



# **“The Agronomist: the advisor in rural and forestry development” a UK perspective**

**Patrick Stephenson Chair of the AICC**



**Independent advice on over 1.2 million hectares**



# Introduction

- Independent Advice in the UK
- AICC
- What does an Agronomist do?
- Trials
- Wider remit

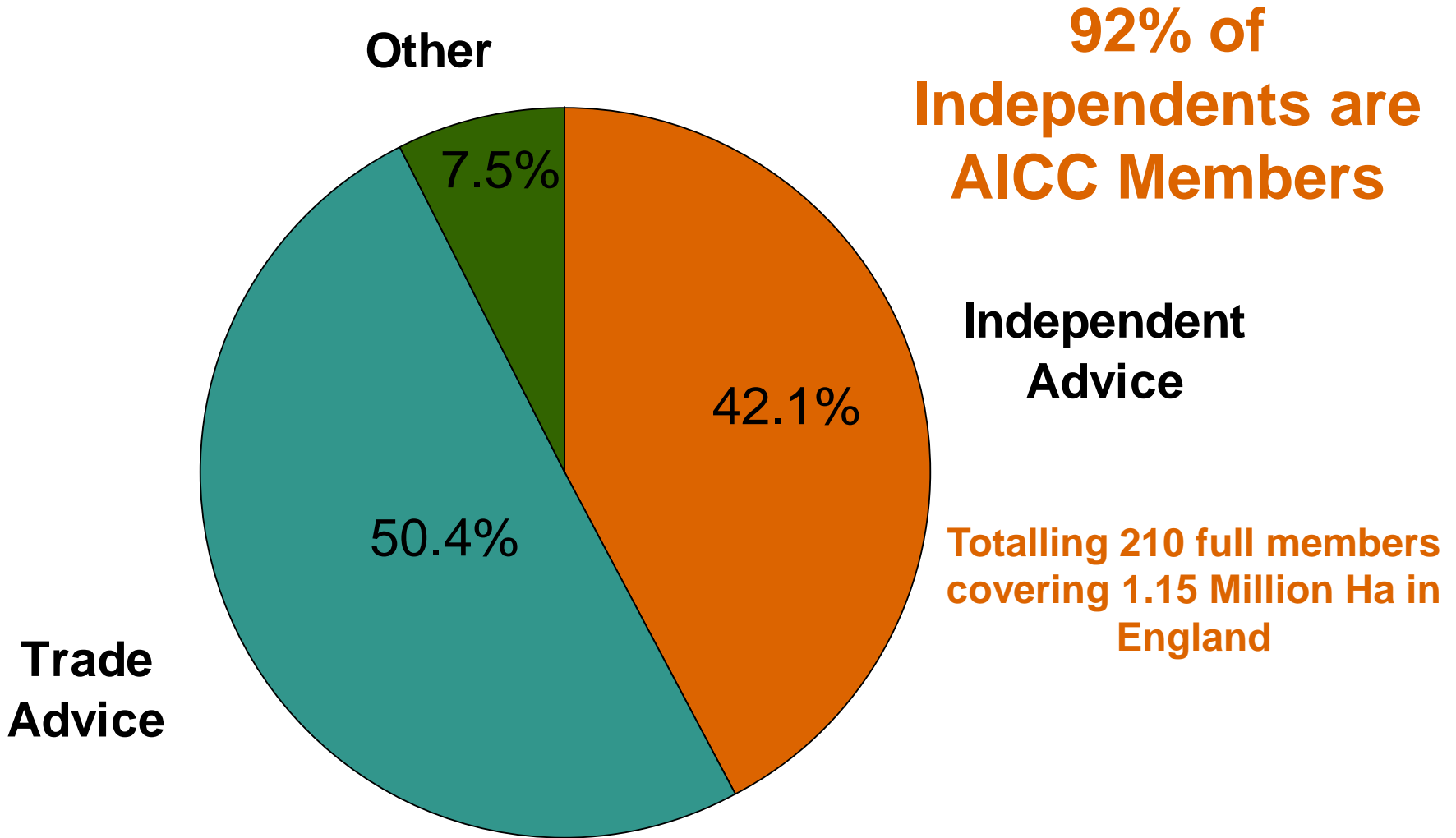


# The History of Independent Arable Advice in the UK

- 🔥 Paid independent arable advice in the UK started in the Late 1970s with the demise of state funding for the government arable advisory service
- 🔥 AICC formed in 1981 as a professional body and drove recognition of independents
- 🔥 The number of independent crop advisors rose dramatically in the 1980s and growth has continued over the last 33 years.






# Advice on Arable Crops in England



## **Average Age of Members as at 1 September 2014**

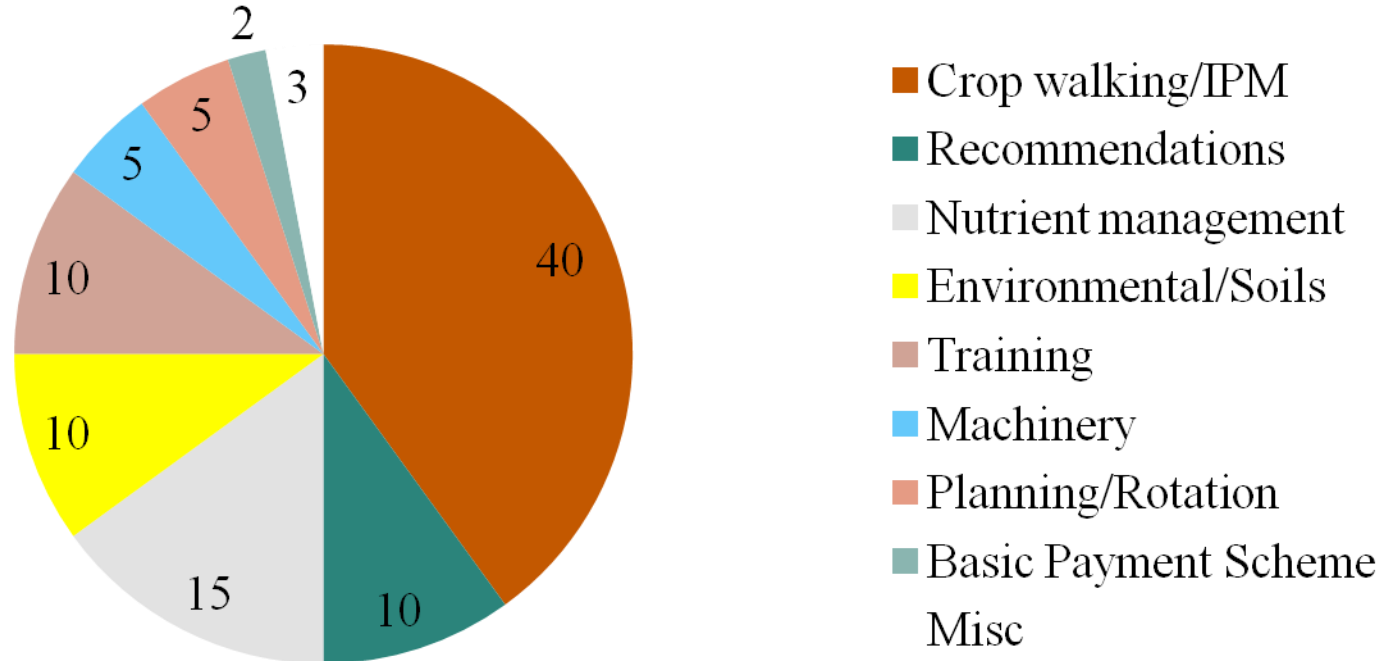
**47.8**

# AICC

-  Fully engaged members advise on average 5,000 hectarea each
-  Members specialise in all areas of crop consultancy advising on crops including soil & nutrition advice, environmental factors and legislation advice.
-  Expert Witness Work, Financial planning, Grant advice, precision farming, waste management and renewable energy

# What does an Independent agronomist do?

Time



## Crop walking/IPM

- Assessing fields for weeds, disease, and pests. Up to 30 km/day in spring
- Economic and environmental assessment of potential recommendation.
- Traps and baits set.







# Nutrient management

- Manure management plan
- Nutrient management plan
- Nitrate Vulnerable Zone Compliance
- Phosphate balance?
- FACTS accredited advisor

# Recommendations

- Legally compliant
- Individual fields and recommendations
- Explain to the spray operator potential issues e.g. buffer strips, or tank mixing order
- Quantities of product required stock management

# Environmental/Soils

- Assessment of risk to soils from farming practices.
- Designing methods of minimising risk.
- Use of Bio-diverse areas of the farm to meet greening requirements and benefit bio-diversity

# Training

- Member of the BASIS professional register
- Minimum of 8 days equivalent accredited training a year
- AICC average 25 days a year of all forms of training and updating.



## AICC TRIALS

National series of independent field trials - principally involved in testing and comparing the performance of current and near market agrochemicals.

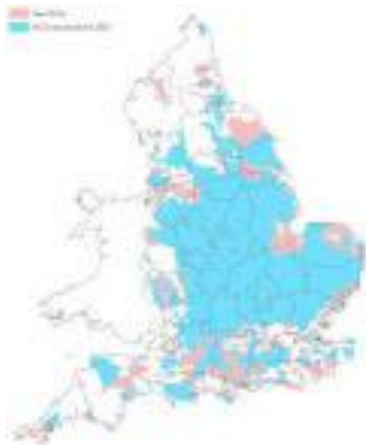
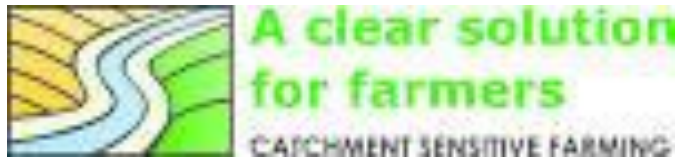
All work protocols analysis and presentation is carried out in house.

In 2014 established 50+ field trials throughout England and Scotland.

Focus on testing and comparing the products that our members have requested in order to help them make cost effective recommendations for their farmer clients.



# Delivery of NGO and Government Policy





# A UK Agronomist will deliver

- Agronomic advice
- Ecological advice
- Legislative advice
- Technological enhancement
- Friemndship





# Thank You



Largest Provider of Independent Advice to UK Arable Farmers