

Workshop  
**Economic Experiments for EU  
Agricultural Policy Evaluation:  
Methodological challenges**  
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How to recruit  
farmers as  
participants in  
economic  
experiments ?



- ❖ Mailing Lists / E-Mail
- ❖ Advertisements in Magazines
- ❖ **Postal Letters**
- ❖ Conferences / Fairs / Workshops
- ❖ University Students (of Agriculture)
- ❖ Training Courses / Classes
- ❖ Telephone Calls
- ❖ [...]

# Postal Letters

## ❖ Experiment / Survey:

- Paper-based
- **Online**

## ❖ Problem: How to get the **address data**?

- Public databases (EU subsidy database)
- Other research projects
- Buy datasets
- **Cooperate with official institution (ministry / administration)**

# ‘Landwirtschaftskammer Niedersachsen’

- ❖ Public corporation in Lower Saxony (**‘Agricultural Chamber’**)
- ❖ Responsible for
  - Processing of EU Subsidy Payments
  - Monitoring compliance with regulations and sanctioning non-compliance
  - Contracting 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar programs such as AEM etc.
  - Research / Testing / Statistics
  - But also: organizing workshops, fairs, conferences; consulting in terms of business administration, crop cultivation, animal husbandry and other forms of professional advice (NOT on behalf of the ministry, in competition with other advisory services)
- ❖ **Maintains several databases with farmer address data**

# Advantages

- ❖ Easy and direct **access to address data** of almost all farmers
- ❖ Possibility to **reach sub-categories** of farmers (such as all organic farmers, etc.)
- ❖ Chamber as **expert institution** in the domain of agriculture
- ❖ Possibility for **pretesting**
- ❖ Possibility to reach farmers with a **personalized letter (uniform wording / framing)**
- ❖ Possibility to **arrange payouts** with a second letter (including a voucher card)
- ❖ Serious **image**
- ❖ 'Political' **neutrality** of the chamber

# Disadvantages

- ❖ High **costs of letters**, especially if a high N is needed
- ❖ **Probable biases**: age and internet access in rural areas
- ❖ **Data privacy issues**: researchers not allowed to see addresses, complicates process + increases costs (you have to trust chamber employees regarding randomization etc.)
- ❖ The more people get involved, **the longer it takes** to make decisions
- ❖ Everything needs to **get approved** by chamber officials
- ❖ ‘Political’ **neutrality** of the chamber

# Punchline

- ❖ Good option if **funding** is generous and secured
- ❖ **Time** should be available
- ❖ **Contact person** is crucial