



# The European Network for Rural Development

**Candidate Countries Seminar  
November 11<sup>th</sup> 2010**

**Adrian Neal, ENRD Contact Point**





## EN RD Objective

‘Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of EAFRD implementation’





# EN RD CONTACT POINT



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## European Network for Rural Development

The European Network for Rural Development (EN RD) contributes to the efficient implementation of Rural Development Programmes throughout the European Union (EU). Each Member State has established a National Rural Network (NRN) which brings together the organisations and administrations involved in rural development. At EU level, the European Network for Rural Development ensures the networking of these national networks, organisations and administrations. [Read more about the EN RD.](#)

### EN RD news

**REMINDER: Edinburgh meeting - application forms available for LAGs**

The Scottish NRN is delighted to invite Local Action Groups (LAGs) to attend the EN RD supported EU Rural Cooperation Fair, taking place in Edinburgh on 23/24 September 2010. However, LAGs are advised to liaise directly with their respective NRN in this regard. For more information click [here](#). You can download the registration form here [PDF [en](#) ].

**REMINDER: Registrations open for "Semi-subsistence farming" seminar in Sibiu**

The open call for the registration to the "Semi-subsistence farming in the EU" seminar in Sibiu, Romania has been launched. The seminar, which was postponed due to flight disruptions in April, will now be held on the **13-15 October**. Click [here](#) for further information.

**13th September 2010: Monitoring Indicators published online**

The Monitoring Indicators, which are a means of assessing progress in terms of the implementation of Rural Development Programmes, have been published online. The results, which include both financial and physical indicators are based on annual reports provided by the RDPs' Managing Authorities. Click [here](#).

**10th September 2010: Climate change country profiles available online**

A screening exercise has been undertaken which analyses the extent at which climate change is addressed by RDPs at Member State level. The results of this review are being published on the EN RD website. Click [here](#).

**10th September 2010: Information on Leader subcommittee focus groups available online**

Three focus groups have been established by the Leader subcommittee of the EN RD to examine key aspects of the implementation of Leader in the programming period 2007-2013. Detailed information on work carried out to date is available [here](#).

**5th September 2010: Agenda for 10th NRN meeting in Scotland now available**

The 10th NRN meeting will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland on 24th September, 2010. The meeting will take place in connection with the EU Cooperation Fair, hosted by the Scottish NRN in partnership with the EN RD. A draft agenda for the meeting is now available. Click [here](#).

[More EN RD news](#)**CALENDAR****JOIN OUR MAILING LIST****CAP PUBLIC DEBATE POST 2013****RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME SUMMARIES****CLIMATE CHANGE COUNTRY PROFILES****NATIONAL RURAL NETWORKS GATEWAY****EU RURAL REVIEW****LEADER COOPERATION GUIDE****LEADER COOPERATION OFFERS**

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## National Rural Networks > NRN information

The **National Rural Networks (NRNs)** provide an important link at Member State level between the national administrations and organisations involved in rural development (including Local Action Groups).

Their structure and organisation may differ although in all cases their main role is to support the implementation and evaluation of rural development policy. NRNs bring together a variety of rural stakeholders to promote communication and information exchange at regional, national and European level. They also organise events, produce a variety of communication tools and have an important role in sharing good practice.

Click on any of the countries on our European Union interactive map, to access a variety of information related to each of the Member States **National Rural Networks**.



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## National Rural Networks > Netherlands

### Summary

The Dutch Rural Network has been fully operational since October 2007.

A consortium of five organisations have been contracted by the Managing Authority (MA), the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature management and Food quality (the Ministry), to run the Network Support Unit (NSU). Three of these organisations are involved in the NSU's core management and network facilitation team. The remaining two consortium members provide thematic support, as and when required.

The network does not have an explicit mission statement, but according to its website the NRN supports people and organisations that are committed to promoting a strong and attractive countryside.

The NSU provides a necessary platform for different parties to share knowledge and experience and to identify and promote promising development initiatives.



### Network Participants

The network does not apply formal membership criteria and participation depends on the theme being developed. However, the core network consists of: Leader groups; other formalised area based groups; theme specific groups (involved in the combination of farming, nature, recreation, rural reconstruction or national parks); regional or village level committees of inhabitants; and various private sector initiatives, mainly involved in economic development. Hence, both the private and public sectors are represented. Some partners also participate in their own networks.

Read more about the organisational structure of the Network [PDF ]



### Contact details:



Address: Postbus 64, 3830 AB Leusden, the Netherlands  
 Telephone number: 00 31 33 432 6090  
 Website: <http://www.netwerkplatteland.nl/>  
 Contact person name: Mrs Marga de Jong  
 E-mail: [info@netwerkplatteland.nl](mailto:info@netwerkplatteland.nl)

### Current NRN Activities

The outline work programme until 2013 contains elements such as the identification, analysis and dissemination of good (or best) practices and the maintenance of a database of practices. Exchange of knowledge and experiences/practices is also facilitated, including advisory and research services, policy & bottleneck analysis and lobbying.

Beyond the support and provision of inputs for actors across axes, skills development and capacity building is prioritised, including the promotion of collaboration between rural actors. In addition, the provision of technical support for interregional and transnational cooperation is also planned in this programme period.

Read more about the organisational structure of the Network [PDF ]



### Activities with other Networks/Countries

- Relevant Experience Pilot Initiative

### Other relevant information

- [Netherlands Rural Development Policy](#)

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## Name of Rural Network

Nationaal Network  
Platteland (NNP)



## Contact Details

**Address:** Postbus 64, 3830 AB Leusden, the Netherlands

**Telephone number:** 00 31 33 432 6090

**Website:** <http://www.netwerkplatteland.nl/>

**Contact person name:** Mrs Marga de Jong

**Email:** [info@netwerkplatteland.nl](mailto:info@netwerkplatteland.nl)

## Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives of the Rural Network

The network does not have an explicit mission statement, but according to its website the National Rural Network (NRN) supports people and organisations that are committed to promoting a strong and attractive countryside.

From this broad perspective the strategic objective of network is to act as a platform for different stakeholders for the sharing of knowledge and experience. In addition, promising development initiatives are to be identified and promoted as a source of inspiration to others. This will ensure the linking of different groups and stakeholders at regional, national and international level.

## Participants in the Rural Network

The network is coordinated by a Network Support Unit (NSU), a private consortium consisting of five private institutions. The network itself does not have formal membership and participation depends on the topic. However, the key stakeholders of the network consist of Leader groups, other formalised area-based groups, theme-specific groups (involved in the combination of farming/nature/recreation, rural reconstruction or national parks), regional or village level committees of inhabitants and various private sector initiatives, mainly involved in economic development. Hence, the public as well as the private sector is represented. Some of the stakeholders are also involved in their own separate networks.

## Network Structure

The Managing Authority (MA), the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality (the Ministry) has subcontracted the coordination of the network. A consortium of five, forms the NSU. Three are involved in the core management and network facilitation team, and two members provide thematic support, as and when required. The following expertise is provided by the NSU: network and process coordination, agri-environmental and rural advisory services, communication and social research.

The annual work programme of the NSU is approved by the supervisory unit for rural development within the Ministry. If requested by the NSU, the Ministry facilitates regular meetings with the MA, in which the 12 provinces are also represented. The NSU participates in Leader meetings, as and when required. Two sub-networks also operate within the Leader programme. Liaising with other networks takes place in an informal manner, as is the case for the NRN as a whole, which does not have a formal operating structure.

## Network Management

In addition to regular e-mail and telephone contact, the core management team of the NSU meets at least bi-monthly, while the network team as a whole, meets three to four times per year. Self evaluation of the team takes place on an annual basis. Important decisions regarding the network are made after consultation with stakeholders, but this will be further elaborated upon and formalised.

used. E-mail is the most frequently used mode of communication, in particular for informing partners about upcoming events.

If required or useful, observations on policies are informally forwarded to official organisations. General and specific information, on good practices for example are spread via electronic news bulletins (eight per year), newsletters (four per year), publications (two per year) and via the interactive website.

Annual activities and results to be achieved after 2013, are outlined in the programme. The NSU also has specified three types of criteria - operational (related to activities, the number of participants and satisfaction regarding events); qualitative (related to results) and criteria related to impact. Based on these criteria, network activities are reviewed annually. Conclusions are used when drawing up the programme for the following year, including special themes and target groups. At an individual level the number of participants in network events and satisfaction levels are also monitored.

One third of the budget is used for outsourcing activities to network partners in the regions. For example, in 2008 an international conference was organised in this way.

## Cooperation interests of the Rural Network

The NSU is interested in cooperating with other networks on the development of new tools for networking, especially regarding the integration of stakeholders under the different axes. Another area of interest, concerns ways in which to evaluate the added value of networking.

In return, the network would like to share outcomes of the special annual themes (e.g. urban-rural links, area based funds) and its methodological guidelines and publications. The guidelines concern transnational cooperation, using good/best practices, systematic planning and monitoring. Publications are available on subjects including communities of practice, devolution of responsibility to regional level (pilot) and young working entrepreneurs (interviews).

### Network budget for the period 2007-13:

Network budget	€	Budget breakdown	€
Total network funds	4 000 000	Work plan resources	1 439 000
National co-finance	2 000 000	Network running costs	1 357 000
FAIRD	2 000 000	Others (if appropriate)	1 204 000



## 1. Summary of Work Programme

The Network Support Unit (NSU) has drawn up an outline for a programme until 2010, with quantitative indicators formulated for each output. The outline contains the following elements: identification, analyses and dissemination of good (or best) practices and maintaining a database of practices.

The facilitation of the exchange of knowledge and experiences/practices is also planned until 2013, including advice, research, policy and bottleneck analysis and lobbying.

Activities not only support and provide inputs to actors across axes, but also help develop the skills and capacity of actors. Collaboration between actors is also encouraged. Technical support is provided for participation in interregional and transnational cooperation up to 2013.

## 2. Focus and annual priorities supporting the RDP implementation in 2010

The NSU prioritises the following areas for 2010:

- The network is involved in a greater number of activities and the number of potential stakeholders is also expanding. There is also increasing traffic to the network's website and a growing number of subscribers to the magazine *Streek* and the digital newsletter. The magazine is published four times per-year with a print run of 1,500 copies.
- The NSU team has initiated at least four new activities to encourage effective cooperation between new stakeholders: farmers, nature conservation organisations, recreation companies and other businesses and/or municipalities.
- The NSU team is organising at least 15 meetings to reach between 500 and 800 people.

The 2010 work programme was approved at the end of 2009. Preparations for the 2011 work programme began in June 2010.

The main focus of NRN policy activities are:

- To continue with several of last year's (2009) themes, including rural-urban linkages and landscape funding;
- Other key themes include entrepreneurship, the role of municipalities in area-specific projects and social issues in the countryside.

The network has a broad target group comprising all actors involved in rural areas. These include social actors, provinces, municipalities, women and young people, elderly people, migrants, traditional and diversified farmers, agrarian nature conservation associations, nature conservation organisations and entrepreneurs.

In 2010, special attention will be focused on entrepreneurs, farmers, social actors and municipalities.

Cooperation with farming organisations is facilitated through the Task Force on Multifunctional Farming, with a specific project entitled 'Opportunities for a new start for farmers'.

## 3. Thematic Activity

### 3.1. Thematic Initiatives launched by the Network

Specific areas of thematic focus for 2010 include:

- Entrepreneurship in rural areas;
- Social domain in the countryside;
- Regional food strategies.

#### • Events

During 2010 the NSU team is developing these themes in the following ways:

- 25 March 2010: Spring conference on 'Social living in the countryside', which also served as a platform for the presentation of the prize for the "Best RDP" project.

## • Guides or other support documents

- N/A

## 3.4 TNC Activity

### • NSU members dedicated to TNC support

- N/A

### • Cooperation fairs and similar events

- Following the organisation of a workshop in May 2009 for Leader Groups on how to start up transnational cooperation projects, the network will organise an international conference in 2010, to further develop transnational cooperation projects.

### • Partner search facilities, guides, other support documents

- N/A

### • Approved TNC projects as of 21 April, 2010

- Seven transnational projects were approved and have already started.

## 4. Monitoring and Evaluation of Networking

- The network continuously monitors outputs and outcomes;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the NSU are based on agreed indicators, including the number of website visitors, the number of subscriptions, satisfaction surveys, etc.

## 5. Communication

### • Communication plan for the NRN

- Publications (including a digital newsletter, the website, *Streek* magazine and brochures).
- Special training in the use of 'Web 2.0' - for blogging, social-reporting, Twitter, RSS feeds, and teleconferencing.

### • Communication plan for the RDP

- N/A

## 6. NRN Knowledge Base

### • Publications

- N/A

### • Latest version of the NSP and RDP:

- A special info desk with access to publications, reports etc. was put in place to provide access relevant information:
- [http://www.netwerkplatteland.nl/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=385&Itemid=72](http://www.netwerkplatteland.nl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=385&Itemid=72)



## Rural Development Policy > Country Information

All Member States have established National Strategies for Rural Development and Rural Development Programmes, either for the whole country or by region. Click on any of the countries on our European Union interactive map, to access a variety of information related to each of the Member States National Rural Development Strategies (country data sheets, principal institutions involved, details of the Rural Development Programmes and their implementation and other relevant information)



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## Rural Development Policy > Country Information > The Netherlands

### Management of Rural Development

Rural Development policy in the Netherlands is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. Rural development is important, as it plays an essential role in the development of all aspects of the Dutch rural landscape, water management and outdoor recreation. The Dutch Rural Development Programme (RDP) is a practical elaboration of the Netherlands' Rural Development Strategy (NRDS), which was based on the European rural development guidelines, and reflects the strategic decisions taken by the Netherlands in this field.

### Summary of rural development policy objectives

The Dutch RDP includes the following overall objectives:

- strengthening entrepreneurship and the capacity to innovate within the sector;
- better compliance with demands from society regarding environmental quality, water management, food quality, animal health and wellbeing;
- improving the physical conditions for agri-business;
- improving the quality of produce and of the production process by strengthening the agri-chain;
- sustainably management of Natura 2000 areas and strengthen biodiversity by agricultural enterprises in particular;
- preserving and improving typical man made landscapes ('National Landscapes') as part of the Dutch cultural heritage;
- increasing afforestation of farmland, multi-functional use and sustainable management of (production) forest;
- restoring water systems through sustainable (economic and ecological) water management, improved quality of ground and surface water, prevention of water shortages in agricultural land and natural areas;
- diversifying farm activities;
- promoting micro-enterprises in rural areas;
- increasing accessibility to rural areas and promote rural tourism;
- improving the quality of governance and mobilize rural development capacity.



### Relevant documents

- National Strategy Plan (NSP): <http://www.regiebureau-pop.nl/files/file622.pdf>
- National Rural Development Programme (RDP): <http://www.regiebureau-pop.nl/files/file622.pdf>
- Rural Development programme summary: To see the detailed RDP fiche please [click here](#).

### Relevant organisations

- National Authority: Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality: <http://www.minlrv.nl>
- Managing Authority: <http://www.minlrv.nl>
- Paying Agency: <http://www.dienstlandelijkgebied.nl>
- National Rural Network (NRN):
  - <http://www.netwerkplatteland.nl/>
  - [The Netherlands NRN on EN RD](#)



### Local Action Groups on EN RD website

- Other relevant organisations: [Vitaal Platteland](#), [Platteland\\_startpagina](#)

### Other relevant links

- N/A

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## Rural Development Policy > RDP Fiches

Detailed RDP fiches are in preparation and will be uploaded upon completion


Country / Region	Link to fiche
 Austria	[ PDF  ]
 Belgium	
Flanders	[ PDF  ]
Wallon	
 Bulgaria	
 Cyprus	
 Czech Republic	[ PDF  ]
 Denmark	
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## CZECH REPUBLIC

**Program rozvoje venkova ČR (Czech Rural Development Programme 2007-2013)**

*(The text of this summary sheet was finalised in August 2010 in accordance with the version of the RDP that was current at this time)*

### Relevant Contact Details

**Address:** Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic, Těšnov 65/17, Praha 1, 11705  
**Telephone number:** +420 221 811 111  
**Fax:** +420 224 810 478

**E-mail:** [info@mze.cz](mailto:info@mze.cz)  
**Managing Authority Website:** <http://eagri.cz/public/eagri/>

**Other useful links:**

- Rural Development Programme (RDP): <http://eagri.cz/public/eagri/venkov/program-rozvoje-venkova/programove-dokumenty/program-rozvoje-venkova-cr-1.html>
- National Strategy Plan (NSP): <http://eagri.cz/public/eagri/dotace/program-rozvoje-venkova-na-obdobi-2007/programove-dokumenty/narodni-strategicky-plan-rozvoje-venkova.html>
- National Rural Network (NRN): <http://eagri.cz/public/eagri/venkov/>



### Climate Change and Renewable Energy issues in 2007-2013 RDP

Climate change (CC) is a fundamentally important issue in the context of agriculture and policy making. EU agriculture must play an important role in mitigating this phenomenon by curbing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; at the same time it needs to adapt to the expected climatic adversities which will have serious consequences on production processes. Rural development offers a range of possibilities to support farming practices and investments that can contribute to climate change *mitigation* efforts (including the increase of the use of *Renewable Energy* (RE) resources) and additionally effect *adaptation* benefits. CC challenges have been well recognized in the baseline analysis of the 2007-2013 EU Rural Development Programmes (RDP)

# European Network for Rural Development Contact Point

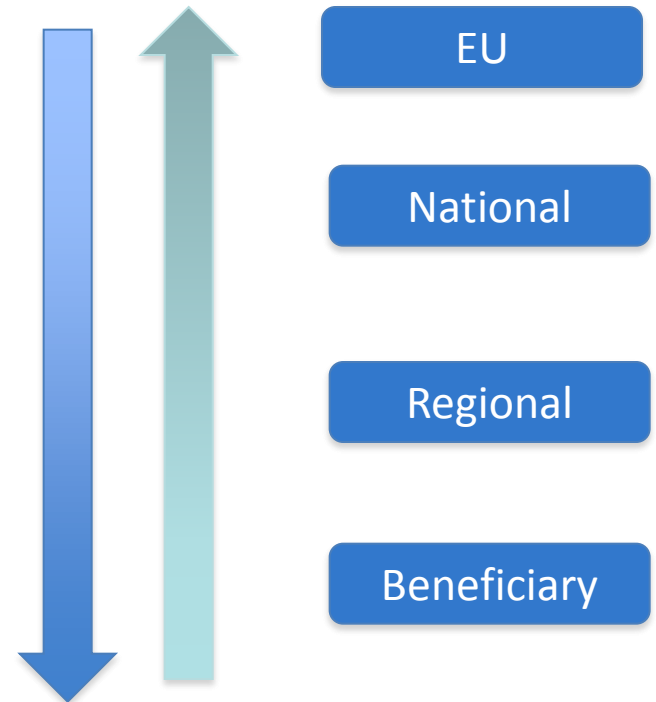


## Mountain Areas / Mountain farming NSP and RDP Screening Results

Draft Working Paper  
October 2009

# TWG4 - Delivery mechanisms of the EU RD policy

1. Strategic approach and targeting
2. Programming procedures and financial aspects
3. Architecture of the policy (axes and measures)
4. Implementation procedures
5. Partnership principle
6. Integrated territorial development strategies
7. Coordination of policies
8. Monitoring and evaluation
9. Control systems
10. Obligations of beneficiaries



# TWG4 - Delivery mechanisms of the EU RD policy

## STEP 1

6 case studies: ES, IT, IE, AT, LV, BG

Step 1 report → TWG4 meeting (5/10)



## STEP 2

Reviewed methodology

6 case studies: DE, FR, DK, PL, HU, GR

Step 2 report → (end 2010 – draft)





# The CAP beyond 2013: the debate

**Launch of the  
public debate**

**Advisory group  
on CAP**

**Coordination  
committee of the  
EN RD**

**Public conference**

**Commission  
Communication**

**Legal  
proposals**

**4 strategic questions on the future  
of the CAP:**

1. Why do we need a European common agricultural policy?
2. What do citizens expect from agriculture?
3. Why reform the CAP?
4. What tools do we need for the CAP of tomorrow?



# ENRD contributions to the conference on 19-20 July

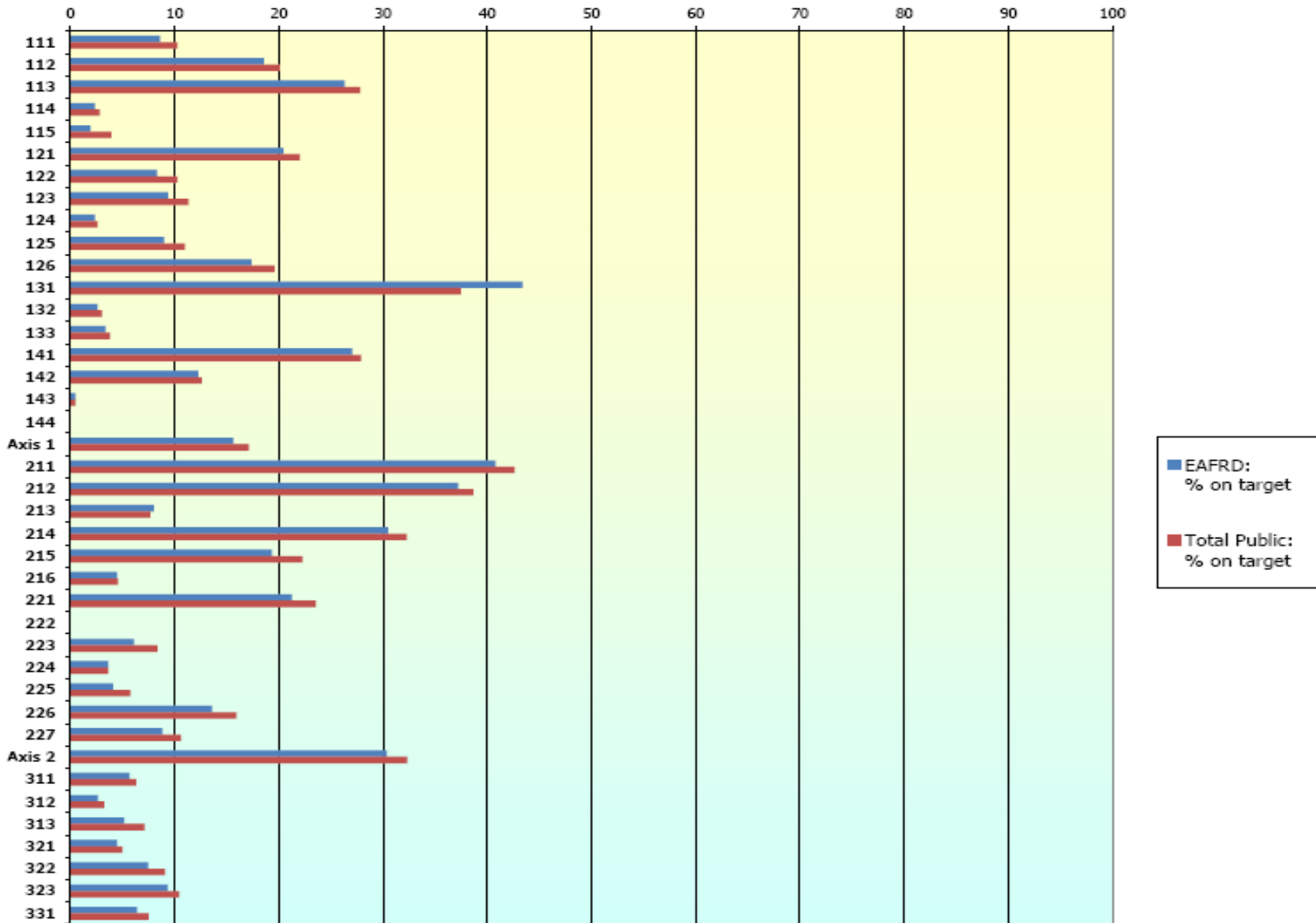
Addressing specific rural development questions (informed by the main CAP debate questions)

Received 36 summary contributions:

From 24 Rural Networks + 12 European organisations

Over 11,000 participants/respondents in the process, covering all 27 member states

### State of the EAFRD and Total public expenditure per measure (% realised vs. programmed)





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## EN RD NEWS and UPDATE

### MAIN STORY

**LAGs invited to attend Rural Cooperation Fair**

The Scottish NRN is delighted to invite Local Action Groups (LAGs) to attend the EN RD supported EU Rural Cooperation Fair, taking place in Edinburgh on 23/24 September 2010.

[More Information](#)

### OTHER NEWS



#### REMINDER: Edinburgh meeting - application forms available for LAGs

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#### 17th September 2010: New look 'Rur@I News' Issue 10 now available.

The newly re-designed EN RD newsletter 'Rur@I News' (Issue 10) - is now available online. This issue focuses on the public response to the open debate on the future of the CAP and as always, we update you on recent EN RD activity and events. [Click here](#)



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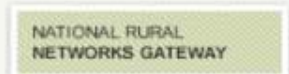
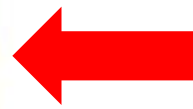
**COUNTRY** Select up to 3 Countries

**RDP MEASURES** Select up to 3 Measures

**PROJECT COST** Select up to 3 Project Costs

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Select up to 3 Keywords

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Select up to 3 Countries  
*Please select a country*

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- Austria (2 records)
- Belgium (Flanders) (2 records)
- Belgium (Wallonia) (2 records)
- Bulgaria (0 record)
- Cyprus (0 record)
- Czech Republic (2 records)
- Denmark (0 record)
- Estonia (5 records)**
- Finland (1 record)
- France (0 record)
- Germany (0 record)
- Greece (0 record)
- Hungary (6 records)
- Ireland (0 record)
- Italy (5 records)
- Latvia (0 record)
- Lithuania (0 record)

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€ **PROJECT COST**

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👤 **BENEFICIARY TYPE**

**SEARCH**

**CALENDAR**

**EU RDP PROJECT DATABASE**

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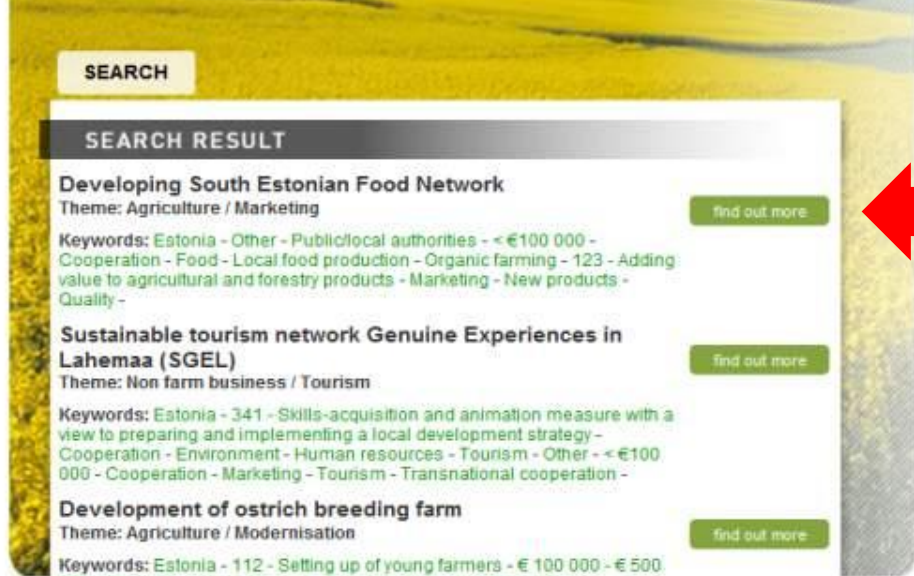
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**PIKSE** Project Information and Knowledge Service for the EN RD  
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MORE SEARCH OPTIONS

THEME Select up to 3 Themes

KEYWORDS Select up to 3 Keywords



SEARCH

SEARCH RESULT

- Developing South Estonian Food Network**  
Theme: Agriculture / Marketing  
Keywords: Estonia - Other - Public/local authorities - < €100 000 - Cooperation - Food - Local food production - Organic farming - 123 - Adding value to agricultural and forestry products - Marketing - New products - Quality - [find out more](#)
- Sustainable tourism network Genuine Experiences in Lahemaa (SGEL)**  
Theme: Non farm business / Tourism  
Keywords: Estonia - 341 - Skills-acquisition and animation measure with a view to preparing and implementing a local development strategy - Cooperation - Environment - Human resources - Tourism - Other - < €100 000 - Cooperation - Marketing - Tourism - Transnational cooperation - [find out more](#)
- Development of ostrich breeding farm**  
Theme: Agriculture / Modernisation  
Keywords: Estonia - 112 - Setting up of young farmers - € 100 000 - € 500 000 - Tourism - Young farmers - Diversification - Modernisation - [find out more](#)
- Local food project "LOCAL TASTE" ("UMA MEKK")**  
Theme: Non-farm business / Cooperation  
Keywords: Estonia - Cooperation - Non-farm or forest Enterprises - Producer groups - 111 - Vocational training and information actions - < €100 000 - Cooperation - Food - Local food production - [find out more](#)
- Setup of tourism works to develop Oxforell Ltd**  
Theme: Non-farm business / Tourism  
Keywords: Estonia - Tourism - Other - € 100 000 - € 500 000 - Disadvantaged people - Equal opportunities - Rural tourism - 311 - Diversification into non-agricultural activities - [find out more](#)



CALENDAR  
Rural Events

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## Developing the South Estonia Food Network

### Background:

The project was developed to help address the imbalance that exists in Estonia whereby both the production and consumption of organic food is increasing, but the processing and marketing of local organic products remains under-developed.

### Objective:

To respond to the increasing demand for organic food products in Estonia by improving the marketing of organic foods that have been produced and processed in Estonia.

### Main Activities:

Alt-Lauri Farm Shop and the South Estonia Food Network have developed an effective direct-marketing network for a range of local farm products, including organic food. The South Estonia Food Network started to market organic products in 2006, but needed further supplies of good quality products to expand their activities. The Food Network provides healthy organic food products to regional children's nurseries and schools. Customers can place their orders by e-mail and goods are delivered directly to their home.

### Results and Benefits:

Investment in facilities for improving the processing and marketing of local organic food products at Alt-Lauri Farm has resulted in:

- reconstruction of the barn at Alt-Lauri Farm to include washing and packaging rooms;
- purchase and installation of cold storage equipment;
- purchase of washing, peeling and packaging machines for potatoes and vegetables, and;
- increased co-operation between Alt-Lauri Farm and other local farmers for jointly supplying the South Estonia Food Network.

The benefits of this specific investment have been:

- the increased supply of local food to local consumers (with all the associated economic, social and environmental benefits);
- improved incomes for Alt-Lauri Farm and other local farmers using the new facilities;
- encouraging innovation with new products and packaging etc.

### Lessons Learnt:

The project offers an excellent example of how targeted investment can support the co-operative processing and marketing of good quality local food products.

### Contact Information:

Project website: <http://www.let.ee/>  
Estonian NRN website: <http://www.maainfo.ee>  
Contact: Reve Lambur, [reve@maainfo.ee](mailto:reve@maainfo.ee), Tel. +372 384 9728

 [Further information...](#) (25.5 KB)

### At a glance:

Theme:  
Agriculture

Sub-themes(s):  
New products  
Quality

Keywords:  
Co-operation  
Food  
Marketing  
Organic farming

Country/Region:  
Võru County,  
South Estonia

Beneficiary type:  
Other  
Public/local authorities

Project cost:  
< €100 000

RDP Measure:  
Leader (Axis 4) – LAG  
Võrumaa Partnership  
Assembly  
123 - Adding value to  
agricultural and forestry  
products

Duration:  
Start date: September  
2009  
End date: September  
2010 (Predicted)

Last updated:  
3 September 2010



ALT-LAURI<sub>taalo</sub>



# Pilot RDP Projects Brochure



## The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development Examples of Projects



## Organic chicken business takes off: EAFRD co-finance helps double the productivity of a Swedish family farm

Developing new markets for new products remains important for the competitiveness of rural businesses, and Rural Development Programme (RDP) funding provided to an organic chicken farm in southern Sweden confirms that entrepreneurial spirit can thrive in Europe's countryside.

Throughout Europe many examples exist to highlight how farmers and other rural businesses can succeed in entering new market places. Success factors involved in the process include identifying a viable market niche, personal perseverance, and making good use of rural development assistance.

One such case is evident in Sweden where a small family farm has used EAFRD co-finance to help consolidate its position in the country's poultry sector.

### Organic Opportunities

Organic products had not previously been prominent in the Swedish poultry market and this fact was identified as an opportunity by Birgitta and Claes Alwén who were among the first farmers in the country to establish a commercial line of organic chickens.

Located in the southern Swedish region of Bentarp, the Alwén's organic chicken business has now been running for over ten years. During this time the husband and wife team have carved themselves a firm niche in the national poultry market and experienced a steady increase in demand for their environmentally-friendly products.

Branding the meat with the company name (*Bosapkyckling*) and investing efforts to inform customers about the relative benefits of their poultry production systems has helped to build and protect their market position.



© Bosapkyckling

Growing consumer preferences for healthy, natural products allowed the company to evolve progressively and RDP funds have recently been used to co-finance a business expansion project which doubled the Alwén's production capacity for organic *Bosapkyckling* chickens. Six new mobile stables were constructed for the adult birds and funds were also secured for a 'baby barn' to help improve welfare and development of the younger chicks. Total project costs amounted to approximately €130 000 which was offset by a RDP grant of around €32 000, comprising 50% from the EAFRD. Bank loan finance was also used to realise the rural business expansion plan.

RDP support for the project was provided to support investment activities targeted at modernising agricultural holdings. The modernisation outcomes from this RDP project are clear and, as well as doubling their productivity, the Alwéns have also reinforced their ability to provide quality organic products to their wholesale, retail and catering trade customers.

### Reputation Building

Birgitta Alwén considers product reputation to be one of the most important business tools at her disposal. She has invested significantly in building a strong brand name and the reputation of her organic chickens and she believes that finding ways to communicate unique aspects of product quality is vital for successful customer relations. In addition to the clear benefits for the environment from organic husbandry approaches -

Mrs Alwén also explains "We have a different product and the chicken has a different quality. It is much larger and has longer fibres, which gives it a different chewing resistance". The quality difference results in an improved eating experience.

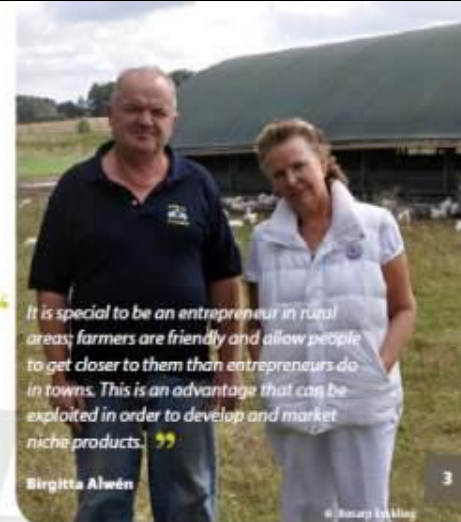
These unique selling points of the *Bosapkyckling* chickens are promoted to customers during face to face client meetings and via the [company's website](#).

Internet tools provide particularly useful advertising opportunities and the *Bosapkyckling* website hosts a video presentation about the farm and its organic credentials. This type of dynamic marketing device is increasingly popular with rural businesses because it can be both shown to new clients during business meetings, and video approaches can also help reach an even wider group of potential customers, over the web or via in-store demonstrations.

Other promotional features on the company website with relevance to similar EU farm businesses include a selection of organic food recipes and a long list of press publications indicating the company's achievements. The farm has become known as a success story for Swedish organic producers and to date the Alwéns have received over 30 different study visits from groups of rural development stakeholders interested in finding out more about economically viable organic production systems.

### Entrepreneurial Vision

Looking to the longer term, Mrs Alwén has a vision for further consolidating the *Bosapkyckling*'s market position and radically reducing reliance on external productivity factors. "If we had our own slaughterhouse and packaging facilities I am sure this would make us more independent and even more competitive." She continues, "What's more, Sweden has all the qualifications to be a major exporter of organic quality chicken. We have plenty of space, clean air and water, and also salmonella-free products. There are many opportunities for new export products in these types of conditions for those who wish to take on such a challenge."



*"It is special to be an entrepreneur in rural areas; farmers are friendly and allow people to get closer to them than entrepreneurs do in towns. This is an advantage that can be exploited in order to develop and market niche products."*

Birgitta Alwén

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RDP assistance is available to help farmers like the Alwéns turn their entrepreneurial ideas into commercial reality. More information about RDP opportunities in your area is available from the National Rural Networks. Click on the following hyperlink regarding [contact information for the National Rural Networks](#).

Further information about the RDP project and *Bosapkyckling* organic chickens is available from the Alwéns [company website](#).

Organic production offers niche business development opportunities, provides ecological benefits and responds to consumer demands for environmentally-friendly food products.

Connecting Rural Europe

<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>



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Rural Development*

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