Participant Information Sheet/Information about the research

Version 1.2: 23-Sep-2025

Title of study:

Testing Agricultural Robotics and Gathering Stakeholder Feedback

Invitation to participate

You are invited to take part in research being conducted by the University of Lincoln in collaboration with the Agri-Robotics Regulatory Network (ARRNet).

The ARRNet, a collaboration between the UK Agri-Tech Centre, Lincoln Institute for Agri-food Technology/University of Lincoln, Harper Adams University and the Manufacturing Technology Centre, is working to overcome the remaining barriers to the widespread adoption of robotics and automation in agriculture. Through developing technical standards, training and testing, ARRNet aims to ensure the reliability and safety of Robotics and Autonomous Systems (RAS) in agriculture, whilst also supporting commercialisation and adoption.

Participation is entirely voluntary. Please read this information carefully before deciding whether to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

The research aims to explore how agricultural robots can be tested for safety and performance in farm environments and to gather feedback from stakeholders. The findings will help inform the development of standards, guidelines and best practice to support the wider adoption of robotics in agriculture.

Am I eligible to take part?

You may take part if you are aged 18 or over.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate, you may:

Be observed during robot demonstrations.

Complete a short questionnaire.

Take part in an optional interview or group discussion.

Participation will take between 10 and 45 minutes, depending on the activities you choose.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to answer any questions. Once you have submitted data, it cannot be withdrawn because all data will be anonymised and not linked to you.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

You will have the opportunity to contribute to research that supports the safe and effective deployment of agricultural robots. You may also benefit from networking and knowledge exchange with other stakeholders.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

Minimal risks are anticipated. Questionnaires and interviews may cause minor inconvenience, but these are short and voluntary. All robot demonstrations will be carried out under supervision with safety precautions in place.

Will anyone know I have taken part?

No. No personal data will be collected. All feedback and observations will be recorded anonymously.

Where will my data be stored?

Anonymised data will be stored securely on the University's OneDrive in password-protected files, accessible only to the research team. Consent forms will be stored separately in locked cabinets on University premises.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The results will be published in anonymised and aggregated form through academic publications, project reports, and knowledge exchange outputs. A short summary will also be made available through project networks and websites.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is conducted by the University of Lincoln as part of the Agri-Robotics Regulatory Network (ARRNet) project, funded by Innovate UK.

Who has reviewed the study?

All research conducted by the University of Lincoln is reviewed by a Research Ethics Committee to protect your rights, dignity, and wellbeing. This study has been reviewed and approved (Ref: 2025_21732).

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak to the researcher/researchers, who will do their best to answer your questions. The researchers contact details are given at the end of this information sheet. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting ethics@lincoln.ac.uk.

Further information and contact details

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