

Measuring the Effectiveness of Educational Instruments in
Facilitating Environmentally Responsible Behaviour in Agriculture:
The Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan Program

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Abstract

This research evaluates the effectiveness of Ontario's voluntary Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program's educational instruments by applying the Theory of Planned Behaviour and measuring environmental awareness. Despite being billed as an educational and environmental awareness program, the educational elements of the EFP program have not previously been evaluated in relation to their ability to foster environmental behaviours. A survey was conducted before and after the EFP workshops to measure any change in farmers' environmental awareness or intentions to implement beneficial management practices. Findings suggest an overall increase in participants' behavioural intentions and awareness, though there are opportunities to strengthen the underlying constructs of these measures to help ensure these positive outcomes are sustained beyond workshop participation. This research identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the EFP program's educational instruments and provides insight into the psychological constructs influencing farmers' participation in the program and their intentions to implement conservation measures.