Studies from the EIP-AGRI Focus Group on New Entrants into Farming:

▶ lessons to foster innovation and entrepreneurship

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AGRICULTURE & INNOVATION

funded by European Commission

Family farm (vegetables, olives, fruit trees)

Agnès and Renaud Papone

www.lavancia.com | https://www.facebook.com/FermeLavancia

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Puget Théniers, Alpes Martimes, France.

Located in the lower French Alps, a mountainous region typically farmed pastorally by sheep and goat breeders. In our setting organic vegetable farming is atypical. However a new trend among entrants is to produce diversified vegetables for community supported agriculture schemes.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Agnès : 41 years
Renaud: 43 years
Two children, Lucie (2 years) and Jules (4,5 years)

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

1,2 hectares of vegetables with olive and fruit trees along the edges of all the terraces. 250 laying hens for eggs and 10 pigs for meat.

95% is sold directly to consumers through community supported agriculture schemes, online via the food assembly, the local weekly market or through our 8-member organic famers' cooperative, to local school lunch programmes. A very small proportion is sold to supermarkets or specialty shops.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

We run the farm full time with a division of labour where Renaud does the bulk of the work in the fields and Agnès takes care of sales, marketing, deliveries, administration etc. We have one apprentice who is in his final year and we usually hire 1-2 seasonal workers to help during the summer months.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Dealing with the overwhelming and very burdensome agricultural bureaucracy and their lack of knowledge about diversified vegetable farming, organic practices and new approaches, as opposed to looking in every possible subsidy programme. Overcome through patience, perseverance and personal conviction.

Gaining access to land to develop the farm in a setting where land is very scarce and held by families hoping to cash in on their properties if the zoning laws change in their favour. Still a work in progress though we are chipping away at it and have gotten several additional plots of land through leases or loans.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Successful models of collaboration with local authorities – we need a paradigm shift from thinking family and small scale farming is obsolete to being a force for rural renewal and job creation.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

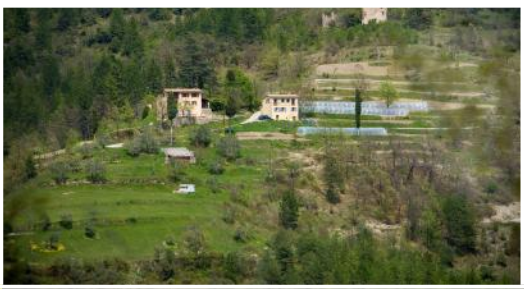
Research online and learning from peers, training organised by Agribio 06, mentoring other new entrants and learning from established farmers.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

We were able to start with no debt on a small family property and develop farm activities incrementally. We expanded the land in cultivation with the help of several neighboring property owners who were willing to lease land to us or make it available to us in exchange for maintaining their fields.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Continuing to diversify and growing the existing practices, increasing our current population of 10 pigs to reach a sustainable number, growing more of the livestock's feed ourselves to limit costs, carbon footprint etc. One important aspect of our work is advocacy for local organic farming at the municipal and regional level, through our organic body called Agribio. We are also part of an EU project called Edulis to reintroduce and multiply heirloom varieties. We are hopeful about a LEADER project.



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Organiclea Community Growers

Adam Payne

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Organiclea community growers are a workers' cooperative made up of 16 people who run a 4.5ha market garden on the edge of London. We grow a wide range of fruits and vegetables that are sold through a weekly box scheme with 350 customers, on two weekly market stalls and to 20 cafes and restaurants in London. The box scheme is supplied by 3 other farms in addition to ours but we manage the scheme. We also run an extensive volunteer programme with around 50 volunteers per week, offer training courses in organic horticulture and short courses in other land based skills, as well as offering services to support community groups establishing urban gardens. The market garden is based on an ex-council tree-nursery, that we have leased from the council on a peppercorn rent after it was closed down. The facilities include 0.5 acre of glass houses (1/5ha) and a warehouse. We took a 12 year lease on the property in 2008 and extended it to a 30 year lease in 2014.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

We are located on the edge of London. There are a number of similar organic market gardens that have been established in the past 6 years around London. Organic vegetable growing for box schemes and local markets is a common strategy for new entrants in the area. There is a long history of convention vegetable growing in the region, which used to be considered the 'breadbasket' of London but has been in decline in the past 30 years.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

There are 16 members of the cooperative, most of whom are employed by the cooperative 3-4 days per week. When we took on the lease in 2008 the organizations had existed for 10 years running a market stall and allotment plots but we had little experience of horticulture. No-one lives on the site.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

4.5 ha including 1/5 ha glasshouses. Of this total area only 1 ha is actively cultivated for vegetables, with further areas planted as orchards and biodiversity areas. The farm is bordered on 3 sides by ancient woodland, which extends into the site in many places restricting the areas that can be cultivated.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

National networks of organic growers have been the main source along with specific training on issues we have needed to develop. These are often accessed through the same national networks.

KEY OBSTACLES:

The key obstacles we have faced have been access to land – which we overcame by negotiating with the council for a low rent of an existing agricultural facility, and access to the capital necessary to start the farm and pay salaries until the income from the farm was sufficient – which we overcame through grants from charitable organisations. Without these this would not have been possible.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

More and better research and development to support organic production – in particular ways in which the farm can main autonomy from external inputs and respond challenges such as pests and diseases by working with a more detailed understanding of the on-farm ecosystem.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

We are planning to develop our food processing to help minimize losses due to gluts and poor quality produce as well as starting a farm-start cooperative to support new growers to set up and access markets in London.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

The farm is managed on a democratic and participatory basis. The cooperative is structure in a 'hub and spoke model' with groups focused on the different areas of our work, who each send representatives to a central hub of directors that manage the strategic development of the organizations.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

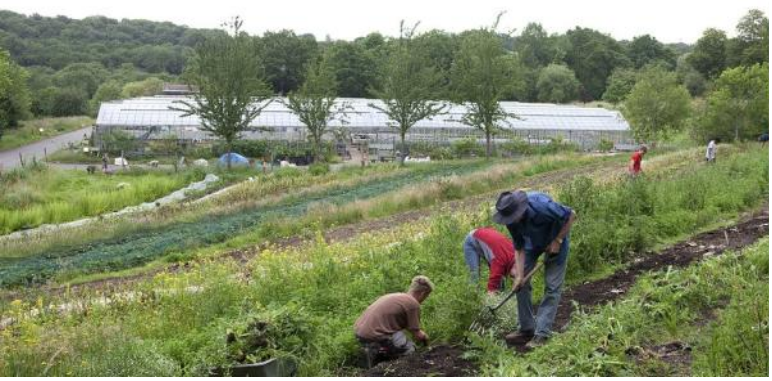
We are very successful at involving the local community in the farm, through volunteering and training programs. I think this has been the primary success of the project and has helped it to build a large and engaged distribution system.

We are also located on the edge of London where there is an unmet demand for local, organic produce.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Maintaining financial viability; having relevance to a wide range of people from the local community, included marginalised groups, for food supply, and social / educational interest which means attracting a range of people to volunteer and participate in training courses; producing organic vegetables to a high degree of quality; supporting other new entrants; participating in networks that aim to create a more socially and environmentally just food system.

Failure: Not maintaining financial viability; not attracting a diverse cross section of the local community to our training, volunteering and markets; loosing sight of the 'bigger picture'.



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Philip Feeney – Joint venture with Dairy Farmer Robert Bostock

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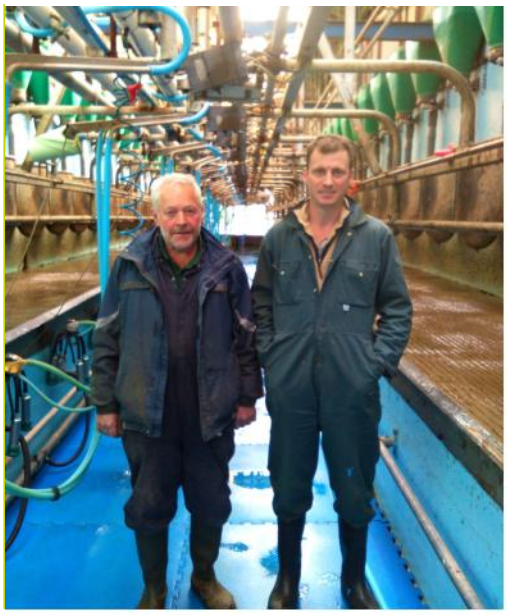

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Old Hall Farm, Malpas, Cheshire, England.

This is primarily a dairy area with horticulture and arable cropping on the lower ground. This has over recent years been a very proactive region of the UK to think differently and encourage new entrants.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Philip is in his mid/later 30's. He came from a farming family in Ireland was there was no available position for him to work on the family farm long term. He moved to Cheshire with the ambition and enthusiasm to realise his dream to dairy farm in his own right but with virtually no capital to offer – just his credit card!

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

286 hectares, Organic Dairy farm owned by Robert and Janet Bostock.

320 cows milking herd, total herd size 700.

Over the past 8 years, Phil has worked with Robert and Janet gaining their trust and respect and slowly buying into the herd cow by cow!

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

To start with both parties signed a formal contract where they each received a return on capital they invested into the joint business. E.g. to start with Philip would by the machinery and 25% of the 320 strong herd. Philip also ran a cow hire agreement alongside enabling Robert to see a return on his assets while Philip took over the milking and had an agreed share of the profits in the business account. This has 8 years later been replaced by a 50/50 equity farming partnership.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Only a very few business in the UK had tried something similar when they started out. So, Philip and Robert sort out the limited information there was but the rest they have had to phantom out by trial and error.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Lack of knowledge from industry professional on how different agreements can be used to benefit new entrants.

Absolute trust, respect and honesty in the joint venture. Excellent communications and regular reviews.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

It has helped Robert and Janet decrease the amount of physical work they needed to do on the farm whilst gaining additional income and helping someone get started.

By purchasing the cows gradually, the herd size didn't have to decrease and enabled enough profits for both parties. They now have 700 cows and Philip owns half of them.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

They all enjoy the day job still but are keen to evaluate new opportunities to keep moving forward. This could be by increasing herd size on this farm or elsewhere. Longer term, Philip would like to try and provide a set up to help someone else into the dairy business.

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Stadsboerderij Almere
City farm Almere

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GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Near the city Almere (4km). New entrants are not very common in this region, the land is the best agricultural land in the Netherlands, prizes of land are high. The land was reclaimed from the sea and the land was given / hired to farmer families in the 70's. The strategy this farmer uses can be seen as a typical new entrants approach in organic / multifunctional agriculture.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

The farm is managed by a couple (F /M) 55/57 years of age. They started the farm in 1996. None of them had farmer parents, but they were educated in agriculture (agricultural university / bachelor agricultural school) and both worked on farms and in research, consultancy and education. Motivation at the start was working in sustainable farming / organic farming, near the city.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

The farm is a bio-dynamic mixed farm with beef cattle and arable crops (wheat, sweetcorn, pumpkin, carrot, onion, red beet, spinach, white and red cabbage, broccoli, pea). The farm consists of 180 ha arable fields and has access to 500 ha of nature areas in which the cows can graze during the summer. All meat products are sold directly to customers at the farm, and on the farmers market which is organized weekly on the farm.

Besides agricultural produce, the farm has a public function: all primary schools visit the farm for educational purposes. They provide possibilities for people with poor opportunities to find a regular job (care farming), they have developed a regional brand (Almeerse weelde) for produce grown in the wild (nuts, fruit, berries, etc.) together with citizens of the city of Almere. Finally all kind of cultural activities are being developed.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

2 farmers, 2 employees, 15 seasonal workers fulltime. Sources of capital: bank, own capital, crowdfunding on solar energy project. echnologies: solar energy, warmth-storage under the buildings, storage of electricity in batteries, GPS on fieldwork.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Availability of land: difficult to hire land, not much available. They rent land from the city of Almere which might be used for building in the future, (one year contracts!) Therefore problems with loans (no security).

They overcame these obstacles via their excellent network and networking skills. They established the organisation "friends of the city farm". With all sorts of people with influence in it (former aldermen etc.) which they used for lobbying.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Being a pioneer in new technologies and in new agricultural and social initiatives. Being a good farmer: growing high quality products.

Failure: Short term land use without future perspective makes biodynamic agriculture difficult. Uncertainty about the periods of land use make investment and future planning difficult.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

The development of a second farm in the neighbourhood, developed as an estate with different entrepreneurs focussing on sustainable production, deeply integrated with nature development; short chain development in relation to food policy of the city of Almere. The city of Almere wants to develop the east side of the city to a landscape which produces food for the city of Almere. Precondition is that farms are self-sustaining in energy, recycle waste and preserve natural areas as well. The city farm Almere has proposed a plan for part of this land.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Different types of networks: innovation networks with other multifunctional farmers, communities of practice, research networks, advisory organisations, symposia , informal networks of entrepreneurs outside agriculture.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

The farm invested in really good contacts with the public, inhabitants of the city of Almere. A large quantity of products is sold through direct selling resulting in high prices. They are also quite stubborn, have a strong opinion and vison and act upon that. They have good communication skills and are open for new initiatives, also for other entrepreneurs starting new business on their property.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Application of renewable energy sources by storage of energy, like H2-technology, for use in tractors. Development of working/living communities around farms.

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SCOP La Ferme des Volonteux

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GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

The SCOP « La Ferme des Volonteux » is located in Beaumont-les-Valence, Drôme, France.

The Drôme county holds 6400 farms. This number has been constantly decreasing for the past 3 decades, consistently with regional and national trends. Every year, an average of 170 new farmers enter agriculture in Drôme, less than a quarter of which are supported through public schemes. Farmers' renewal rate in Drôme is 42%.

Beaumont-les-Valence is located in a fertile plain, only 6 miles away from Valence's urban area (170 000 inhabitants). It can therefore be described as a peri-urban farm. Drôme attracts many new comers who come from backgrounds other than agriculture. A significant portion of them set up rather non-conformist farms, producing foods with high added value, as well as services, and creating niche markets for their small businesses, especially in the mountains. In the plain, agricultural holdings have a more common profile. In this context, the Ferme des Volonteux stands out as atypical regarding its legal status and internal decision-making process, its many partners in relation to its size, and the variety of economic activities it encompasses.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

In 2009, this farm was run by one person. It now employs 8+ people: 5 full-time partners, 3 employees-to-become-partners, 1 half-time employee, and several seasonal employees. It uses around 10,5 hectares: fruit trees (7ha), and vegetables (3,5ha). Everything is grown organically. Other activities include:

- a shop that sells the farm's vegetables and a wide range of groceries;
- a catering service, "Croq'Champs", that uses products from the farm and delivers dozens of daily lunches to businesses in the area of Valence;
- a delivery service of vegetable & groceries for businesses and individuals.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

This poster is focussing on 2 among the newest entrants, Ludovic Measson and Claire Damery, the couple who manages part of the vegetable-growing activity, as well as Croq'Champs: the catering and delivery of lunches. Claire and Ludovic are 34 years old and they have a 2-year-old child. Ludovic's initial training was in agriculture, and he got to work with innovative organic farmers who processed their products and sold them directly. He later worked as a researcher and a consultant on public policies for sustainable development in rural and periurban areas. Claire also worked as a researcher and in rural development and local innovation. They both spent a year working on farms as wwoofers, and were also involved in event planning. Through their work experiences, they developed knowledge and networks related to small-scale farming and direct-to-consumer activities. This was the base of their motivation for the project.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Ferme des Volonteux: The farm entity is a Société Coopérative et Participative (SCOP), which means it is ruled by partners who have equal decision powers and share the infrastructure and equipment. From a financial point of view, each business activity is run independently within the SCOP. Each activity pays a rent to the SCOP for using the common equipment. Although this particular form of entrepreneurship has become fairly common in the general economy, it is still very rare in agriculture. The shop brings the majority of this SCOP's turnover.

Croq'Champs: Claire and Ludovic grow a diversity of organic vegetables on 1 hectare of land. They process the production and turn it into lunches that they deliver in businesses in the area of Valence. The meals can be ordered from their website: http://www.croq-champs.fr/

They joined the SCOP in December 2012. By April 2014, Ludovic could draw an income from the business, and in 2014 the turnover of Croq'Champs was around 110 000 euros. Since the beginning of 2015, they both get an income from this activity.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Farming techniques: Ludovic derives his practical know-how from internships, short technical trainings, and working on farms. Within the SCOP, vegetable growers help one another. Ludovic passed his knowledge on to Claire, who learns on the job.

Catering: Both Claire and Ludovic have followed short trainings on processing and catering hygiene. Yet they claim to be mainly learning on the job for the cooking part. "At the beginning, cooking for 30 people would keep us working until midnight. Now we we're done before 7 pm."

Marketing and communication: Their previous work environments provided them with tools and networks that prove useful for this business. They can also seek specific knowledge through the cooperatives network.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Their initial project was located in the Lyon area. They struggled to find available agricultural land. Ludovic, who had quit his job in order to start the project, was not eligible to funding from the banks. In the case of Claire, the transition from an external salary to an income from the Croq'Champs activity was eased by the use of her unemployment insurance to start the business.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Ferme des Volonteux: The founder, Rémy Léger, had a vision of the collective business he wanted and of the potential of his farm. He was adamant about building his vision, made all the investments, recruited partners, and now oversees the SCOP's management. Through him, the business accessed agricultural land as well as funding.The SCOP was granted public funding for its investments. The group gets appropriate advice for the setting up and management of a collective business. The partners within the SCOP "Ferme des Volonteux" share the same vision of their business.

Croq'Champs within the farm: Both Claire and Ludovic had extensive previous work experiences and a first-hand understanding of what running a farm really looks like on a daily basis. They acknowledged the competences they did not master, and were careful to build working relationships that would compensate for their initial missing know-how. The offer they put on the market was new and met an actual need. They first sold on local markets, where they had the opportunity to explain the project to customers who then became their first regular clients.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Make a living: Do both new entrants draw a revenue from the business 18 months into the project? In their case yes, they get a little more than the legal minimum wage (1100 € net / month). This criteria was also labelled "not crashing the project!"

Workload: Is the daily amount of work (all types of tasks included) below 12 hours for each new entrant?

Anxiety: Is the overall amount of stress generated by the project bearable? This assessment is qualitative, and refers to a sense of "mastering" the business and not continuously handling unexpected issues.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Creating collective farming businesses: how to build teams and governance?

Adjusting permanently to make sure the business is operating efficiently. Which advisory systems are actually adapted to business creation in an uncertain context?

Knowledge acquisition & advice: what types of resources (advice, expertise, tutoring…) exist AND are efficient? WHEN is it most efficient to use them?

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

The future plans include bringing new partners on the farm and stabilizing the SCOP's management.

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This poster was presented at the first meeting of the EIP-AGRI Focus Group 'New entrants into farming' – June 2015 | More information: www.eip-agri.eu

Organic farm Kabolca

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DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

The farm is managed in pair: male (interviewee, 34 years) and his female partner (aged 33); both hold university degree in human studies. Both in-migrants: one from continental part, the other from bordering winegrowing region. No regular job, but diversified income: involved in NGO, LEADER and some other projects, receives a PhD grant, stakeholder in social enterprise (ecotourism) and active in organic farming (also offers farm visits for schools, associations). Experiences with farming gathered on several organic farms, which have also been a topic of his MSc study. His partner is at the moment without regular job, before she was working in a jewellery shop. She has not got any previous farming experience, but her uncle is famous winegrower. Farming brings them personal contentedness; he wants to be his own boss and wants to see tangible results of his work in the locality.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

When he started on his own in 2012, he rented approx. 0.5 ha arable land. Afterwards, he has expanded: he has mostly rented a land from »Farmland and Forest Fund of the Republic of Slovenia«, elderly local farmers, church. Momentarily, there are 3 ha of arable land (not all cultivated, some under grassland), 0.9 ha of olive grove, 0.2 ha of orchard. Specialized into horticulture, mostly direct marketing: primarily via CSA, cooperation also with consumers´ association from Ljubljana (capital, Central Slovenia), and modestly with local schools. Marketing is mostly performed via internet, efficiently also through »word-of-mouth«. Small-sized processing (marmalade, sauce) due to shortage on facilities, equipment, small production.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Mostly from other farmers, web, periodically participated in courses. He would like to invest more in new farming knowledge, but has no time for that.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Slovenian Istria, SW Slovenia (coastal hilly hinterland)

The surveyed case is an exception to the rule since the young farmer is completely “new kid in town”: in-migrant, does not have neither any agrarian roots nor own land or farm house (at the moment he is accommodated in his parents´ second home). There are few young farmers in the region, also few new entrants into farming.

Source: http://kabolca.weebly.com/ (July 1, 2015)

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

For both, farming is a part-time activity. Their main objective is to gain proper average income in farming for both – which has not been accomplished yet. They work 8 hours/day on farm in season (March-November). They include additional work force (one person for 8h/week/season - with organic farming experiences, via public scheme).

Owns no mechanization (no tractor, etc.), highly dependent on local farmers. Consequently, there is a lot of manual work included. No special processing technologies, but using covering with straw, drip irrigation, following organic standards.

Networking with several organic farms in locality and in a wider community (also in relation to his diversified work): they order seeds together, exchanging products, helping each other with farming.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Real estate is too expensive (houses and arable land) and this obstructs the purchase of own farm house and farm land, as also further farming development. Rental is financially relatively favourable, but offers no guarantee and security (he does not have long-term rental contract). Land fragmentation and dispersed accessibility: approx. 15 plots on different localities (in radius of 10 km) demand more time. Accelerated climatic conditions over the past few years: drought, moisture, above the average warm winters, etc. Problems associated with sale: do not have enough clients/partners in locality.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Personal contentedness. Income.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

The practice with CSA, organic farming.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Suitability of various species for cultivation (respecting local particularities). New farming techniques.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Acquisition of RDP subsidies (measures for farming start-up): this would form an investment basis – greenhouse, mechanization, diversification (into processing). Own farm purchasing (building first, optional also land). Active involvement in local cooperation set-up.

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Organic farm

Marc Bianchi

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GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Ile-de-France, not far from Paris (peri-urban). New entrants are not so common in this region where most of the farmers have cereal-large-scale-farms.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Marc is a 43-year-old man. He worked during 15 years in tourism, in good conditions (interesting jobs, good salaries). But he had frequently the feeling that "he was not in the good place"…

He decided to turn into an organic farmer not only because he was interested by organic farming, but also because working in agriculture was a way to have a work that "means" something for him.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

Marc started his farm at the end of 2014, in Saint Augustin, in the North of Seine-et-Marne department. He did it at the same time with Boris Canal, another new entrant he met in Les Champs des Possibles, the "espace-test agricole" (farm incubator) where he tested his project during 2 years.

They are both on a land of 4 hectares, next to another farmer (Philippe Caron) who started organic gardening there 4 years ago. New farm, in creation. 4 hectares in organic gardening, with 2 persons. They sell everything in AMAP (short scale market chain).

Marc, Boris and Philippe have 3 separate exploitations, but they work together in mutual aid. Marc has 2 ha on organic gardening. 100 % of the production is sold in AMAP (short scale market chain): 2 groups of consumers have signed contracts with him.

He estimated that he should get a net income of 2 000 € per month, but it is not the case for the moment. He wants to reach this objective progressively on a 3-4 years period.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

It's a full time job, in organic farming. He uses few technologies, and little mechanization. Most of the material he uses is shared with Philippe and Boris (mutual aid). And he is beginning to build his own material. Their idea, with Boris, is to make minimum tillage. He is involved in different networks, created when they were in the "espace-test agricole" (Les Champs des Possibles, AMAP, Organic Farming Organisation, Terre de Liens...). He is especially involved in Les Champs des Possibles as a member of the board of directors. The source of capital for investments: 70% borrowed from the bank, 30% from a regional grant (new material). A good part of the treasury comes from the contracts with the consumers in the AMAP.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Practices in farms, and salaried activity into farms (during 2 seasons). Academic formation (9 months of adult formation in a CFPPA). Test of activity during 2 years in Les Champs des Possibles, with a tutor (organic farmer) who helped him. Various trainings provided by different associations (technical, economical, financial trainings). Readings (books of other farmers, agronomists).

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Before the installation, he tested his project during 2 years, creating networks that helped him to find land, to have treasury (thanks to the AMAP), to commercialize his production, and to find two farmers with who he can work in mutual assistance. Thanks to the AMAP, he also found the capital, because the commitment of the consumers is a guarantee for the banks.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Difficulty to reach a good balance between professional life and personal life. He overcomes it thanks to mutual assistance with two other farmers. And he also overcomes this obstacle thanks to the support from his wife and children. He is also thinking to hire someone in few years. Other obstacles: the administrative complications, the "papers", the delays… Usual obstacles for people trying to create their business. He overcomes these obstacles thanks to obstinacy, determination, patience. You have to know the law, your rights… and to be always motivated to solve the problems.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: The economic success - the possibility to have an income from the activity. The fact that more and more people want to talk with him about his activity, how he did it… Especially with future farmers. To be a "referent », to be able to share his experience. The technical competency: to be able to sell good products to the consumers. The satisfaction of the consumers. The good balance between professional and personal life.

Failure: They are almost the same, but in the negative way. Not to be able to get an income from farming. Dissatisfaction of the consumers in the AMAP. The fail in a culture (technical failure). Not to be able to live « peacefully » the activity, in a social point of view (family, friends, etc.). To be prisoner of the work.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

How simplifying the « obstacle course » when you want to become a farmer (administration, economical problems, etc.)? Is it a need for research? Not sure, but it is a real problem. New entrants are a new phenomenon in agriculture. And the whole agricultural system is still designed for the "old ways" to become a farmer (transmission). There are things to study in order to change that. There is also something to do on news status for farmers (for example: haw to be an independent farmer in a workers cooperative…). Technical researches on organic farming. How to facilitate exchanges between farmers?

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Hire an employee (in 3 years…). Receive trainees in the farm, be a tutor, in order to share his experiences, and to "give back" what he received. Development of other activities (transformation of the vegetables with other farmers, poultry). To have a part of the land saved for experiments. Working on green manure.

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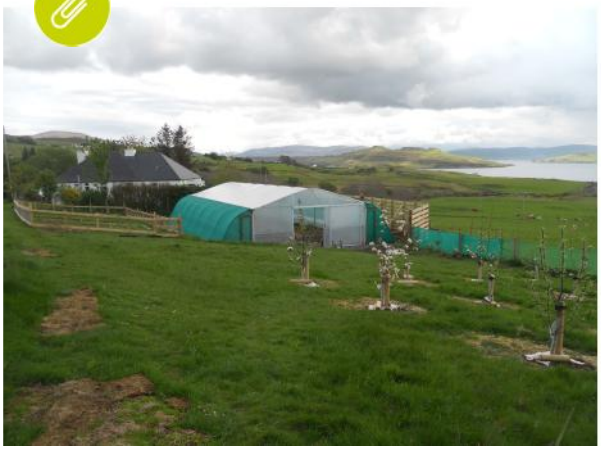
New entrants to crofting on the Isle of Skye West coast of Scotland



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Crofts are small agricultural units, most of which are situated in the crofting counties in the north and west of Scotland. They are held subject to the provisions of the Crofting Acts, UK passed between 1886 and 2010 to ensure that the land is actively worked by local occupants.

There are over 12 000 crofting households in Scotland. Although most crofts are inherited, the Scottish Crofting Federation is actively encouraging new entrants to crofting.

Actual numbers of new entrants are unknown, but in this region of the highlands there are at least several dozen. This combination of livestock and diversification into bed and breakfast is common. It is a high visual amenity location in which to settle, so it is particularly appealing to 'lifestyle' farmers and tourists.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

This is a couple in their fifties, who took over her uncle's croft seven years ago. Her family has been involved in crofting for the past 400 years, so she visited the croft as a child, but it was completely new to him. Both worked as business professionals in England prior to acquiring the croft. They croft as a form of semi-retirement, because they enjoy the lifestyle.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

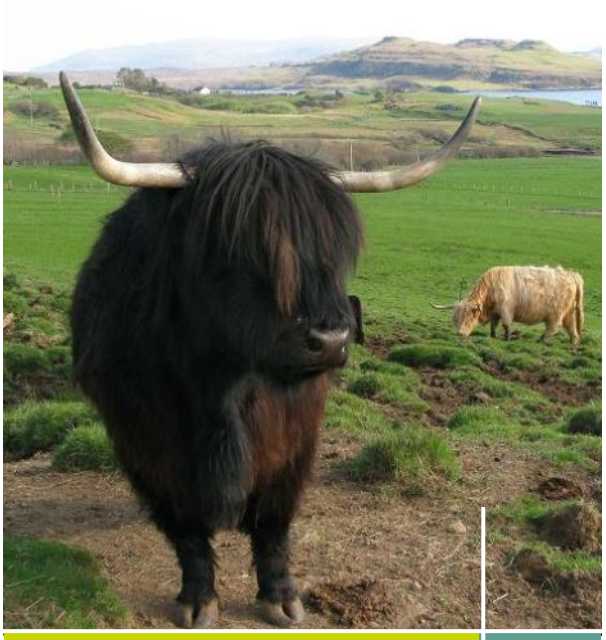
50 acres (20 ha), with access to 3000 (1214 ha) acres of common grazing. Small herds of sheep and highland cattle, a new polytunnel and orchard. Livestock marketed through local livestock market. Diversified into bed and breakfast – that was the first change they made when they took over the croft.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Both partners work on the farm and have no external employment, although it generates only about 10% of their household income (the remainder appears to be from the bed and breakfast, pensions etc.).

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Highly reliant on neighbours for practical information (e.g. livestock husbandry). Also access formal training and specialist advice (e.g. on stocking density, soil analysis) from local consultants.



KEY OBSTACLES:

Accessed land through family connections, brought wealth for start-up from previous employment, immediately started a diversification activity to generate income.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Successful diversification, low income demands of owners.

Able to integrate well into the local community and gain local knowledge.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Hoping to be able to sell produce from their polytunnel.

Planning to expand their shed to house their bull and enable calving indoors.

funded by European Commission

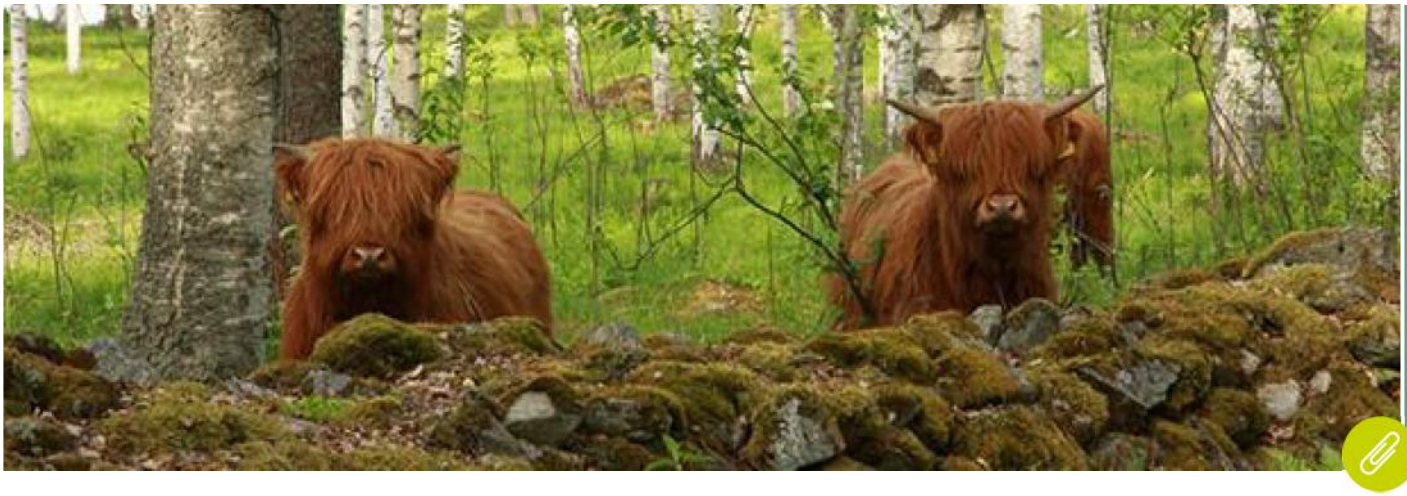
Hyvätuuli Highland

Store/webstore opened by cattle farmers

sami.lehto@ranchising.fi

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Jäppilä, central Finland. Operation area full Finland and new farms opening further central Finland.



DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

50 to 100 hectare multiple farms. Outside marketing and IT service is bought and hired.

Pasture grazed high value meat is success sold on webstore to quality embracing consumers and kitchens.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Three former dairy farms turned to organic Highland cattle farmers formed a group, now training new entrants to highland cattle farmers and employing for running a short supply chain webstores.

Highland cattle was seen as profitable business and co-operative organization is now expanding bringing up new entrants.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Cattle feed is grown on the same farm with now grain fed to animals even on winter time. Store employs local people and is run in turns by farmers. Finance of new entrants businesses is left for new entrants to acquire and is not specified.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Knowledge in cattle caretaking and business strategies is shared to newcomers by funders.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Small local slaughterhouses prefer bigger batches and thus grouping with local cattle farms brings down the cost and speeds up the chain.

New ERP-software project is implemented to increase the efficiency and bring more edge on the market.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Recent changes in milk price has made dairy business unprofitable but high demand for quality meat makes possible the large production from Highland cattle farms.

Time required running a store and marketing is divided and bought outside.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Niche market for quality product and resource pooling converts to economic success. Animal welfare is also a key factor for farmer and clients.

Failure: Mass production of low-price product eventually ends in losses and thus animal welfare is harder to manage.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Benefits of franchising business model EU wide. Quality facts of highland cattle.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Open up several stores around Finland and international sales (TRADEIT).

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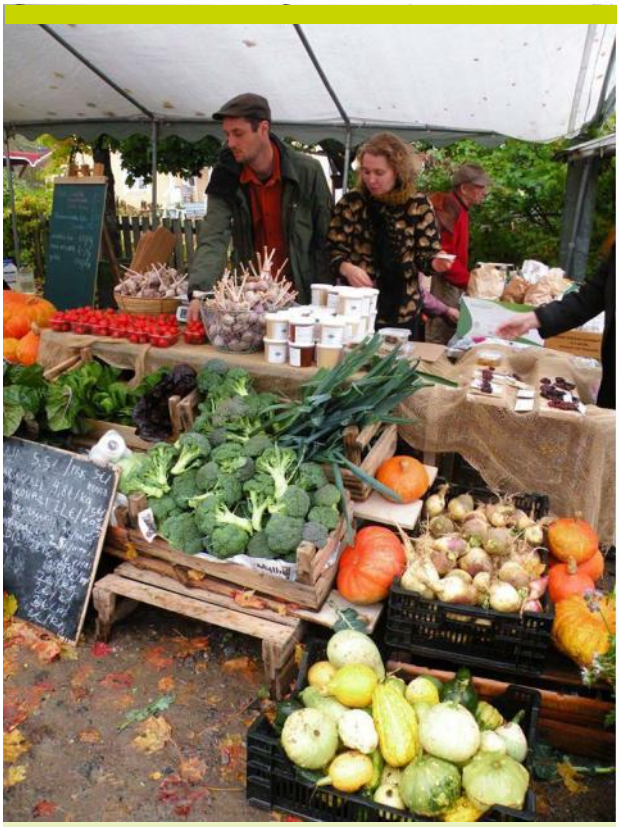
Lehtokummun tila

Vegetables and honey



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Hyvinkää, southern Finland. Good sub-capital area for big markets and low land prices, though new entrants are rare.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Couple in their thirties formerly nature conservation professionals in government organization.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

1 hectare field owned with 2 more rented from nearby farm. Marketing is marginal, but product is mainly sold on a farmers market and straight sales to consumers.

Nearby bigger organic farm arranges farmers market for customers living in nearby cities.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

The farm was bought as a place to live with mortgage later on growing to small scale organic farm (5 years). Couple work part-time and employ students for work experience during the summer. The motivation for moving to countryside was life-style aspirations and a way to live sustainably.

Machinery has been and is acquired as used and give-a-ways during the operational years. Nearby organic farm occasionally offers machinery and services.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Place in market is hard to find for new entrants, but Lehtokummun tila has found it convenient to use existing connections of nearby organic farmers.

For deep co-operation with nearby farm, no competing products must be sold.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Operation was grown slowly with minimum investments and financed with part-time job outside farming during the winter. Short supply chain methods were found successful on this scale.

According to farmer, there would be a lot of space on the Finnish market for organic vegetable and fruit product.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Good balance on working hours (secondary job vs employed workforce vs free time). Enough income to cover expenses.
Failure: Low yield due the lack of knowledge. Too many working hours compared to income.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Other farmers, internet, books and various ways of self-study. Organic pest- and weed control knowledge is hard to come by according to farmer.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Organic pest control.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Plan is to not grow in size but intensify productivity on current hectares. 3 hectares is thus seen as enough land to support income for the family and eventually turn to nearly full-time farmers. Both the farmers have other sources of income that is planned to be timed to winter months that tend to be idle on the farms in Finland.

funded by European Commission

LittleVillage Ltd.

PieniKylä Oy

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Espoo southern Finland. This close to capital (40km), new entrants are rare due the high value of land. Some new businesses for recreational services are emerging.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

40 hectares of land consisting 20 of active field. New business currently runs on about 2 hectares. Machinery and driver can be rented from nearby farmers. Marketing is done by the company owner and possibly hired professionals.

The 20 hectares have been rented to nearby farmers but eventually, when the business grows, they will be claimed to PieniKylä use.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

The about middle-aged owners of the land and the company have no strong previous experience of farming. Aim is to continue family farm after many years of being idle. Youngsters hired and in co-operation bring experience and workforce.

The business is run in highly privatized manner, though the goal is to mature to nearly non-profit organization enabling many types of activities and businesses.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Currently PieniKylä farms vegetables in co-operation with about 3 full-time youngsters with possible education and experience to farming. The scale of operation is highly flexible being open to additional workers/co-operatives/professionals.

Biodynamic. The limited company approach enables entry to farming with divided risk and effective usage of experience and knowledge.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Required knowledge in the business is brought in as professionals are hired.

KEY OBSTACLES:

For company owner obstacle of limited time and knowledge is overcome with co-operation.

For youngsters/professionals the acquisition of land is not required.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Biodynamic in the area is rare but has a tight supporting network. CSA has been seen as appealing choice for consumer to get involved, especially this close to bigger cities.

Community Supported Agriculture divides the risk and brings in revenue to hire more workforce and rent machinery.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Recreational activities, Green Care, community farming, product refining. Plans are spanned on about 7 year scale.

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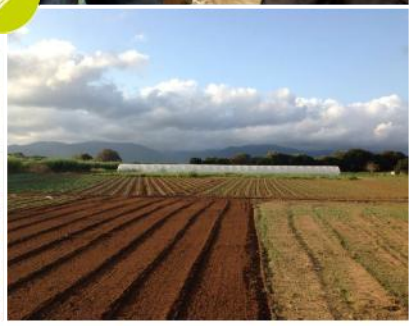
Cal Cerdà

Marçal Parera (Master in Organic agriculture)
Quim Puigagut (Technician in gardening)
Marc Marin (Degree in physical education)

www.calcerda.cat, info@calcerda.cat

This type of new entrant is the most common in the region. The main characteristics are: 2 or 3 members, organic production, direct marketing, horticulture, pluriactive work.



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Cardedeu (17.427 inhabitants), 40 kilometres from Barcelona (big market), Spain, tradition agrarian area that have been urbanized in the last decades. Competition with other farmers like them.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

This farm is run by three men. Age: Marçal (30), Quim (31) and Marc (32)

In this type of farms there is likely to be more women than in conventional farms. Some other examples have more women as members. Previously they have been working as: Marçal (farm advisor and gardening), Quim (gardening) and Marc (teacher and organic food commercial). The three have the motivation to farm because they love outdoor work, being their own boss, being respectful with nature and being part of a "world change".

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

2 hectares of vegetables (0,1 m2 greenhouse)

Market: Saturday in the farm, boxes for families, local restaurants and local shops.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Marc and Marçal are working full time at the farm. Quim is working full time as a gardener. They have a part-time employee. Initial investment: tractor (10.000€), greenhouse (16.000€), water system (18.000€), web (1.000€) and consultancy (1.800€) =46.800€

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

The three members have acquire the knowledge by formal education, own experience and self learning (internet, books, friends, etc). They are active attending different courses and seminars related with organic farming, local marketing, etc.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

The key points are: to be a team with different skills, to have agrarian education, to be link to the local community, to make a quality product and to have family land. They are involved in local and food movements like Slow Food.

KEY OBSTACLES:

The main obstacles: access to market (they need to increase the production in order to make a living for the three members). They lack knowledge in economical, juridical and management issues (business approach). Access to land has not been a problem. The farm is setup in a family land property (the grandmother of one of the members).

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: To increase the local sales. To make local people understand the important paper they have as a consumers.

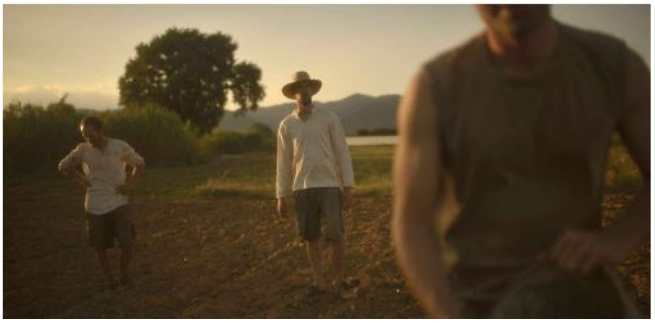
Failure: To lose one of the members of the team. To be incapable to invest in important things.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

To increase the production and the clients. To diversified the products (local varieties). To have a regular market point at the village (shop).

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

How to fight certain pests and diseases organically. Organic fertilization at local level.



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CEO Naranjas Ché, Valencian Cooperative

Guillermo Antelo

guiantelo@naranjasche.com

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

The farm is in Sagunto (Valencia Region) in Spain. He is not a new entrant typical, he has innovated in the market (internet sales), in the type of production (organic citrus) and in the product (over 30 different varieties of citrus and an orange wine).

He has two business lines: direct sales of fresh citrus and the elaboration of orange wine (Tarongino, 35K litres/year).

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Male, 39 years old, licensed in agricultural engineer. Although most of the land he works with is belonging to his family, his parents and his direct family have never been farmers. His mother is a doctor and his father is a lawyer. Currently, his two younger brothers also work on the farm.

Since he was young, he wanted to dedicate to farming, he studied it and when he had some capital to invest, he started his activity. His main motivation is emotional.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

They are four people working full time. The main financial source has been own resources together a grant, in form direct payment and subsidized loans, of Regional Government. They use Internet how main tool to sale. They also are specialising in selling on delicatessen shops.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

He has around 33 ha, a warehouse with the necessary machinery to manipulate citrus, a truck, a tractor with adequate tools and own well. To elaborating Tarongino, he has a small cellar, where he can make all the process.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

They have a framework agreement with Polytechnic University of Valencia They belong to an Agrarian Trade Union.

KEY OBSTACLES:

The start-up cost was a trouble (not the access to land). They had to endure some very difficult years until they were able to get farm profitability enough to live.

Excessive bureaucracy. He spends 10% his time in this job.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Product specialization (over 30 varieties) and his product diversification using the same raw material (fresh fruit, wine, sparkling wine). One of four employees is dedicated fully to advertising their products. This is a good form to make own market.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Specialization: over 30 different varieties of citrus (only crops citrus). Diversification: fresh fruit plus citrus' wine. Own market: they do not depend on other people, thank new technologies have created their own market.

Failure: Trusting in traditional market: at the beginning, they thought that only with one quality production would be enough to access to desired market. Wrong profitability plan: they do not calculate correctly the cost start-up and the necessary time to first sales.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

They are starting with the elaboration of sparkling wine based in oranges to. They continue with the expansion of varieties of citrus. They are a reference.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

New tendencies of consumer at middle term (3-5 years).

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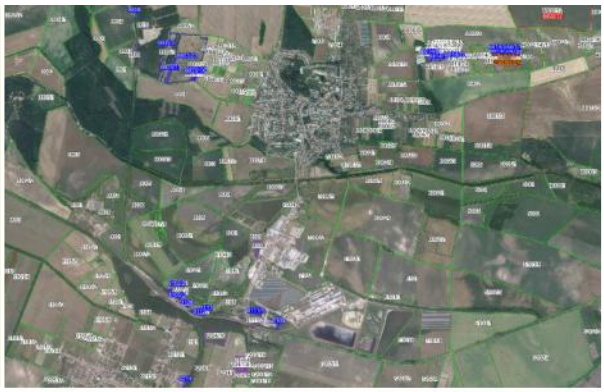
Farm of Robert Thomas Zahrl and Tomáš Ignác Fénix

office@ochsen.cz



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Our farm and orchards are situated in the South Moravian border region to Austria. It is a chronically weak region with few new businesses at all. The expulsion of the established inhabitants after WWII left its marks until today. We are the only new entrants in the closer surroundings and we are part of a small minority as small/medium sized farm.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

40 hectars of orchards, vineyards, meadows and bushland. So far main crops are apricots, plums and apples. We are BIO-certified, and communicate our sustainable way of farming to our customers. We sell them fresh to shops, private customers and other distributors, and also process them to jams, dried fruit, juices.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

We are two men, age 27-34, both from a non farming background. In our aim to rebuild a devastated region, farming is the foundation we build on. It also satisfies our personal need for a healthy and balanced life. Both studied humane disciplines and still continue law/theology studies and we both are politically active in order to contribute to society.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Farming is our main occupation. Capital came solely from our (and our families`) savings. Number of employees fluctuates between two and ten. We try to use the minimum necessary mechanisation. We are part of the young farmers` and fruit growers association.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

We learn by doing, but certainly consult more experienced people and institutions as questions come up.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

We are idealists and found customers that appreciate it. We don`t spend anything on personal convenience. Entrepreneurial skills are of great importance.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Reliable, skilled workforce is the most scarce resource. We are always on the search for helpers and potential partners. Financial support from the state/EU would take some pressure off us, unfortunately current programs do not consider “start-ups” as we are.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Research must show why new entrants often are forced to work without support by the current institutions and give a clear instruction to the political actors.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Extend our enterprise in width and depth to have a greater impact. Next steps are professional drying, juicing technology, wine-making.

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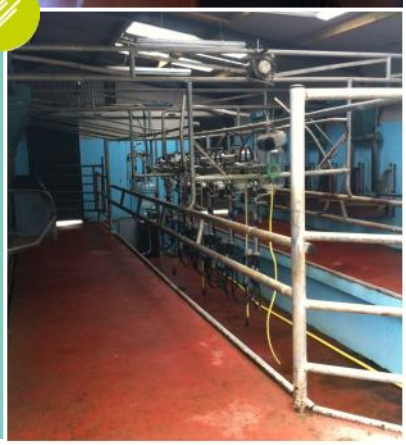
New Entrant dairy farm since spring 2014

Peter Hamm

Peterhamm20@yahoo.ie

Dairy is definitely the most popular 'new entrant' enterprise in Ireland currently as the restrictions with milk quotas prevented many young people entering and growing in the industry before.



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Based in the centre of Ireland. Moate, Co. Westmeath. Becoming more popular since 2009 (CAP Health Check Review 2008 resulted in the decision to remove milk quotas and the Irish Department of Agriculture developed the New Entrant Scheme which allocated a portion of milk quota to new dairy farmers to enable to start milk production prior to April 1st 2015). Since milk quota removal there are still new entrants entering milk production in this region though some may be at a slightly larger scale.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

42 milking cows and 20 replacement heifers all reared on the farm. Milk produced is sent to the local dairy processing cooperative which process and market manufacturing milk in conjunction with the milk marketing organisation Ornua (formerly Irish Dairy Board). This is called manufacturing milk which is paid for based on milk fat % and milk protein %. Improving these constituents will increase price paid per litre.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Male, mid 30's, married, young family. Previously worked in the building industry. Farmland was previously involved in suckler beef production.

Motivated to become a new dairy farmer necause there was no income from the suckler enterprise and off-farm employment 'propped' up the farms costs. When the off-farm employment disappeared- so did the viability of continuing on with the suckler beef.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Full-time dairy farmer. Main sources of capital included existing stock, Single Farm Payments and new loans from the bank. Predominantly operated as a family run business with some farm relief during holidays/weekends. Higher use of key technologies in comparison to established dairy farmers especially in relation to grassland management technologies and Artificial insemination. Taking on more financial management technologies recently as the establishment of a profitable dairy farm can be cash demanding and intensive. Encouraged to integrate into local discussion group networks and workshops to learn more about dairy farming. Generally a high uptake by new dairy farmers into local discussion groups.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Local, 'good' dairy farmers in the region. Mainly identified through word of mouth from other farmers. Selected a number of these farmers as mentors/support for advice. Teagasc dairy advisor (who are the independent agricultural body in Ireland) advised on the infrastructure and planning aspects of the farm and continues to work with Peter today. Part of a local discussion group and a host farmer for the local grass pod group. The grass pod group is a mentoring system to help develop skills of managing grass in the local area with other farmers in similar systems.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Peter has a passion and interest in grassland and is eager to do his best with what he has available. However, without being involved in the grass pod group and working so intensively with the advisors he admits it would be difficult to pick up. Acquiring loans on good terms was difficult as his family were mainly offered short term loans that would put an increasing pressure on the business. After taking the offer and proving his ability to reach targets he was in a better discussion to speak to the banks on changing terms the following year. Managing cash flow in the early development years is difficult and business planning and cash flow forecasts are a must in the early years especially. Peter records and plans around his cash flow each month.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Positive and passionate person who loves what he does. Peter would admit that although the farm is still in the development phase he is already planning on growing and improving in all aspects of the dairy farm management over the coming years.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Looking after animal health and taking it more seriously as one of your most valuable assets. Identifying trustworthy sources of information is also critical. But most important is that regardless if it's a professional in agriculture or another farmer you need to surround yourself with positive people who are always interested in progression. Building your own confidence through the experience of meeting problems and finding out the best way to deal with them. Listen to how vets/ other farmers deal with problems and learn from it.

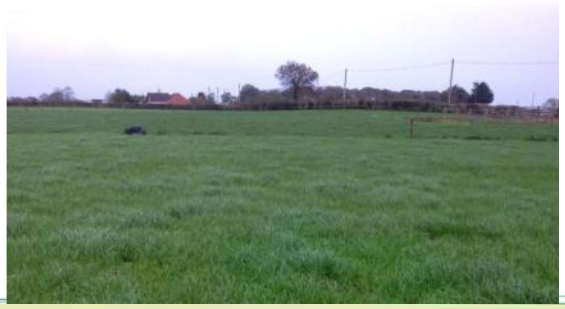
Failure: Having no previous experience dealing with stock and managing animals through calving, nutrition, breeding etc. Even some form of experience would be of great benefit to other new entrants. Not learning key stock management skills beforehand in some form.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

To grow the herd and the efficiencies of the farm. Working closely with his neighbour to form a lease agreement potentially which would lead to significant growth for the business.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Need more focus on the risk analysis for new entrant dairy farmers at the time of set-up. Workshops troubleshooting what could happen and how to deal with them if they do come up. "You can have all the information you want but its not until you're faced with the problem head-on that you need to find out what to do"



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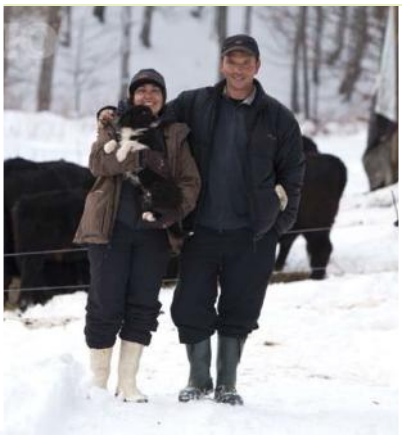
Linbul Farm

Pavlin Antonov

bgcattle@gmail.com | https://petrohan.wordpress.com/



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Petrohan pass, Western Stara Planina Mountain, Bulgaria.

The region is high altitude grassland and forests, it's typical for livestock and pasture based farms. As the farm was somewhat pioneering in such kind of business and lifestyle for the region and Bulgaria, it became a good practice and model to follow for other BG farms, now the approach could be called "typical".

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

250 ha pastures and hayfields, 30 mother cows, about 30 calves at different ages. Product is Strictly Grass Fed Angus beef. Delivering directly to customers, with collaboration with a small butcher facility close to the farm; Marketed through internet and by satisfied customers. Small diversification – wild/forest products like berries, mushrooms etc.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Husband Pavlin 44-years old, wife Sonia 36 years, son 19 (not at the farm), a baby daughter 4-months old.

The background of both of them is civil engineers. Pavlin is with extensive international experience in project management of construction projects. He used the experience abroad to learn how to do farming and for establishing business contacts. The transition to farming was planned long time ago. Motivation – basically the lifestyle (living in and with the nature). He assumed to have more relaxed life (which didn't happen). He studied beef farming 3 years before the start of the farm.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

The work is done only by the members of the family, full time, no employees. Part time extra help during the hay season (two weeks/year). Technologies – Internet and social media, networks – National Rural Network. Start of the farming with their own savings by the previous construction business and credits (loans).

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Contacts in Europe and US, internet, books. Pavlin and Sonia have their own blog where they share their knowledge and experience of farming free of charge.

KEY OBSTACLES:

The lack of available land is the major obstacle. Especially in Bulgaria the majority of the grassland is public property and is rented only for "clearing" for the subsidies 15 days per year, not grazed or cut for hay. They have several initiatives for changing the regulations to allow real farmers to have access to the land.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

They succeeded to have high quality and to market it well. Most of the new entrants do not have the knowledge and the skills for farming well, they only repeat what the others do, do not apply new approaches. The short supply chains mean not only to " have a product", but to make it ready for the market – processing, packing etc., and to communicate well with the customers and the public. On the other side some are too much "traders", not farmers. Most of farmers do not "open" their farms for the public yet– to share what they do, how they live and how the food coming out of their farms is actually produced

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: The satisfaction to see every day what you have created by your own hands. To have incomes by producing clean and safe food in a fair way. Your family to live in a beautiful quiet and clean nature. To have to opportunity to apply innovation and innovative approaches.

Failure: Destroying the soil and nature despite the higher incomes.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

To survive. The access to financing is difficult and the credit interest is higher than in the other EU countries. The subsidies of the direct payment are still very bureaucratic.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

How to motivate and support young , well -educated new entrants in farming.

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Rebirth of a village in the French dry préalps. Vachères-en-Quint, a story of 3 generations of new entrants

Sjoerd Wartena

wartena.sjoerd@wanadoo.fr

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

South East of France. Small village (34 habitants). 500 ha of which 45 ha you can plough. There are quite a number of comparable new entrants in the region.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARMS:

About 40 ha ploughable land for all the farms. Some hay comes from fields in the neighbourhood (NB! the herb farms use about 2 ha only) 300 ha of wood and pasture.(wild picking of herbs and culinary plants!) 120 sheep, 70 goats, 5 pigs,13 cows, some horses and donkeys. Training activities, trainees, school classes.

HOW THE FARMS ARE MANAGED:

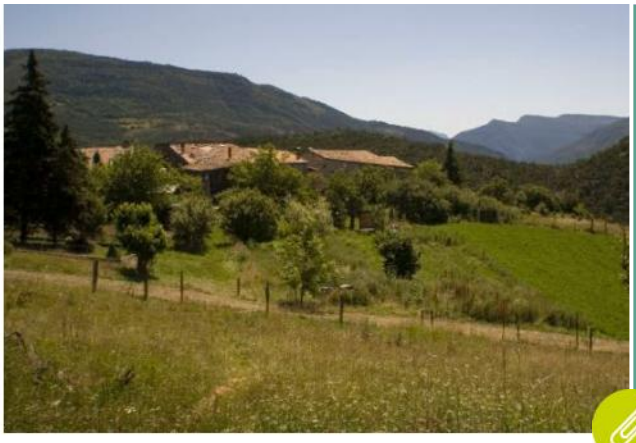
All farms are full time and managed independently. Nevertheless there is much cooperation, exchange of land and mutual use of machinery. Products of all the 5 farms are sold locally. The herb businesses sells also on big fairs and through Internet. Some farms employ temporary. This work of several (5) people represents in all 2 full time jobs.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLDS:

Coming from Amsterdam with my wife Elisabeth, we started a goat and herb farm from scratch in 1973. We had no agricultural background. Six old peasants learned us their way of life and their culture of tradition and multi-functionality. In 1985 the goat farm was taken over by a young German couple, who still farm, building a new stable and adding supplementary 5 pigs, 13 cows (meat) and a wood-chopping activity. In the same time a couple started a sheep farm, making cheese and yoghurt, using the woodland and steep meadows, not used by the goats, for grazing. Another girl started in the same time a culinary activity with a big vegetable garden (500 square meters), wild picking, training courses and catering. After my retreat the herb activities were taken over by two little companies, run by women, who process their harvest and specialize in organic herb teas, cosmetics, oils etc. also giving training courses. Actually the sheep farm is taken over by a young couple, representing the third generation of new entrants since 1973.

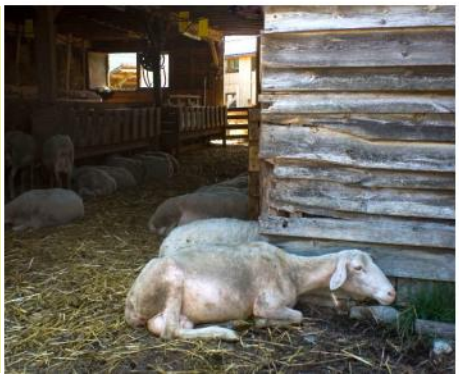
SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Most of the actual farmers have had an agricultural training, sometimes of University level. Especially for the herb activities, training courses are necessary for knowledge improvement.



KEY OBSTACLES:

There were a lot. Lack of knowledge, access to water, investment, steep land, organic agricultural problems. Most are solved in the mean time. Access to somewhat more and better land continues to be a problem. A real problem for local marketing and processing is the ever strengthening standardization of European rules. Especially for the herb business this is a real danger!.



SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

The herb activity was at the start of a whole range of local herb processing businesses, actually employing more then 150 people. All the farms make a decent living and don't want to grow very much. They receive much less subsidy then the 20 % of the European farmers that absorb 80% of 40 % of the European budget. This type of farming can be multiplied enormously. In 1973 we could start, having enough capital to buy and not to lent and to endure some learning years. Our successors took profit of this starting initiative. [If politics could take over this task of providing starting facilities, this would be a serious attempt to counter social and ecological problems. SW]

Failure-indicators are always the land question and, a certain lack of market cooperation. When too many people in a small regions with the limits of a local direct market don't cooperate in extending their market area together, they will be struck by a destructive competition.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

The fact that the Terre de Liens-organization (www.terredeliens.org) bought about 25 ha helps to assure the future of organic farming in Vachères-en-Quint. We try to continue this proceedings. In Vachères-en-Quint and elsewhere.

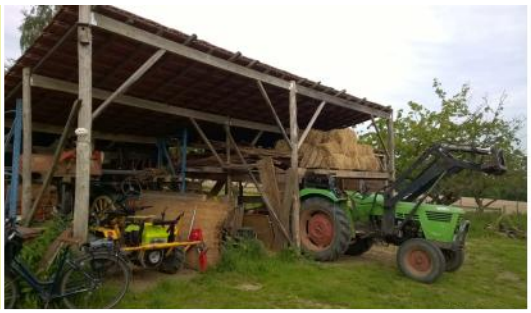
funded by European Commission

This poster was presented at the first meeting of the EIP-AGRI Focus Group 'New entrants into farming' – June 2015 | More information: www.eip-agri.eu

Het Open Veld

Tom Troonbeeckx

hetopenveld@gmail.com | www.hetopenveld.be



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

The entrant is located near Leuven, student University town. Het Open Veld was the first CSA in the region.

Anno 2015, there are 9 CSAs in the province. More information on the CSA network in Belgium is available on http://www.csa-netwerk.be.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Started in 2007, at the age of 30 years. He is not from a farmer's background. Tom is father and his girlfriend works part-time. His motivation is developing independent and sustainable farming.

Working pressure was very hard at the start, but he has improved efficiency and aims at improving continuously through among others mechanisation.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

He has 1.5 ha of arable land. You can find the total plant and yield schedule online. He often tries out new crops. Tom has over 320 clients. There is a waiting list. But he doesn't want to grow too much, in order to keep the contact with the clients.

Tom is very subsidy-averse. He wants to remain independent. Het Open Veld is exclusively organic farming.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

CSA network. Tom is very much informed on the Flemish system and as founder of CSA Belgium, stakeholders know Tom. Tom mentioned the need for translated work on agro-ecology.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Farming is his full time employment. There are no employees. He started the business from scratch. In terms of know-how, there is a lot of exchange between farmers. He sometimes has students working as trainees. Financially, the first years were hard. Now, he has a reasonable income.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Tom was a pioneer in Flanders. Now that people see how it works, specific consumer groups are willing to join. It remains a niche for middle and high class groups in society. You pay at least 250€ a year.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Farming is very risky, certainly when you are not from a farmer's background, the investment is very high. The system of having consumers' paying at the start of the season helps a lot to overcome this.

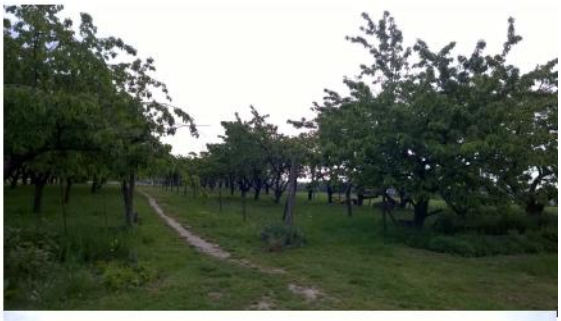
SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Involve people in the food chain, build an ecological farm that is also economically sustainable, be happy with work, produce healthy food

Failure: Be too idealistic, doing everything with horses, or permaculture, wanting to do too much, loose balance work/ family, too low income, low quality of life, overinvestment, going back to capitalism.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Improve efficiency, encourage other start-ups.



PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Translation of existing work on CSA, on sustainable farming on a small scale, specific issues on growing crops and pest management.

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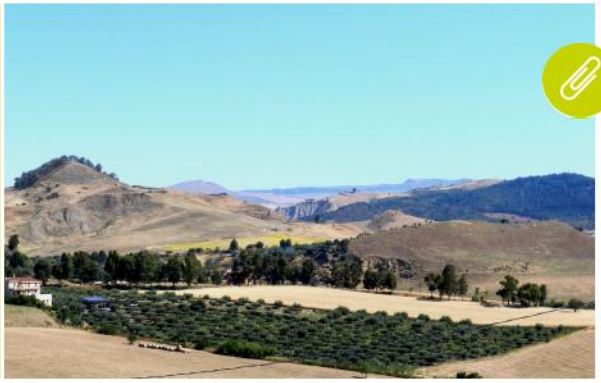
Azienda Agricola DORA (DORA Farm)

Vincenza Ferrara

donidinatura@gmail.com

DORA was set up thanks to a project co-funded by the EAFRD.



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Villarosa, a rural marginalised area of inner Sicily, Italy.

New entrants are not so common, since many educated people are not so attracted by the agricultural sector, but they prefer to work in big cities and have office positions.

Sicilian agricultural sector is still very "old": most of the farmers, as well as public officers and politicians/administrators, are very poor educated, old-fashioned and without an open view of sustainable development.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

The farm manages a 6- hectare organic olive grove and an in-house oil- mill, producing a very top quality extra virgin olive oil promoted and marketed by the farmer (Vincenza) in Italy, central-Europe and Scandinavia so far.

The farm is an open-air workshop of sustainability: only renewable energy is used and all the residues are recycled.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

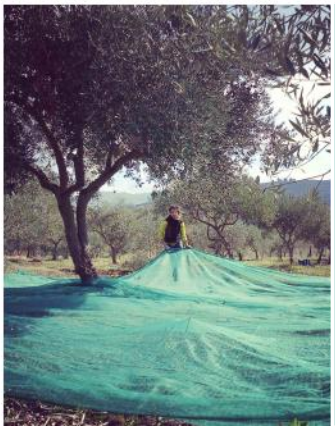
Vincenza is a 34 years old woman who has always lived where she set up her farm; she works also as a project manager in nature conservation and R&D. Motivation: take care of those wonderful olive trees, contributing to environmental protection. Passion for the green sector and a holistic approach to sustainable development.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Academic education, professional training courses.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Full-time engagement; the sources of capital come from sales and projects. Relatives, friends and visitors come to help Vincenza during harvest time. DORA uses a high-tech oil-mill exclusively powered by solar panels.



KEY OBSTACLES:

Bureocratic overload, delays and incompetence in public administration officers, corruption, lack of services and infrastructures. The farmer has overcame them developing new skills able to compensate the lacks and incompetence encountered.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

DORA is one of the national rural excellences selected by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture for being able to use the EU fund to set up a 100% sustainable agricultural business. The farmer is a real new entrant, since her academic and working background (even though in the green sector) is in Human Sciences (philosophy).

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: sales, social connections and networks, official certifications and acknowledgement of the quality of the product, learning outcomes, multifunctional activities and projects carried on by the farm, nature conservation activities and projects realised.

Failure: failure to identify the right value proposition of the product, insolvency, lack of capital and other type of resources to invest on, ignorance and prejudice, closure to innovation, unreliability in providing regularly a high quality food product, unfairness in business affairs.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

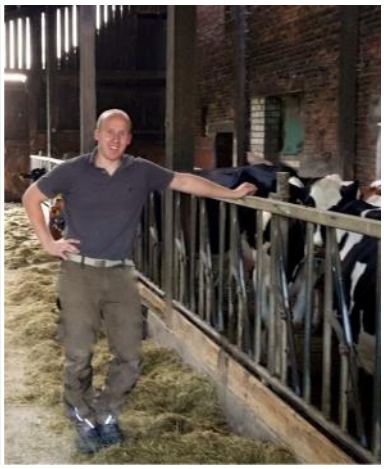
Farmers who choose to produce according to the principle of organic agriculture have to incur in several extra costs. Such costs are mainly related to finance a system of bureaucratic control bodies in charge of checking the right applications of the organic procedures. The same happens regarding the safety and hygiene regulations. In most of the cases, such bodies do not provide a good consulting services to the farmers, but are simply expensively paid just to release certifications. Farmers have also to pay by themselves the chemical analysis to be done in order to determine the nutritional values of the product (compulsory from 2016 in EU for some product).The final outcome of this process is the higher price of organic food products, then affordable only for people who can pay for it. In other words, organic products are not "democratic" at all. Researchers should try to understand how to reduce those costs in order to allow more farmers to start farming according to the organic agriculture principles and to let more people benefit from buying and eating organic food.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Create and/or join networks with other experts in agriculture; research work on Historical Ecology at Uppsala University. Educate people to recognise a real EVOO from fakes.

Farm of Christian Helms

christian.helms@yahoo.de



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Village Entrup, Eastern part of German federal state North Rhine-Westphalia. New entrants are not common in that region, and not common in Germany at all.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Male, 26 years, began to study machine construction and later pedagogy, but started then an apprenticeship in agriculture. Now he is studying agriculture at a University of Applied Sciences (SWUAS). The family had run a farm up to the he was 12 years old; it had to be given up because death of the father. He decided to become a farmer because he likes practical work and to be his own chief, further motivated by a conversation with his cousin, who is running a farm. The cousin told him, that he is looking for a partner for his agricultural business, but had not yet found an adequate person. Because they both have a quite good understanding, they decided to start a farm partnership after the end of the bachelor course. He is an excellent student and very engaged.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

The farm has 135 ha crop surface and 20 ha pasture land, 35 milking cows with young breeds and 500 pig fattening places.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Details of the partner contract and of financing will be decided in next future. So far, it is planned to organize the farm with two full time working persons and without further employees. He will bring not only his work, knowledge and some capital into the new partnership, but also the agricultural land owned by his family (typically new partnerships rent the land from their partners or the families of the partners, sometimes existing buildings and machines as well). New investments will be financed by bank loans, probably under preferential conditions for young farmers and probably with some subventions for new animal welfare livestock buildings.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Agricultural apprenticeship and bachelor course agriculture, special farm journals, part time work on farms in neighborhood.

KEY OBSTACLES:

High financial risk by financing a new farm business with a great share of loaned capital, also the risk of an accident, which would stop any farm business, if the farm is run alone by only one person. The planned partnership with his cousin is limiting both risks in a substantial way.

He suggests also for other interested new entrants, to look for partnerships / cooperation possibilities - best with one or more experienced partner(s). Coaching new entrants by experienced farmers / farm consultants may be a good support measure, also supporting partnerships. An overlapping takeover of a farm without a successor in a partnership with a leaving farmer can be also recommended.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

In general, the success of the planned future partnership is based in a good understanding / harmony of the persons engaged; they should "think in the same way" and "think and feel similar". However there are and will be conflicts and conflicting ideas, but it is very important to discuss without endangering the relation to the partner. "The good relation to my partner is more important for me (...)". Conflicts should be discussed only internally; against persons from outside the partnership should stay always 100 % together.

Personal ability for team working is an absolute important success factor for the way of entering agriculture via a partnership!

I know from some attempts of partnerships between new entrants and old farmers without children, which failed due to missing personal abilities for team working - in most cases on the side of the old farmers, which were not used to discuss decisions with anyone else.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Innovative schemes / "best practices" for organizing new entrances (via partnerships and in general) in relation to the juridical construction, financing, decision processes, work organization and conflict management. Experiences of incubators / advisory bodies.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: ability for teamworking, good understanding / harmony of the persons engaged, solving conflicts internally and in discussion, good formation / practical experience, sufficient own capital basis.

In general, the success of the planned future partnership is based in a good understanding / harmony of the persons engaged; they should "think in the same way" and "think and feel similar". However there are and will be conflicts and conflicting ideas, but it is very important to discuss without endangering the relation to the partner. "The good relation to my partner is more important for me (...)". Conflicts should be discussed only internally; against persons from outside the partnership should stay always 100 % together.

Failure: missing ability of team working and missing discussion culture (in partnerships), missing knowledge and practical experience, too high credit engagement / debth, personal ability for team working is an absolute important success factor for the way of entering agriculture via a partnership!

Some attempts of partnerships between new entrants and old farmers without children failed due to missing personal abilities for team working - in most cases on the side of the old farmers, which were not used to discuss decisions with anyone else.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

He and his partner plan to invest in the farm with the objective, that it will support economically later two fully employed persons. First they want to invest in a new cowshed, next step could be a new pig fattening building, for getting more added value from their cereal production. It is planned to keep running all three actual main activities: crop, milk and pig production for more economic stability, but the character of a family farm should be conserved.

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Urban farm of Rolf Morgenstern

morgenstern.rolf@fh-swf.de

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Dortmund / Germany - metropolitan area Ruhr (former coal and steel region).

There are some similar examples of urban people starting +/- innovative agricultural activities, but it can neither seen as a broad phenomena, nor as a typical new entrant approach. There are in fact to little projects in whole Germany.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Male, 45, self employed chemical engineer, IT-Service and consultant for renewable energy, little previous experience with farming: home gardening, motivation: general interest in self sustainability, goal is to explore new forms to sustainably produce food for the population.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

Current: preliminary testing and exploring techniques, goal is to plan urban aquaponic farms sized between 1000 and 5000sqm. Local and direct marketing. High value crops like microgreens and leafy greens. Plant specialities instead of standard supermarket products.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Emphasis on design and planning of farms. Sources of capital: evaluating crowdfunding and community supported aquaponics, No of employees of the farms depends on size and integration of product processing steps, aquaponics using RAS and hydroponics

RAS = Remote Access Service

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Internet, professional and scientific literature, networking with professionals, international scientific cooperation via COST-action "EU-aquaponics hub", cooperation with University of Applied Sciences SWUAS.

SWUAS is one supporting the Dortmund aquaponic activities and start-up plans with scientific experience, offering also a scientific part-time job for him in a research project about aquaponics.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Still in knowledge gathering phase. Anticipated obstacles: Funding and administrative lack of knowledge and lack of political will.

"Over-regulation" and administrative obstacles make innovative - non conventional - agricultural activities in Germany very difficult, even there is a good cooperation and support of a lot of persons in local and regional authorities!

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

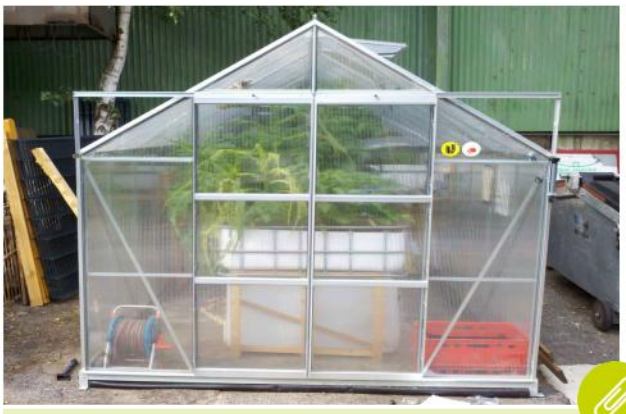
To early to answer.

Differentiating from other farms through active marketing of the sustainability of the production method. “Surfing on the hype”. Identifying and delivering to niche markets.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Demand with sufficient purchase power for products and technology, trend to local/regional "superfresh" products. Finding a suitable location: near to consumers, low costs for area, access to low cost industrial excess heat. Cheap long-term financiation (eventually by external investors). Knowledge networks. Public support especially for getting operation licenses and for fundraising. Special situation caused by the character of a technological start-up enterprise

Failure: Administrative obstacles. Technological / biological failure. Changing consumer trends, i.e. if an economic crisis come up. Sudden drawback of capital engaged (if working with external investors).



PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Market potential for products and technology.

Technological / biological balance and stability of the production system, technological improvement (also in remote control / robotization).

Concepts for improving sustainability.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Ideally implementing a loosely connected network of decentralized urban farms. May be run by different operators, but connecting into a cooperation for buying supplies and services at better rates and thus streamlining business.

funded by European Commission

SeedsValley Ecological Farm

(MagosVölgy Ökológiai Gazdaság)

Zoltán and Judit Dezsény

zoltan.dezseny@gmail.com

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Hungary, North Hungary (region), Nógrád county, Terény (village), 85 km North from Budapest.

There is quite few new entrants into farming in this region and hardly any without farming background (like us). Most young or beginner farmers are successors from farming families. Also, small-scale, ecology driven farm businesses are rare, almost negligible in their number.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

29 yrs old married couple with 3 little kids. Judit stays at home with the kids and responsible mainly for paperwork, Zoltán works for the Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (ÖMKi) as research associate besides farming. No previous farm experience, only few weeks/days of volunteering on organic farms and previous farm visits in Hungary and abroad.

Motivation: farming as a romantic lifestyle, call for creating something valuable and durable from scratch, We consider a mission to prove that it is possible to create a living on the long run based on local resources on a peripheral rural area affected by depopulation and high unemployment rate. The region has very nice environmental setting and lack of industrial pollution.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

1 ha open field and 0,1 ha polytunnel organic mixed vegetables (50+ varieties), 1 ha grassland. Farm established in 2014, there was no farm history before. Vegetables are direct marketed to specialty restaurants and home delivered to families, mainly in Budapest (85 km).

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Family ownership, part-time farm manager and full time off-farm employment. The farm started through the EU Young Farmers support measure (40.000 Euro). On average 3 seasonal full time employees and one volunteer are part of the farm crew besides the farm couple. No farm machinery available at the moment besides a garden tiller. Production technology is hand labour intensive and based on permanent beds through the application of high doses of plant biomass compost and/or locally sourced farmyard manure. Certified organic. The farm utilizes informal networks mainly from the farm couple's pervious life and civil activity.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Farm couple has all together 3 MSc degree in Ag and 3 vocational training certifications. This theoretical background is useful but just in itself is insufficient. Valuable sources if information are experienced farmer friends. Also, books and farm visits.

KEY OBSTACLES:

Practical information on the very details, tricks of small scale, low-input, management intensive vegetable production are in need. Specifically weed management, irrigation system design and implementation, finding the most appropriate tools and methods for certain farm duties. Most problems occur mainly due to lack of hands-on experience. It is a real learning by doing adventure for us.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

We are in the 2nd year of farming and have a very little farm history behind us. This moment many things are under development/in progress including farm infrastructure, human resource and farm management, marketing channels, communication, creating the image of the farm. The strategy is to produce high value, excellent tasting organic vegetables and sourcing directly to people or organizations we have good personal contact. Part of the plan is to build an educational angle, fun an internship program and make the farm as open and transparent as possible showcasing small scale organic food production.

I would like to prove that a small scale farm can be financially viable in a region where there are no viable small scale farms, so to say no small scale farms at all.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Positive financial balance. Community support behind the farm. Exploit new markets and invent/utilize viable new technologies.

Failure: Burden and exhaustion during the initial phase of farm establishment due to many non-farming activities, e.g. off-farm employment. It is rather a threat than an indicator.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Organic weed management, variety testing suitable for small-scale or organic production under given agro-ecological conditions, minimum till soil building methods for intensive vegetable production.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Make it attractive, financially viable and a messenger for sustainable small scale agriculture.

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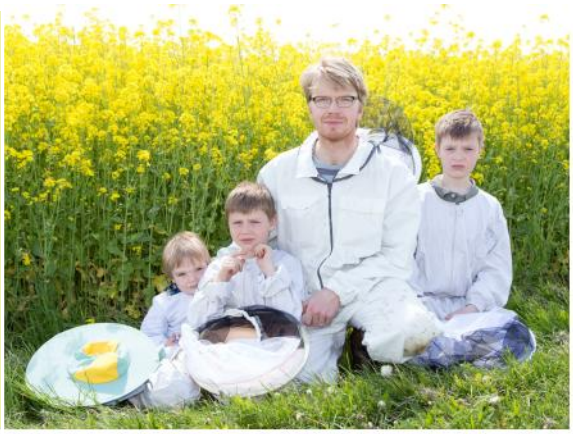
Lõuna-Eesti Mesi OÜ, beekeeping

Liisa and Jaan Eensaar

triin@aakri.ee (advisor of the farm)

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Rannu (ca 200 km from Tallinn), Tartumaa, South-Estonia. In this region is most popular crop production and we have big crop production farmers. South-Estonia is also good for beekeeping and it is also quite popular in this region.



DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Jaan, 36, has 20 years beekeeping experience. Jaan has B.Sc. geography. Jaan was working in Australia when he realized that this is not for him. So he decided to start with his own company and with bees.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

300 bee families. Goal is to produce with this quantity 30 tons honey and second goal is deal with breeding of bees to gate a very good productive bee. Average yields should be 80 kg per one bee family, even better 100 kg per family. We want to be big bee producer. We are having cooperating with other farmers who own crop production, apple gardens and plantations by using their land for bees (buckwheat, clover etc.) most of the production is sold directly to end customers (market, tourist and farm shops).

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Beekeeping is full time job. Jaan is handling the bees and Liisa does the paperwork and raising queenbees. Jaan's brothers and sisters are also helping in the farm. Today most of the work is done manually, but they are slowly changing it by investing in beekeeping equipment, like bigger honey production line.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Different unions for beekeepers, advisors and other farmers. We have lot of seminars and information days for beekeepers and we are sharing experience there between us. We are also visiting other bee farms.

KEY OBSTACLES:

It is important that beekeeping will give us full time job. We think that having some other job extra, next to beekeeping is not giving that possibility to handle that big with bees. At the beginning is hard to find bigger customer who will give you stable turnover, but when it is found then is more time to find more new customers and sales are not so tight anymore.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Cooperation with other farmers, experience and knowledge, good cooperation with wife and extended family – they all have the same goals.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: We are successful when we can take care of all our family needs. For now it is great that we can build up our farm facilities and invest to new equipment for beekeeping. It's too early to talk about great success, but we are able to say that three years of beekeeping has brought us economical security.

Failure: Real failure would be the loss of bee families due to different bee diseases and other factors.

PERCEIVED RESEARCH NEEDS:

Bee breeding on national level, bee diseases like flounder and medicine effects on bees.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Expansion with extra 200 bee families, investing into modern beekeeping equipment.

funded by European Commission

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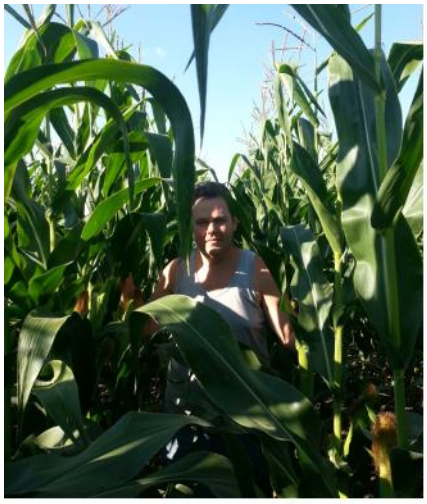
Farm of András BORI

bori.agrar@gmail.com



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Farm located in Hungary, Tápióbicske, 50 km from Budapest, in an agricultural region dealing mainly with the production of arable crops. Young farmers are not very common in that region.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSEHOLD:

Young farmer 35 years old, teacher of biology, maths and chemistry in 3 primary schools. Father (71) did some farming before, he has taken over the land plus has bought (spent all YF payment on buying 10 ha of land) and rented more. Chosen to be a farmer because he loves farming and also interested in mechanics/machinery. Brother has agricultural education, they regularly exchange views.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM:

45 ha of land of which about half is rented. Located in 3 villages, within a range of 20 km. Produces maize, winter wheat, barley, sunflower. Gave up rapeseed as there are periods when it requires intensive care and availability – not compatible with part-time farming.

HOW THE FARM IS MANAGED:

Farming in the afternoons and weekends. Father helps regularly. No employees. Excellent relation with the local "former state cooperative"- now private company – does the purchase of inputs through them, sells most of the harvest through them. They do the harvest and storage of grains for him (practically, relation like with a "farmers' cooperative"). This cooperation works very well mutually. 2 tractors, full mechanization. Started fist with used machines and renovated them himself – progressively replacing them with new and modern ones. Some equipment (e.g. for lifting "big-bags") designed and made himself. Capital came first from own salary and from financial help from family. Part of the profit has been continuously re-invested. Took credit for buying a new tractor. No other credits. Used the 40.000 EUR YF money to buy land. Very cautious to take credits – grows only step-by-step. Always makes insurance on the crops to avoid "bankruptcy" in case of a natural disaster. Has another farmer as good friend – often help each-other when significant workforce or quick action is needed.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE:

Books, agricultural newspapers, salesmen, other farmers – sharing experience, father, brother, uses lots of common sense!

KEY OBSTACLES:

Lack of capital and machinery – grown only step-by-step, used first inputs for the production with a "minimum approach" instead of the "optimum approach"; Lack of storage and certain machinery – used the services of the above mentioned "former state cooperative". Limited availability of land: put aside the YF money to have immediately available in a piece of land was on sale plus he has a good reputation in the village among other farmers and land owners (care about rented land, pays rent in time and correctly), so many of them offer him first the land if they want to sell or rent out.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS:

Do farming if you like it and interested in it – not just to get the YM money. Grow only according to your financial possibilities. Re-invest as much as possible to your farm. Learn from others. Train yourself continuously, use latest knowledge and technologies – but take into account your financial limitations. Be in good relation with other farmers – and help each other when needed.

SUCCESS & FAILURE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO FARMER:

Success: Access to land, credits, devoted to agriculture not opportunism for subsidy!

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE FARM:

Farm has reached its size limits that can be done in part-time farming. Teaching would remain as a "second leg" to provide safety of income and help to maintain the balance of intellectual and physical work. Has 3 children (boys) – will try to involve them as much as possible – think about future.

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