

# JOINT ENRD CEJA Workshop

## Generational Renewal through Rural Development

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# Model in a nutshell

- Organic certification
- 1.2 hectares of diversified vegetable market gardens (including 1000m<sup>2</sup> of unheated polytunnels)
- Conversion to permanent raised beds, French intensive vegetable farming (2016)
- 250 laying hens → 400 hens (2017)
- 1 apprentice or 1.5 FTE seasonal workers



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# Distinguishing characteristics

- Technophiles
- Open Source Farming
- Very little reliance on advisory services
- Facilitation
- Commitment to new sharing economy, crowdfunding



Photo credit: Rebecca Marshall



# Atypical farmers, fairly typical new entrants

- Non-farming backgrounds, no farming training
- Bringing an abandoned subsistence farm back to life (2010)
- Starting modestly, managing growth incrementally and slowly



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- Not limited by conventional wisdom
- Very little debt => more freedom for experimentation
- Local interest and commitment to farming renewal



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# Show me the money

- Started with CSAs, market in village
- Founding cooperative of local organic farms
- Maintaining excellent relationships with all of our clients
- Taking account of fragmented demand
- Selling surpluses



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# Season 7 – What's next?

- Managing very high consumer demand
- Scaling back to focus on essentials
- Finding better production –costs balance
- Learning from failures
- Flexibility to adapt
- Improving ergonomics



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# Points of pride

- Raising new entrant farmers
- Institutional vegetable supplier for a retirement home
- When you're an endangered species, you need to be exceptional
- Synergies with other new entrants



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# Recommendations

- Incentives to farmers for training potential new entrants on the job
- Innovative financing for local authorities making land available to new entrants
- Remove perverse incentives from CAP which are barriers to new entrants
- Small grants to help overcome barriers to startup, but not enough rope to hang yourself with..



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# Thank you for your attention!

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