

Women in Agriculture: Leadership programme development research - summary

This research was carried out to inform a new leadership programme for women in Scottish agriculture. It included an evidence review and in-depth interviews with women in mid-level and leadership roles in agriculture and other relevant sectors.

Paths to leadership

- Most participants did not have clear career plans, but have instead taken opportunities when they have been offered or tried different roles.
- Many had doubts if they had the right skills before taking on leadership roles in agricultural organisations.
- Participants were critical of more direct forms of positive action, such as quotas on boards. However, they also spoke about wider issues recruiting women or encouraging them to apply for roles.

Leadership programmes can:

- Be a stepping stone to leadership roles within agricultural organisations
- Build women's confidence, practical skills and support networks in the industry
- Help attendees explore their own goals and approach to leadership

What could the programme include?

Leadership skills - approaches to leadership, career planning and goals

Business skills - industry knowledge and how a board works, chairing meetings

Practical skills - time management

Personal skills - confidence, resilience

What did interviewees tell us?

Confidence, listening and working collaboratively are viewed as key leadership skills



Women in leadership in agriculture feel they have to work harder to prove themselves



Support from family, contacts in the sector and organisations can be key to women's success



It's important to be willing to learn and practice things that are more challenging



The programme should be delivered to smaller groups to build close relationships



Women taking part should have a clear goal, and receive a certificate on completing the programme



1. **Designing the programme** - who is it for
2. **Delivering the programme** - what to include
3. **Evaluation** - what is the programme's impact