

Dr. Eric Nost (Geography, Environment and Geomatics – University of Guelph) is recruiting a Master's student with interests in agri-environmental stewardship, geospatial technology, and science-policy interfaces. The student will complete a social science research project on ag data governance and use, conducting interviews with and surveying stakeholders including crop advisors, government agency staff, and representatives of farmers groups. The thesis will be developed alongside collaborators who are creating a soil carbon accounting and profit mapping tool (see [Capmourteres et al. 2018](#)) that will require assessing existing/best practices for farm-level data management and how users might actually employ such information in their decision-making. The research is funded by the [Arrell Food Institute](#) at the University of Guelph via the Canada First Research Excellence Fund.

Background: Innovations in precision agriculture have made yield mapping available to farmers for quite some time. Yet yield maps do not always meet the needs and interests of farmers, their advisors, and planners. [Profit maps](#), however, might clarify farm efficiency and identify field areas that could be managed for ecosystem services such as carbon storage. As Canada implements carbon pricing schemes, soil organic carbon could become a farm asset. In light of this, existing concerns about farm data ownership and control intersect with the potential for new profit/ecosystem services information to put ag system actors at odds or be used against farmers in speculation and regulation. Implementing “data-driven” decision-support actually requires social infrastructures: trust-building, addressing uncertainties, complexity and information overload, and tailoring information services to specific types of users.

The Master’s student will gain experience with semi-structured interview and Q survey methods, as well as cartographic analysis (depending on interest and qualifications). A key component of the research will involve knowledge mobilization alongside collaborators - an opportunity for the student to enhance their project management and public communication skills.

Prospective applicants should contact me via email - enost@uoguelph.ca - and forward an unofficial transcript, resume or CV, and a statement outlining their interests as they relate to the project description above.

More about the Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics at Guelph:

- Guaranteed funding for all graduate students for the duration of the program
- Comprehensive support for fieldwork and research expenses
- Outstanding faculty dedicated to a collaborative model of graduate education
- Research-intensive, collegial department in one of Canada’s top comprehensive universities
- Spacious campus with modern amenities in a vibrant community

For additional details, please see our website:

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/geography/graduate-programs-geography-overview>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Nost". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" and last name "Nost" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Eric Nost

Assistant Professor

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