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CHCx3 February Newsletter

Gaining Momentum

Stuart Knight, NIAB, CHCx3 Knowledge Hub Leader

Welcome to the second edition of CHCx3 Insights, the newsletter of the Centre for High Carbon Capture Cropping, or 'CHCx3' for short.

On 20 September 2023, the Prime Minister recommitted the UK to achieving Net Zero by 2050. Meanwhile, the goal for UK Farming is still to reach this milestone ten years earlier. Huge strides are required over the next two decades to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon capture. Not to mention maintaining the productive, profitable, and resilient cropping systems needed to supply enough food, feed, forage, fibre, and biomass, whilst continuing to reduce the negative and enhance the positive impacts that farming can have on the environment.

Since our project started in April 2023, the CHCx3 Partners have been busy in the lab, in the field, and in the workshop, exploring the potential for rotational cover crops, annual fibre crops, herbal leys and perennial cereals, and perennial biomass crops, to help accelerate progress to Net Zero.

We have also been growing our community of growers, agronomists, scientists, plant breeders, crop processors, product manufacturers, and environment and policy stakeholders, all with an interest in high carbon capture cropping. If you are interested in getting more involved in CHCx3 research, events, or have a suggestion as to how else we can support carbon capture cropping, please do get in touch. Our contact details are provided on the last page of this newsletter.

In this edition of Insights, Professor Peter Ball of the University of York gives his viewpoint on the opportunity to exploit innovative thinking across agrifood and biorenewables value chains. NIAB's Dr Nathan Morris outlines new field studies to investigate how rotational cover crops could increase soil organic carbon and growing system resilience, and Jed Soleiman of Cotswold Seeds describes field trials evaluating the benefits of multi-species herbal leys for crop productivity and carbon capture. In 'News from the Hub' we highlight new developments in carbon capture cropping from CHCx3 and elsewhere. We hear from Cambridgeshire farmer Luke Palmer on how he is exploring new cropping options to enhance carbon capture, and from the Biorenewables Development Centre and Unyte Hemp on the work they are leading on Value Chains and Industrial Hemp respectively within the Project.

Read the Newsletter

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