

Report on the Conference
“Local Agriculture and short
Food Supply Chains”
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Agenda

- Scope:
 - ✓ CAP support
 - ✓ Links between farmers and consumers (labelling and development of appropriate infrastructures)
 - ✓ Hygiene rules
- CAP support
- Discussion



Three workshops

- **Workshop A:** Towards an appropriate policy framework
- **Workshop B:** Facilitating market access for local farmers
- **Workshop C:** A better use of the Hygiene and food safety regulatory framework for small food producers

Workshop Towards an appropriate policy framework

Issue 1: Difficulties specific to farmers and disadvantaged rural areas

- Not reaching a critical mass to access the market
- Lack of marketing skills
- Lack of infrastructure (farm shop, street markets)
- Absence of producer groups
- Absence of local networks or partnerships (grouping farmers, local authorities and consumers)

Issue 2: Belief by some governments that small farms cannot be « competitive » in a European sense

- Competitiveness to be also seen in a regional/local dimension
- Commission should review the application of policy by MS and factors preventing from gaining support through CAP

Overall conclusions of Workshop Towards an appropriate policy framework

- SFSC more and more demanded by consumers and is developing across Europe
- Large number of small farms in the EU (10.3 millions in 2005). They have economic, social and environmental significance (home of about 30 million citizens);
- Small farms with a local market orientation do not have access to CAP support (low priority under RDPs, lack of capacity)

Small farms and local agriculture deserve a specific focus in CAP under both pillars

Pillar 2 existing support for small-scale agriculture

- Semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring (EU-12 only)
- Free provision of advisory services
- Setting up of producer groups (EU-12 only)
- Various adaptations to grant rates and eligibility conditions for farm investments
- Support for meeting standards
- Training & advisory services
- Farm investment
- Early retirement
- Diversification, micro business
- LFA, agri-environment
- Leader

Europe 2020 strategy

Common Strategic Framework (CSF)

– covering the EAFRD, ESF, Cohesion Fund and EMFF, and reflecting EU2020 through common thematic objectives to be addressed by key actions for each of the funds

Partnership Contract

– national document outlining the intended use of the funds in the pursuit of EU2020 objectives

Rural development
policy: EAFRD

Other CSF funds
(ERDF, ESF, CF, EMFF)

Innovation, Environment and Climate Change as cross-cutting themes

*Fostering
knowledge
transfer and
innovation in
agriculture,
forestry and
rural areas*

**Enhancing
competitiveness
of all types of
agriculture
and farm viability**

**Promoting
food chain
organisation
and risk
management
in agriculture**

**Restoring,
preserving and
enhancing
ecosystems
dependent on
agriculture and
forestry**

**Promoting resource
efficiency and
supporting the shift
towards a low carbon
and climate resilient
economy in
agriculture, food
and forestry sectors**

**Promoting social
inclusion,
poverty reduction
and economic
development
in rural areas**

Priorities

Rural Development Programme(s)

Pillar I after 2013

Small farmers scheme (art 47-51):

Single annual payment between 500 and 1000 euros.

Cyprus and Malta, lower than 500 but not less than 200 euros.

Farm restructuring as a rural development priority after 2013

Priority 2: Enhancing competitiveness of all types of agriculture and enhancing farm viability

Facilitating restructuring of farms facing major structural problems, notably farms with a low degree of market participation, market-oriented farms in particular sectors and farms in need of agricultural diversification;

Food chain as a rural development priority after 2013

Priority 3: Promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture

Better integrating primary producers into the food chain through quality schemes, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations

Indicative list of relevant measures for small farms and short supply chain

Skills and concept development; quality promotion

- Knowledge transfer and information actions (Art 15)
- Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services (Art 16)
- Quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs (Art 17)

Investment and local infrastructure

- On farm investment in physical assets (Art 18)
- Basic services and village renewal (Art 21)

Farm and business development (Art 20)

- Business start up aid for young farmers, non-agricultural activities in rural areas and development of small farms Investments in non-agricultural activities

Cooperation of different partners (Art 36)

- Small operators sharing facilities and resources
- Promotion activities related to short supply chains and local markets
- Setting up of producer groups

Local strategies (Leader) (Art 43-45)

Facilitating market access for local farmers

Issue 1: Values and specificities

- Renewed definition of « values » which are exchanged through local food systems (not only economic but also awareness, friendliness, self-commitment, sustainability,...).
- Common prerequisites: short distance between actors, link to territory, low number of intermediaries.

Issue 2: Certification

- Several elements can be certified (Product itself, production process, the method to process the product, the marketing system,...).
- Differentiate direct marketing from and local food chains/systems
- Define a clear link between certification and notions of ecological and social quality of products.

Issue 3: Adapted legislation

- Rules defined for industrial food chains (e.g. sanitary and trading rules) can not apply for SFSC.
- Self regulation specific to local marketing to be taken into account (direct contact is the guarantee of sanitary standards).
- Introduce local origin of products as a standard selection criterion for public tenders.
- Encourage local framers to group and cooperate to provide significant volumes in public tenders in their territory.

Issue 4: Adapted infrastructure

Specific orientation of measures dedicated to infrastructure modernisation (support market infrastructures dedicated to local products).

MS should support local food systems through a full use of the possibilities open within the FEADER.

Facilitating market access for local farmers

Conclusion: Local agriculture and SFSC make up a system with specific values, infrastructures and legislative needs. Values shares by increasing number of consumers that are part of the system.

- Adapt legal framework and support development of appropriate infrastructures

A better use of hygiene and food safety regulatory framework for small food producers

Conclusions:

- Tremendous difficulties and costs to sale products due to inappropriate and untailored hygiene and safety requirements.
- Some MS do not implement the derogations for small farms and SFSC of current EU legislation on hygiene rules.

Issue 1: Difficult to comply with sanitary rules

- Heavy, too frequent and expensive procedures of control.
- Successful flexibility principle by approving specific national guidelines, stakeholders' involvement; training, education and communication.
- National Authorities to be open to collaboration with producer organizations which could draft guidelines for direct sales

Issue 2: General inertia of authorities which charge EU for rigidity of rules

- Lack of knowledge and expertise to implement national guidelines
- Cultural distance between farmers and other stakeholders (e.g. zero risk approach)
- Lack of « voice » of small farmers at national level
- Inadequate access to public funds

Issue 3: Costs could be significantly reduced by...

- Creating certainty on the rules to follow
- Adapting controls to the given context
- Accepting that different products have different risks
- Investing in education, training and communication
- Promoting research in risk analysis, risk management and governance

And... the Commission is invited to :

- Improve and promote the guidelines made for derogations to EU legislation
- Simplify notification procedures
- Monitor the application of derogations by MS
- Promote training at EU level under the Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme

Thanks for your attention.

