

THIS ISSUE

- The secondments of Raniel Valencia and Meret Kaspereit at Cotswold Seeds and FarmED, UK
- The secondments of Rouven Lattner at Danko and Poznań University of Life Sciences in Poland
- Update on LegumeLegacy's field experiments



Secondment at Cotswold Seeds and FarmED

Raniel and Meret gained hands-on experience with the day-to-day operations at Cotswold Seeds Ltd. including listening to calls from farmers, observing how orders are processed, and learning how the company software system supports seed mixing and customisation. The doctoral researchers also assisted in preparing both standard and farmer-specific seed mixtures and contributed to knowledge sharing through a farmer-focused article for the company's website, a video, and an interview for Farmers Weekly.

Further, at FarmED, they became familiar with the work on linking good food and farming practices through regenerative agriculture by attending various courses, farm walks, and lunchtime talks, and by joining the operations of their partner, The Kitchen Garden People (a Community Supported Agriculture program). In addition, the doctoral researchers also attended Groundswell, a regenerative farming event, where they had the chance to network and learn a lot more about regenerative farming from farmers, scientists, other organisations and companies. This experience provided the doctoral researchers with a comprehensive understanding of the farm-to-fork approach and its practical application.

Meret Kaspereit and Raniel Valencia

Two Secondments of Rouven Lattner in Poland

The doctoral researcher Rouven Lattner completed two exciting secondments during the summer. The first one brought him to the Polish seed company Danko, where he was introduced to commercial plant breeding processes such as seed preparation, packaging and field management. He joined the laboratory team to assist with solution preparation and crop sample processing for plant breeding analyses.

Rouven's second secondment took place at the Department of Grassland and Natural Landscape Sciences at Poznań University of Life Sciences. He assisted with field measurements and sample collection at two of the LegumeLegacy sites, delivered a seminar on Diversity-Interactions models to academic staff, and co-authored a conference paper on the effects of species diversity on weed invasion for the upcoming EGF 2026 conference, in collaboration with Matej Orešković, doctoral researcher at the Poznań University of Life Sciences. Both secondments provided him with valuable interdisciplinary skills and experience while strengthening collaborations in academia and industry.

Rouven Lattner

UPDATES FROM LEGUMELEGACY FIELD SITES

University of Reading, UK

During the last week of June, Raniel carried out the anthesis sampling for the follow-on cereal crop at Reading, UK. This included two-row sampling and 10-plant sampling, with the help of two PhD students from Universidad de Talca, Amanda and Sebastian, and Meret, one of the doctoral researchers who was doing her industrial secondment in UK together with Raniel. In the last week of July, two-row sampling at final harvest was carried out, separating the ears from the remaining biomass. These ear samples have already been sorted and are ready to be sent to Sophia, doctoral researcher at UHO, for cereal quality analysis. A week later, the whole-plot harvest was completed using the combine harvester.

Raniel Valencia

Agroscope, Switzerland

In early August, the Swiss team successfully completed their LegumeLegacy field season with the harvest of spring wheat as a follow-on cereal crop. The clear positive legacy effects of the legumes observed on the wheat yield will now be thoroughly analysed in the laboratory with special focus on nitrogen mechanisms. Meanwhile, Prasanth is set to embark on a five-month academic secondment at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) to further expand his expertise on organic matter analysis.

Prasanth Bendalam



*Harvesting of spring wheat in Agroscope
(field location – Schneisingen).*



One of the Polish sites.



*Separating the ears from the rest of the
biomass by Meret, Denmark.*

Poznań University of Life Sciences, Poland

The final harvest of winter wheat has been completed at both experimental sites in Poland. The official phase of the field trials has now concluded. All scheduled measurements and observations were carried out according to plan. The collected material will now be processed and analysed in the next stage of the study.

Matej Orešković

Aarhus University, Denmark

After much anticipation, the follow-on spring barley at the Danish site was successfully harvested in the third week of August. It was a moment of reflection and accomplishment, marking the conclusion of the second year of field work, and with it, the end of field activities for both Julian and Meret. Harvesting was carried out using a Handrup harvester to collect the grain, while straw samples were taken directly from the field. Post-harvest cleaning of the grain is currently underway. In the coming weeks, yield parameters and nitrogen components will be analysed and linked to the preceding grassland mixtures to identify which combinations had the most beneficial legacy effects on the growth and yield of the follow-on spring barley. This year's field work in Denmark focused on assessing the legacy effects of various grassland mixtures, comprising grasses, legumes, and herbs harvested in 2024. The insights gained will contribute to understanding how previous grassland compositions influence subsequent cereal performance.

Julian Nyaga

The conclusion of the multi-site field experiment marks a major milestone for the LegumeLegacy project. The focus now shifts from the field to the desk and laboratory, as the doctoral researchers continue their work by processing and analysing the wealth of data collected. The coming months will be dedicated to collaboration across teams, with the shared goal of producing high-quality scientific publications and outreach materials that communicate the project's findings and impact.



LegumeLegacy is an MSCA Doctoral Network

<https://legumelegacy.scss.tcd.ie/>

This newsletter was edited by Doctoral Researchers Prasanth Bendalam,
Die Hu, Julian Nyaga and Sophia Philadelphi.



Funding LegumeLegacy



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2021 doctoral network programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 101072579.

Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. The European Union can't be held responsible for them.



This work has received funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee [grant number EP/X028003/1] to the University of Reading.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
**State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI**

This work has received funding from the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).



The Canadian sites of this project were funded by the Living Laboratories Initiative (or Agricultural Climate Solutions – Living Labs) of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.