

Coding Project: Crop Wars

Christopher Golling, Gael Mourouga, Aaron Moser, Author 4, Author 5

1 Introduction

Agricultural structures are shaped by a variety of factors, including economic, environmental, cultural, technological and geographical conditions [1].

Consequently, both farmers and policymakers can benefit from farm-level models which optimise water usage and crop nature, based on a set of different externalities including water resources availability and market dynamics.

The model featured in this coding project aims to illustrate the process behind the development of agent-based farm-level models, by starting with a simple, deterministic model that is progressively complexified with elements from physics-based models and game theory.

2 State-of-the-Art

To guide the development of our illustrative model, a literature review was conducted to assess the state-of-the-art on agent-based modelling for water resources allocation and farming simulations.

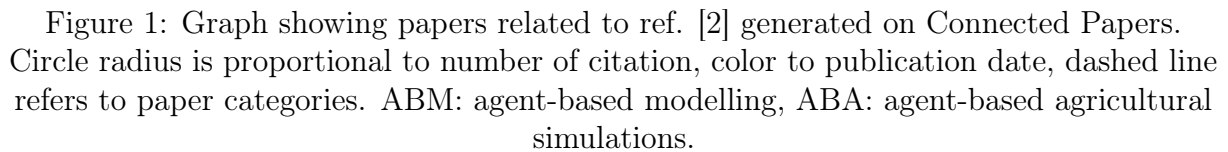
Our starting point was the thesis *"Agricultural policies and farm structures: Agent-based modelling and application to EU-policy reform"* by Happe (2004) [1], which outlines in details the development of an agent-based model (AgriPoliS) to assess the influence of agricultural policies at the farm level, which is applied to a case study in the region of Hohenhole in Germany.

To have an overview of more recent approaches, a seed review paper was selected, *"A review of Agent Based Modeling for agricultural policy evaluation"* by Kremmydas et al.(2018) [2] from which a literature graph was generated using the online tools Connected Papers, and is analysed on figure 1.

For completeness, the graphs generated through other seed papers were also analysed, including an older paper applying game theory to decision making in farmer cooperatives by Staatz (1983) [3] and a case application of agent-based models to water allocation on the transboundary Nile river by Ding (2016) [4].

One thing which became apparent through our literature review was that the parametrisation of the models with real-life data, calibration and sensitivity analysis, as well as the model validation through the analysis of existing agricultural systems was the most time and resource-consuming part of the studies. As such, we decided to procedurally generate data related to externalities (crop price and availability, weather data, water resources availability) and to generate a virtual geography for our agent-based model, centering our study around the construction of the model itself and the analysis of the interactions between agents for a given set of externalities.

A possible extension of this project would be the application to a real-life case study.



3.1 Software

The present report was generated via LaTeX, and all relevant programs or documents were hosted on a git repo, with which our team interacted using Visual Studio Code.

The Crop War model aims to visualise how farmers can compete with respect to water resources and crop profitability, given a geographical environment (the procedurally generated **Map** class) and a set of externalities including weather conditions, market dynamics (supply and demand impacting the price of crops), variable water resources and government policies.

3.3 Model development

In order to illustrate the development of a farm-level agent-based model applied to agricultural systems, the model development is organised in versions, starting from the simple, deterministic `v1.0` on top of which we progressively implement new features such as market dynamics, weather events and agent personalities.

3.3.1 Version 1.0

The first version of the model is not spatially resolved, in the sense that each agent can only grow one crop at a time and can not expand to other locations.

References

- [1] K. Happe, ed., *Agricultural policies and farm structures - Agent-based modelling and application to EU-policy reform*. Studies on the Agricultural and Food Sector in Central and Eastern Europe, Volume 30, 2004.
- [2] D. Kremmydas, I. N. Athanasiadis, and S. Rozakis, “A review of Agent Based Modeling for agricultural policy evaluation,” *Agricultural Systems*, vol. 164, pp. 95–106, July 2018.
- [3] J. M. Staatz, “A game-theoretic analysis of decision making in farmer cooperatives,” *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 1983.
- [4] N. Ding, R. Erfani, H. Mokhtar, and T. Erfani, “Agent Based Modelling for Water Resource Allocation in the Transboundary Nile River,” *Water*, vol. 8, p. 139, Apr. 2016.