding yield stability?

AQ: What advantages or disadvantages do you perceive in terms of yield?

AQ: What crop production advantages do you perceive?
 - c. What are the effects of mixed cropping on the farm?

AQ: What changes do you perceive regarding diversity e.g. species diversity, insects or birds?
 - d. How do you estimate the complexity of mixed culture compared to monoculture in practical implementation?
3. Sources of information on mixed cropping
 - a. What sources of information did you use when implementing mixed cropping on the farm?

AQ: Which colleagues, newspaper, advice did you consult for mixed crop cultivation?

AQ: Was mixed crop cultivation your own idea?

AQ: What advice for mixed crop cultivation do you actively use today?

AQ: What source of information did you consult to design your receiving-pre-cleaning, drying, and fine-cleaning system to be economical?
 - b. How would you rate the information available on mixed crops for today's farming practices?
4. Special cultivation and cleaning aspects of mixed crop cultivation
 - a. What are the most important aspects of crop management practices in your mixed crop compared to monoculture?

AQ: What are the main tillage operations you can explain for mixed crops?

AQ: What are the fertilizer management requirements for your mixed crop?

AQ: How is seeding done (seedbed, temperature, moisture, timing)?

AQ: What mix ratio do you use to make the mix and why?

AQ: How has the ratio of the mixture changed over the years? If so, why?

AQ: What varieties do you use that can grow optimally in the mixed crop?

AQ: What crop protection measures do you implement during the growing season?

AQ: What influence does the mixed culture have on weed pressure?

AQ: What crop management measures do you carry out during the growing season?

- b. Which technical equipment is crucial for your mixed crop cultivation compared to monoculture?

AQ: What specialized machinery for seeding, rolling, harrowing, weeding, threshing, pre-cleaning, drying, and fine cleaning do you use and why?

AQ: What steps do you leave to contractors in cultivation?

AQ: What steps in processing do you leave to contractors?

AQ: Which steps in the preparation do you carry out yourself?

- 5. Use of mixed cultures, quality aspects and economic efficiency.

- a. What is crucial for successful implementation of mixed culture compared to monoculture?

AQ: How do you use mixed culture?

AQ: What quantities do you harvest per hectare and to what quality?

AQ: At what step in the value chain do you sell the produce?

AQ: What quality criteria do you have to comply with in mixed cropping?

- b. How do you estimate the profitability of mixed culture compared to monoculture?

- 6. Conclusion of the interview

- a. What recommendations and advice do you give to colleagues who want to take the step to mixed cropping or preparation and marketing?
- b. Are there any issues that are critical to mixed cropping that were not discussed in the interview?