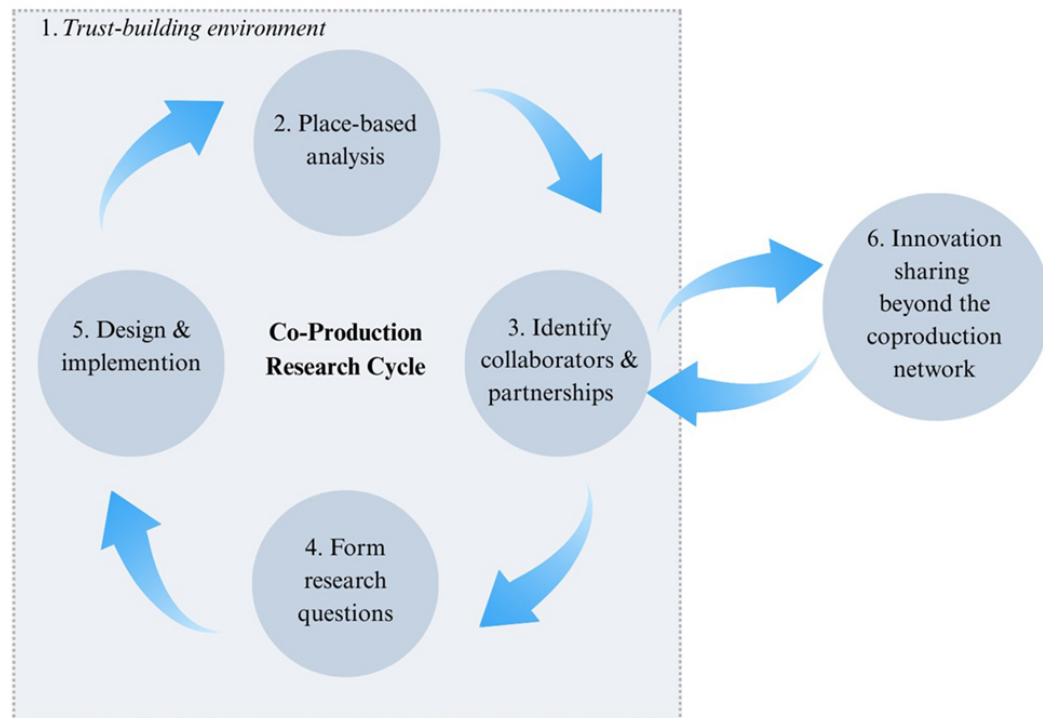




Transformative agricultural solutions need co-production

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The co-production research cycle: collaborating with communities to develop place-based, innovative science. Figure courtesy of Alison Duff, first author on the commentary.

Farmers and ranchers face increasing risks from extreme weather, high input costs, and unpredictable markets. Despite a long global history of impactful agricultural research and extension, scientists have struggled to develop transformational solutions to mitigate these risks while advancing long-term agricultural sustainability. How can research teams design experiments and strategic projects that effectively address the current and future needs of agricultural communities?

Participatory research, or “co-production,” is a process of collaboration with communities to develop place-based, innovative solutions. Unique from outreach, co-production empowers farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural community members as partners in the research process, bringing their lived experience into the design, implementation, and interpretation of scientific research.

In an *Agricultural & Environmental Letters* commentary, scientists from the USDA-ARS and the University of Wisconsin-Madison described three research case studies to illustrate co-production in action and summarized best practices to guide agricultural researchers in applying co-production principles in their research programs.

Recent disinvestments in public funding for science in the United States have revealed an urgent need to make explicit the value of research to agricultural communities. Co-production research builds trust between scientists and community members while ensuring greater accessibility to science as a tool to support more resilient agricultural communities.

Dig deeper

Duff, A. J., Wilmer, H., & Reynolds, J. (2026). Co-produced agricultural research can provide value for communities while building trust and public support for science. *Agricultural & Environmental Letters*, 11, e70053. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ael2.70053>

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