

A History of Farming Systems Research

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Readership: Agricultural economics and development studies.

Farming Systems Research (FSR) may be defined as a diagnostic process, providing a collection of methods for researchers to understand farm households and their decision-making. Its applications use this understanding to increase efficiency in the use of human and budgetary resources for agricultural development, including research, extension and policy formulation.

This book provides a detailed history of FSR. While it includes the application of FSR to developed country agriculture, its main focus is on FSR in its original role, with small-scale, resource-poor farmers in less developed countries. There are some 40 contributions from nearly 50 contributors from 20 countries, illustrating both the diversity and coherence of FSR. The book was initiated by the then International Association for Farming Systems Research and Extension (now International Farming Systems Association) and developed with support from FAO. It provides a wealth of information and insights for all concerned with agricultural development.

Contents include:

- Introduction

Part 1: Understanding Farmers and their Farming

- FSR-origins and perspectives
- FSR-understanding farming systems

Part 2: The Applications of Farming Systems Research

- FSR in technology choice and development
- FSR in extension and policy formulation

Part 3: Institutional Commitment to Farming Systems Research

- Some institutional experiences in national agricultural research
- Some dimensions of the organisation of FSR
- Training for FSR

Part 4: FSR: The Professional Dimension

- The regional and international associations
- FSR and the professional disciplines

Part 5: Future Directions for FSR

- At the cutting edge
- Future directions for FSR

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