Making Crop Rotations
Fit for the Future

Great North Museum at the Hancock,
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Crop rotations play an important role in maintaining crop productivity and soil health in a wide range of farming systems. They are important for sustaining crop yield (feed, food and fuel crops) and fertility building, as well as weed, pest and disease control. UK farming systems have tended to adopt simplified rotations; however, more crops are now available to farmers and there is support to diversify rotations through the inclusion of cover crops as well as new market opportunities for non-food crops. Increased crop diversity is also known to support increased biodiversity on farm. It has also been suggested that increased crop diversity will give added resilience to farming systems in the light of climate change. This inter-disciplinary conference will allow consideration of the impacts of rotations on crop yield (feed and food crops), nutrient cycling, weed, pest and disease control, farm biodiversity and environmental impact. Not all rotations will work everywhere and thus there is a need to consider the drivers for rotation design and the trade-offs between the different ecosystem services that rotations can provide for future agriculture.

This conference brings together scientists and advisors from a range of disciplines and environments in Europe and beyond. We look forward to fruitful discussion and exchange of information which can be applied to the design of crop rotations in future agriculture.

Elizabeth Stockdale
Christine Watson
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