Vreta Kluster
- A New Competence and Development Center for Food and Agritech Industries - from ideas to action

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Representing Vreta Kluster
Competence and development center for food- and agritech industries – from ideas to action

• New initiative, started in November 2011
• Aim is to contribute to new innovations, growth, jobs and development
• We offer:
  • Offices
  • Conference facilities
  • Project development support
  • Support in business development
  • A large network of companies, scientists, farmers, consultants and others
BACKGROUND

Vreta Kluster initiative

- Association of agribusiness companies and organisations
  Formed 2006
- Aim: Research and development for agribusiness, more cooperation between companies and organisations

- Independent advisor company
- Discussed gathering of all advisory companies in the 90:s
- Decided in 2010 to move to Vreta Kluster if it was built

- Agricultural College of Östergötland
- Built a new school house in 2010
- Proposed that the cluster should be built in connection with this

- The Regional Council of Östergötland
  Made a survey of regional food- and agri- businesses in 2006
  Concluded this is a strong business sector for Östergötland, but that we lacked a local competence development site for these subjects

- Linköping municipality
  Started in 2006 to show interest in connecting Linköping University with green businesses
  Have a real estate company, Sankt Kors Fastighets AB, supporting business development through building attractive office concepts.
  Decided to support food- and agritech businesse by building Vreta Kluster
# Theme areas

## Innovation

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<th>Business development</th>
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Method: be an active, catalyst platform

• A bridge between researchers, companies and organizations.

• Networking – matchmaking

• A physical meeting place for crossover development meetings

• Activities to support new ideas and new cooperation

VISION
Create a competence centre with world class competence on creating innovations in green businesses
Example of results so far

• 12 000 visitors (since nov 2011)
• 24 companies as tenants – 50 persons
• 1300 persons in sendlist for news and invitations
• 3 breakfast meetings each term, 25-70 persons each
• Sensorseminar – 3 new development projects about to start up
• 2 st Vinnova application – testbed biogas, plantcounting by camera
• VicVision – a new company started
• Visited twice by the Minister of Agriculture
REFLECTIONS

Success factors

- Activities based on demands (not our offer) – investigate before, be responsive
- Workshops with mixed groups, ie scientists, advisors, consultants, farmers and more - Put effort and energy in inviting the right persons
- Result oriented – all workshops result in concrete activities
- Vreta Kluster take active part in realising ideas by process management

- Networking is the key – let people meet, talk and discuss!
- ...but make sure that the ideas get realised!
REFLECTIONS

Challenges

• Find a new form of operation. Now Vreta Kluster is managed as a project – will probably be formed as an operating company
• How to get companies to finance part of the cluster costs
• How to keep the organisation small and slim, and still get a lot of work done – managing consultants and cluster colleges from other organisations
• Make sure we have a strong profile, and limited offer – so we don’t try to do too much with limited resources

• Always keep in mind that we should only do activities that are not made by others already - Be aware so the cluster doesn’t start to compete with the cluster companies.
RECOMMENDATIONS

From our point of view:

• Be flexible
• Create a cluster platform as a small organisation with enthusiastic persons
• Make sure the cluster is a SUPPORT function for the companies, not a potential competitor
• Use and build your network
• Use external competence when needed
• Do not see others as competitors – create a common goal to work towards
• See opportunities
• Do not waste too much time planning and building systems and big organisation - just start and “build the plane as you fly”!

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