

Towards creative rural entrepreneurship

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Towards creative rural entrepreneurship

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1. Introduction

1.1. Why address this topic?

In a changing economic environment, the social and economic renewal of rural zones consists of maintaining, developing and diversifying economic activity. Through their provision of agricultural produce, eco-systemic services, services to individuals, and employment creation, economic stakeholders revitalise our countryside.

This is why over several months, the Réseau wallon de Développement rural (the Walloon network for rural development) has been examining the question of “strengthening and ensuring the sustainability of entrepreneurship in the rural environment”.

A working group, consisting of a panel of Walloon economic stakeholders, was constituted in the course of a first meeting, which allowed us to identify the key preoccupations of these stakeholders: employer associations, co-operative enterprise, inter-enterprise partnerships (clusters, networks, etc.), the transfer of property/agricultural holdings and its relationship with access to land, support for project promoters from creation to post-establishment, access to finance, and the maintenance and development of agricultural entrepreneurship in the rural context.

Several initiatives devoted to these topics, such as a regional workshop on “co-operatives” or a regional seminar on “rural entrepreneurship”, have been held to enrich the considerations of stakeholders involved in rural development in Wallonia. They allowed an identification of the key issues in rural enterprise, stakeholders’ needs, the bottlenecks, and the instruments to be used, but above all, of the first courses of action and their follow-ups.

This seminar is therefore the logical extension of these activities. By means of presentations of experiences and case studies in Europe, it aims to identify and to analyse, in greater depth, the current and future challenges in terms of economic development, and to put into perspective innovative responses which even today serve to stimulate the local economy and support enterprise in the rural context. Specifically, it allows:

- The examination of new forms of entrepreneurship in the rural context;
- Awareness of policies and measures implemented to stimulate economic development in other European regions;
- The promotion of exchange and dialogue between local stakeholders, institutions, and public bodies involved in the economic development of rural areas and, over the long term, to formulate institutional recommendations.

1.2. The four issues raised and key questions



a) Alternative financing of local projects

While the rural economic fabric is essentially made up of small enterprises (85% of SMEs in Wallonia¹), the development of small entrepreneurs in the rural context is fraught with difficulties: little access to finance or bank credit, to private investment, to business angels, along with refusal rates for bank credit applications at twice the average level in the case of very small enterprises, stringent guarantee requirements, etc. In the face of these observations, we have attempted to identify innovative alternatives to finance which currently exist to stimulate the development of local economic projects, and how they complement the availability of more traditional forms of finance, which are less accessible and suited to the small entrepreneurs and agricultural producers of the rural world.



b) Research, development, and innovation in the rural context

Innovation, technological or organisational change/improvement aimed at any component of the business concern/agricultural enterprise, is a determining factor which impacts a business' ability to survive and to develop in a competitive market. However, the time, energy and investment required for research and development initiatives are a disincentive to small rural enterprises considering this course of action. Is this due to the absence of an appropriate bridge between application and research? To a lack of information on existing forms of support? To the poor image of R&D amongst these small enterprises? To diminishing aid programmes? To the difficulty of access to innovation networks (competitiveness hubs, clusters, etc.) in the rural domain? To extend our consideration of the issue, we examined emerging forms of support for innovation, for technological and organisational creativity for entrepreneurs and agricultural producers, along with their capacity to foster the survival and development of activities in a competitive market.



c) Collaborative schemes in the rural context

Faced with the current conditions of economic instability, collaborative schemes appear to be a promising option: time and work-sharing, pooling of resources, networking between stakeholders, complementarity of activities and competitive impact on the market, etc. And yet, these systems – networks, clusters, sectors, employer associations, joint-ventures, co-operatives – suffer from public suspicion and misunderstanding, and particularly in the rural context. We have tried to answer their questions by identifying and analysing innovative measures and instruments created to ensure the survival of rural enterprises and foster their resilience, to increase their capacity for innovation and promote collaborations, to strengthen the ties between economic stakeholders.



d) Access to land

While activities in the rural context are diversifying, the control over land has become a major economic and political challenge. Urbanisation, leisure, renewable energy production, quarrying, all compete for space, turning agricultural landholdings, the basic resource of the agricultural producer, into speculative assets to be sold to the highest bidder and thereby making them inaccessible to (young) agricultural producers. As a result, renting land remains an unavoidable necessity. However, the agricultural lease agreement has become a controversial instrument, with an increasing number of land-holders giving preference to short-term rental contracts, which are more precarious for the agricultural producer, while being less constraining for themselves. Access to land is therefore becoming the key factor limiting economic development in the rural context. Considering the agricultural context together with that for global food production, what measures are required to improve access to land for rural agricultural producers and entrepreneurs? How can the transfer of land be facilitated and the agricultural producer be given control over his productive resource? How can the effects of speculation on agricultural land be reduced?

¹ Source : Union Wallonne des Entreprises.



2. A plenary session to launch the debate!

2.1. Leading the institutional introduction

Pierre Léonard

Representative for Minister Marcourt, Minister for the Economy, for SMEs, External Trade, New technologies and Higher education

“You are at the heart of creativity in Wallonia!”

Rural enterprise and creativity are problems which are preoccupying Wallonia in this period of economic fragility affecting our region. Several mechanisms exist or are under development to address the needs of the stakeholders concerned: competitiveness hubs, of which *Wagralim* for the agro-industrial sector, university centres with cutting-edge expertise, business incubators allowing start-up entrepreneurs to try out their activity (new prototypes and products), a state-of-the-art platform on short-chain distribution channels by the ASE, the Creative Wallonia initiative which promotes innovation in Wallonia. However, when it comes to financing, certain efforts would doubtless be worthwhile. Notably, the use of EAFRD funds (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) could be improved upon. Field event activities would also benefit from some enhancement. At the dawn of the new 2014-2020 programme period, this seminar is an opportunity to seize new ideas and to gain insights into the genuine aspirations of practitioners in the field.

Renaud Baiwir

Representative for Minister Di Antonio, Walloon Minister of public works, Agriculture, Rural Affairs, Nature, Forest, and Heritage.

“Employment-generating family agriculture must have perennity.”

When we speak of “entrepreneurs in the rural sphere”, what first comes to mind is agricultural producers. However, these producers are today encountering difficulties in taking over, creating or developing a farm. They’re confronted with a generational challenge: less than 3% of agricultural producers are under 30 years of age. Agriculture represents 40% of our territory and is contracting. 40% of Walloons live in rural areas and suburbanisation is on the increase. In this context, how can we ensure a future for our agriculture? Some possible courses of action are gaining in clarity: not to oppose agricultural producers and inhabitants in rural zones, to “live together and develop activities together”, to make better use of available means and to “act imaginatively”, to develop activities which devolve from primary production, tools for land mobility (land re-parcelling), a land bank for managing landholdings, improved education and training, promotion of diversification, support for innovation, etc. At a time when the CAP is becoming greener, Wallonia is establishing a “Walloon code for agriculture”, endowing the region with a global vision which promotes a model of perennial family agriculture, listening to the young people.

Fabio Cossu

Contact point for the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)

The European Network for Rural Development aims to stimulate international co-operation in rural development. Its key results: 31 national networks, 1 million stakeholders involved and 10,000 identified good practices.

The current endeavour of the Network is the implementation of a new European rural development policy for the 2014-2020 period. The 4 areas which have been targeted for rural development now translate into 6 European strategic priorities:

1. To encourage the transfer of knowledge and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas;
2. To improve the competitiveness of all types of agriculture and to improve the economic viability of farms ;
3. To bring improvements to the organisation of the food chain and to risk management in agriculture;
4. To restore, conserve and strengthen the ecosystems linked to agriculture and forestry;

5. To promote the efficient use of resources and support the transition to an economy with low CO2 emissions, which is resilient, and which is positioned to confront climate change, in agriculture and the forestry sector;
6. To foster social inclusion, a reduction in poverty and economic development in rural areas.

The translation of these priorities into Rural Development Programmes has to address the challenges and opportunities facing the stakeholders of the rural world: access to markets, access to land and to the use of this land, climate change, the ageing of the population and immigration, access to credit, exclusion and inequality, public finance, etc.

In order to stimulate this next programming period, the European Network has already been working on various themes such as rural finance linked to social exclusion, micro-entrepreneurship, the “Community-led Local Development”, young people in rural zones, local food distribution and short-chain distribution systems, the transfer of knowledge and innovation.

Pages covering a range of experiences, documentation, information linked to the different topics, are available on the European Network’s website, (www.enrd.eu). In particular, you will find there a page dedicated to the preparation of the next programming period 2014-2020.

Link to documentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/eu-rural-networks-meeting-rural-development-challenges.aspx>

2.2. Three perspectives on the topics of the seminar

Access to land in Europe: what options? what obstacles?

By Sjoerd Wartena, Terre en vue Association



Sjoerd Wartena, from the Netherlands, has lived in France for more than 40 years. Today, a retired farmer and the founder and former president of Terre de Liens, an agrarian movement (www.terredeliens.org), he makes every effort to change the way people relate to the land, agriculture, food and nature and fights to develop a more human-scale, ethical and diversified agriculture. He is in charge of the international working group «Access to Land for Community Connected Farming».

“Land is a common resource.”

The current landholding situation is alarming and severely affects the agricultural sector: each country has its own land legislation, land is subject to speculation and hoarding, prices are rising, 40% of the European budget is dedicated to agriculture, 80% of this budget is allocated to 20% of agricultural producers, agricultural landholdings are contracting, 10,000 farms in Europe disappear every week, 6% of European agricultural producers are under 35, fewer and fewer young people opt to become agricultural producers. Does society really wish to support its agriculture?

A number of movements are coming into being to support rural and agricultural life and to foster change. But they remain divided, each following their own values, priorities, and criteria. Their impact will remain muted for as long as they don’t unify their strengths. The key is to “work together”.

“No ideas without actions and no actions without ideas”

Faced with these observations, several promising avenues have been identified:

- Devote funding to research to “demonstrate that the direction we are going in is not the right direction”, either for the local population, sales practices, or land-leasing.
- Apply the FAO’s “Voluntary Guidelines” (see inset), adopt strong legislation and fiscal measures in respect of the use of land. For example, through the adoption of the “Protected agricultural zone”.
- To develop and unify the initiatives of the civil society.

- Use the media to inform the general public with the aim of mobilising opinion and stigmatising current agricultural policies.
- Promote an agriculture which is family-run, local, and organic, organised as a viable economic and socially preferable practice compared to agro-industries which are poor job-creators.
- Include a component on agriculture, food and the environment in general and professional education to stimulate and inform the young, as training is an important element in supporting family agriculture over the long term.

The **Voluntary Guidelines of the FAO** on the responsible governance of tenure applicable to land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security aims to ensure security of tenure and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests, with the aim of eradicating hunger and poverty, supporting sustainable development, and improving environmental management. They were officially approved by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) on the 11th of May, 2012. Since that time, the application of the Guidelines has been encouraged by the G20, Rio+ 20, the General Assembly of the United Nations, and the Assemblée des parlementaires francophones.

(For further information: <http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/voluntary-guidelines/en/>)

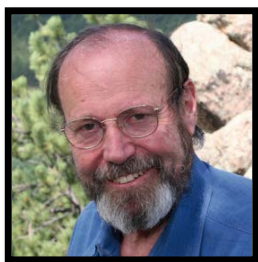
Some practical examples:

- Initiatives such as Terre de Liens (FR) or the National Trust (UK) which enable the acquisition of land as “common land”, entrusted to agricultural producers whose farming practices are ecologically-friendly and anchored in the locality, should be supported. However, these initiatives are limited by the high price of land.
- The Catalan network “Land stewardship” (ES) is developing a system of voluntary contracts with landowners to promote ecological management of their land.
- The “land trusts” of Vermont (USA) obtain “easements”, either through donations or purchases, consisting of legal agreements guaranteeing the protection of land and natural surroundings in the context of agricultural production.

Link to documentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/acc%C3%A8s-%C3%A0-la-terre-en-europe-quelles-possibilit%C3%A9s-quelles-barri%C3%A8res.aspx>

Economy & Finance : What can rural entrepreneurs do?

By Bernard Liétaer



Bernard Liétaer, an international expert in the design and implementation of currency systems, is one of the founders of ECU, the European Currency Unit, the ancestor of the Euro. A university professor and researcher at Berkeley and Moscow, he has authored numerous books and articles, among which Rethinking Money (2013), Au Coeur de la Monnaie (2011), and The Future of Money: creating new wealth, work and a wiser world (1999), which has been translated in 18 languages. His publications are available on www.lietaer.com.

“Diversity may be less efficient but is much more resilient”.

We often speak about the function of currency, of what currency can do, but not what currency is. Today, the main European currency is the euro, 95% of which was created from loans made by banks. This currency is known to everybody and monopolises the financial system. Since 1970, 425 systemic crises have occurred: bank crashes, monetary crises, sovereign debt crises, and the single monetary system doesn't appear to offer a solution. In parallel, there is a phenomenon which is less well-known to the general public: more than 5000 complementary social currencies were available in the world in 2005 (compared to 2 in 1984) allowing citizens to continue to exchange services and goods. The conclusion: the effectiveness and resilience of a financial system depend above all on 2 structural variables in the exchange network: diversity and inter-connectedness.

This diversity is well-represented in all the social currencies created across the world:

- In Germany, we count 64 regional monetary systems operating in parallel to the euro, of which the Regio;
- The Time dollar (USA): a mutual time credit which is distinctive from barter as the time unit can be used as a means of exchange;
- 86 operational monetary systems are used to counteract population ageing through the exchange of services (medical needs, preparation of meals, etc.) In Japan, a smart card system has been implemented - 1/3 of the inhabitants of a city of 700 000 inhabitants are involved.
- A town has implemented a monetary system allowing the leasing of productive land from the town, to buy vegetables grown on this land, etc. The only way to acquire this currency? To perform tasks of public interest for the town. The level of volunteers for these tasks has beaten all records!

These social currencies create ties and social capital but probably do not amount to a solution to the crisis. They engender, however, the opening of doors, a softening of the effects of the crisis, and a response to a social dilemma.

But what is the connexion between these monetary systems and the small rural entrepreneur? The rural sphere is mainly host to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the “fertile soil” of the economy, and creator of numerous jobs. However, the economic crisis does not help them, notably in the face of large enterprises who fix unfavourable conditions of purchase and sale. Without the support of banks, these small enterprises have difficulties maintaining their cash-flow and exercising their activities.

In response to these problems, Switzerland has created the WIR Bank, which functions on the basis of 2 currencies: the WIR and the Swiss franc, the WIR not being convertible into Swiss francs. This system was created by 17 SMEs who created their currency themselves. The results are striking and this system is certainly the secret of the stability of the Swiss currency. Today, there exists an improvement on the WIR system: the C3 (Commercial Credit Circuit). Established in Brazil and Uruguay, this consists of a business-to-business system which operates in the form of commercial network. This system is an advance on the WIR, as the C3 is convertible on demand into national currency. This system works in 3 stages:

1. A small enterprise takes out insurance with an insurance company to guarantee payment of an invoice for services/goods supplied to a large enterprise. This insurance is low-cost (1% of the transaction amount in Uruguay) and allows the small enterprise to have immediate access to the invoiced amount in C3.
2. It then creates a commercial credit circuit. It may subsequently redistribute the C3s to its suppliers, if they wish to enter the circuit (otherwise they wait for the enterprise to receive euros). This supplier then has two options: either to turn to another member of the C3 circuit, or to leave the circuit and convert the C3 into national currency through a bank. This system allows its users to avoid all the costs in the form of interest and bank charges.
3. When the large enterprise pays its invoice, it pays in euros. This is what allows the option of leaving the system while avoiding the costs arising from interest as the euros already exist. Thanks to this system, the small enterprise avoids cash-flow problems and benefits from the security of knowing that the large enterprise will pay its invoice (if it does not do so, the insurance company pays the invoice and initiates proceedings against the large enterprise).

This system is currently in use in Brazil and in Uruguay and soon will be in other Latin American countries.

We currently live in a patriarchal society in which the tendency is towards monopolistic currency: competitive and centralised, with negative consequences for our society (concentrations of wealth, financial crises, non-sustainability, etc.), but positive as well, such as the industrial revolution. Yet some societies function differently, and have been doing so for centuries. Notably matrifocal societies (ancient Egypt, the High Middle Ages) established parallel systems which combined collaboration at the local level and wider competition. The results are rather convincing: economic stability over centuries, social well-being, quality of life, sustainability, communities, etc. This presentation is therefore aimed to demonstrate a well-known adage, particularly in the rural sphere: “Diversity may be less efficient but is much more resilient”.

Link to documentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/economie-finance-que-peuvent-faire-les-agriculteurs.aspx>

Crowd Equity Funding and regional development

By Jorgen Andersson



Jörgen Andersson, a Swedish farmer dedicated to sustainable development, is the founder of the economic association Fjällbete which allows its 150 members from the agricultural sector to collaborate and promote «community entrepreneurial spirit» through a citizens' fund, the Crowd Equity Fund.

“To make the choice between gaining influence through participation, for oneself, for one’s family, for the community, is to assume one’s responsibilities”.

In Sweden, in Jörgen Andersson’s region, essentially consisting of pasture and dedicated to dairy production, we have observed an important decline in agriculture with a significant reduction in the number of farmers and in the number of farms. On the other hand, it should be noted that tourist activity has greatly increased. Faced with these developments, observed about fifteen years ago, agricultural producers decided to look at short-chain distribution and the promotion of local products. Together, the agricultural producers forged contacts with reindeer breeders, hotels, restaurants, local schools, etc., and in 2001 founded *Fjällbete*, an economic association with the status of a co-operative. Today, this co-operative has 150 partners. It is neither a producer co-operative, nor a consumer co-operative, but a co-operative dedicated to the management of a common asset, specifically the local land. Thus, the tourist who stays at a partner hotel knows that the dish being served is made from local products. Each partner shares the common responsibility of promoting the region and its production. The idea is therefore to re-connect production with consumption.

From a financial viewpoint, the co-operative operates thanks to an innovative system of “Crowd Equity Funding”, a local citizen’s financing system called “Lokalkapital” and created by Leo Padazakos.

To illustrate this system, let’s imagine a pyramid representing the individual attitude in the choice of being influential or subscribing to a participative system. The base of the pyramid is equivalent to level 0 and the apex to level 100. A person situated at level 0 is totally at the mercy of the vicissitudes of life and takes no responsibility. In contrast, a person at level 100 believes that there is nothing on this earth which they can’t influence and fully assumes their responsibilities. But note, this represents an attitude which affects everyday choices. Swedes, on average, place themselves at level 25 on this scale.

“Crowd Equity Funding” is therefore based on a change in attitudes which leads citizens towards responsibility and commitment to local economic activity, to an awareness of local resources, to supporting enterprise and investing in projects in which they believe. It is therefore the public which, in effect, make choices affecting the development of its region, through its investment choices. It’s an interesting participative example of sustainable regional development for the future, in which everyone is an adherent, and which rests on the assumption of responsibility on the part of all concerned.



Coopérer
Echanger
Capitaliser
Informer



2.3. Questions/responses and remarks from the floor

“What financial tools should be created to revitalise the local economy?”

We need a regional currency developed in parallel to the euro. To develop an alternative currency is to introduce a real Trojan horse into the current economic system.

Let us also mention the significant advantage of a tool such as internet in bringing increasing opportunities of crowdfunding.

In parallel, it would be appropriate to ensure further developments in agricultural policy.

“Rural development includes too many big entities and few big hands. There aren’t many volunteers to work the land. How are we to restore the love of life and work in the rural sphere?”

Something has to be said about the consequences of a policy without young farmers, and what the future will be like without young farmers: a future made up of industrial farms. Change attitudes, beginning with the young, who currently are not optimistic. A limited result, even if it’s a drop in the ocean, is still positive.

All local initiatives have to organise themselves in order to be taken seriously at the national or European level.

Attitudes have to be changed by focusing on education. Why not put chicken-coops in schools for example?

“How should the young be included?”

You have to use current platforms such as the internet: it’s a key tool!

Another course would be to include the young in the decision-making process: one of the current problems resides in the gap in outlook between those who make the decisions and those who implement or are subject to them, but there’s also a question of geographic distance. This type of functioning has disastrous consequences. The main hope in the face of this problem lies in the fact that the consumer also increasingly demands contact with the local producer. It follows that the future of agriculture is a future in which the producer is in contact with the consumer and the internet is one of the essential tools for achieving this.

“What about land tenancy and measures to be implemented? Are there concrete examples of measures implemented through voluntary guidelines for land tenancy adopted by the United Nations?”

The FAO supports governments which wish to implement these guidelines. Some are critical in the face of these guidelines insofar as they are difficult to put into practice in regimes which suffer from corruption and the phenomenon of land-hoarding, notably in Africa: how are these states to be persuaded to accept these voluntary guidelines?

One of the arguments of *Access to land* is to say that all nations have a representative in the Food Security Commission, and that they have all voted for these voluntary guidelines. As a result, it is a question of making them face their responsibilities in asking them to consider the ways of translating these guidelines into practical measures in the field. The guidelines can therefore be a good means of involving key European institutions, such as the Parliament, in the issues of land tenancy. There is in fact a petition project with Via Campesina which will be presented to the European Parliament to force a debate on land tenancy questions.

“It is untrue to say that young Walloons are no longer interested in agriculture. The opposite is true. Walloon agriculture has been totally abandoned for 2 or 3 generations and the young don’t deserve that we say they’re not interested. They are interested. We still have young people, but landholdings are sold at an astronomic price. We’re told that a land bank would be a solution, but the project has yet to become reality. ”

“Sweden is a pioneer country when it comes to education in local consumption and the implementation of legislative tools and political support such as the Food Nation movement: are there initiatives or good practices which could inspire other countries in Europe?”

The Swedish education system is relatively centralised, but there exists a traditional form of education, consisting of study groups, which can be identified as good practice: these study groups foster the principle of “living well together” and local food. This system allows people to be in contact with the producer and production.

“Would it be possible to work on the creation of an investment fund to create a local currency which could be used to buy land?”

At the global level, the only example we can provide is that of Switzerland (with a volume of several billion euros per year and an existence of over 80 years). The feasibility of such a system is therefore established! It's the concept of a bank using dual currencies which allows that: with a single mortgage, you operate on the basis of both currencies. The Brazilian government is currently financing the launch of 200 dual-currency banks. In Europe we are complete innocents compared to Japan or Brazil: we currently confuse complementary currency with local currency, which can be encouraged at a social level, but which doesn't have the capacity to deal with real economic problems.

“Can crowdfunding be summarised as a transposition of funds normally allocated to social projects, or does crowdfunding consist of new funds which are additional to existing ones for the types of project which have been described?”

People who invest in crowdfunding would not necessarily have invested otherwise: the strong point in this system of financing is that it makes an appeal to people's sense of responsibility. People feel involved when they take this initiative.

Crowdfunding has enabled Terre-de-Lien to raise 33 million euros in 5 years: it's a type of financing/investment which interests people (in particular owing to its novelty) and which allows the raising of considerable funds in a very short time. It is all the more efficient for being based on the internet. However, it's a current trend, which has its limits.

“Crowdfunding to raise capital, land purchase by the community, the creation of local currencies, aren't these all rather feeble citizens' tools compared to the big decisions which are very remote from this democratic base (for example, the free trade agreement currently being negotiated with the USA)? What has to be done to influence political decisions?”

In reality, power-relationships are very unequal and don't leave much room for optimism. The power of greed is immense! But even so, small changes can bring about other more important ones: for instance, the ideas of Terre-en-vue are now being echoed in the corridors of the Ministry, so even a small result therefore draws attention. The important thing is to organise, because if the initiatives don't organise amongst themselves, they lose their impetus and don't get taken seriously in political circles. We have to come together at the national and supra-national level.

“We haven't spoken about the prices of agricultural produce, and it is probably at that point that the influence of the global system, notably through its subsidies, has its greatest effect in oppressing small-scale agricultural production. The prices of food products are downwardly manipulated and include the subsidies. Large-scale agricultural producers operate practically at cost prices. Market prices make it difficult to sustain an agriculture which is closer to people. What can be done?”

Agricultural prices are very low. Agriculture is a permanent means of exchange in global transactions, to gain access to much more profitable sectors of the economy. This has to be changed, but by working from the ground up and hoping that people wake up!

As long as society doesn't adopt a democratic economic market, it will be in danger. Each producer should pay its own costs, whatever the production: by internalising costs, we would achieve a sale price which reflected the production costs (including social and environmental costs etc.). The producer should no longer pass on the costs to future generations. The most important thing is to engage in a real dialogue with those who make the decisions and regulate the global market.



3. The four main themes cutting across four multi-disciplinary approaches

3.1. Support for the rural entrepreneur

3.1.1. Deliberations of the group

Let's take an aspiring rural entrepreneur, a willing candidate in the creation or development of an existing activity in the rural sphere.

As first starting-point, the workshop participants establish the candidate's **key characteristics**: man or woman, he's established in a rural zone. The latter will influence the development of his activity depending on his geographic location, whether more or less remote from urban or inhabited centres. He has chosen to develop his activity in the countryside because he wants to combine work and quality of life. We see him as wishing to undertake his project while remaining faithful to values such as closeness to nature and people, integrity, and a well-judged degree of mobility (reducing his daily journeys into town). He wishes to base his development on local resources. He is ready to apply new models of management to his activity. In certain cases, the aspiring entrepreneur has already led a professional life elsewhere, as an employee, and wishes to develop his skills in the service of his own project. We also see him as self-sufficient, ready to take on all the challenges, and very open to the world.



As second starting-point, our participants put themselves in the shoes of our entrepreneur and identify the **key questions** which he has to confront:

- **SUPPORT FOR INNOVATION** – What support do I qualify for? How can I innovate from within my small company? How do I finance risk, or at least the riskiest aspects of my activity? How do I obtain funding for innovation?
- **COLLABORATIONS** – Is it possible to conduct trials before starting? Under what legal form? How do I find my way between all the bodies which support self-employed people and cope with the administrative complexity?
- **FUNDING** – How do I fund my project? How do I make use of local capital? How will I be perceived by those around me if I launch a crowdfunding scheme? The principle isn't widely known here, is it? How do I convince people, change outlooks?
- **ACCESS TO LAND** – What are the collective means of obtaining land tenure? What forms of public support are available? Is collective land tenure an option or even possible?

Aware of the issues surrounding land tenure and the maintenance of agricultural producers and artisans in rural zones, the group also considers how to protect quality landholdings from speculation and industrial agriculture, how to regulate land-prices.

Illustrated by the initiatives presented below, the **main points for deliberation** identified by the group are:

- a) **With regard to support for innovation:** the ZIM project finances innovation along with its associated risks, puts enterprises and researchers in touch with one another through “pitch” events. It is the administration which tracks the projects directly, and this is considered an advantage. The group points out the necessity of establishing support systems which are flexible and rapid and which avoid the risk of putting off entrepreneurs from initiating an innovative project. The main keys to success are financing, advice, and the establishment of project innovators in a collaborative network involving other countries. The “Elevator Pitch Events” are also interesting: these consist of evening events in which start-up candidates present their projects to others. These are highlight events for networking and the search for collaborative partners.

Support for innovation in Wallonia

In 2011, the Minister in charge of SMEs launched an initiative to harmonise SME policy in Wallonia in the form of a Walloon **Small Business Act (SBA)**, a regional adaptation of the guidelines contained in the “Small Business Act for Europe” dating from 2008. This initiative was launched in close collaboration with social partners and people in the field, and in consultation with SME managers.

The European SBA comprises 10 principles, which are translated into actions to be implemented by the European Commission and its member states. In its official communication, the European Commission called for a more stringent application of the SBA and the appointment of SME Envoys in order to stimulate this.

In concrete terms, 4 points are viewed as vital to reinforcing the instruments for the promotion of SMEs:

- Entrepreneurship
- Internationalisation
- Financing
- Innovation

Since that time, the Walloon government has launched several targeted initiatives every year to strengthen the implementation of the SBA in Wallonia. A case in point is the creation of the Walloon SME parliament. The SME parliament is a context for expression and dialogue between enterprises. Four commissions, each consisting of around fifteen enterprises, will be presided by a Walloon business-owner and will discuss one of the four following topics: entrepreneurship, access to finance, innovation, and internationalisation. Their role will be to discuss proposals made and to identify priority areas.

For further information:

<http://economiewallonie.be/content/small-business-act-en-wallonie#a2H060WoCsfzZrQT.99>

- b) **With regard to inter-enterprise collaboration:** the key elements for success are the widespread promotion of entrepreneurship, information on the business and market opportunities, the opportunity to test one’s activity in an incubator, along with a facilitated access to a resource centre and to personalised sources of advice. Ingredients which we find in the Portuguese CRER project presented below.
- c) **With regard to project financing:** the crowdfunding described by Jörgen Andersson mobilises local capital by using an internet platform. The main advantages of this system are: decision-making power in the hands of the citizens, return on investment, the creation of a network of financed enterprises which develop exchanges of goods and services between them. Moving on to how to assess a project which may be superb but unviable, Jörgen answers: “if those providing the financing are convinced, we go ahead!”. Simple and pragmatic. The key elements to success are: a change in mentality and transparency.
- d) **Concerning access to land :** the Scottish experience describes the necessary conditions for the realisation of a collective project to obtain priority purchase rights over land or buildings for use by the community (on condition of having first obtained the agreement of the owner). The first important step is the constitution of a community of interest: the spontaneous decision of a group to consider itself as a community and the establishment of a legal form for its management and responsibilities. This assumes a commitment by defining the use of the property, by establishing collective security as to the future use of the property in question, by creating a “community company”. The second step is to apply for financing from the “Scottish Land Fund”. They manage the property as a co-operative. The funds collected by the co-operative are re-invested in projects with a social orientation, for example.

3.1.2. The experiences presented

A/ Mobilisation of local capital in the service of community development By Jörgen Andersson, Are Lokalkapital AB, Crowd Equity Funding (Sweden)



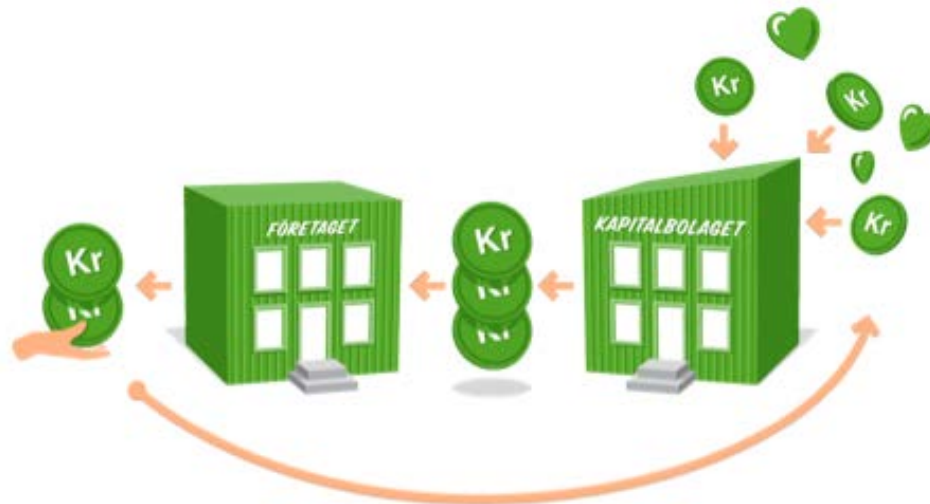
A Crowd Equity Funding platform created for the Are region (northern Sweden). This consists of a model of participative financing using the internet to allow the raising of local capital with the aim of supporting local development and meeting the needs of local entrepreneurs. The project is supported by a collective comprising 36 people living in the Are region.

Contact: Jörgen Andersson - jorgen@fjallbete.nu

Website: <https://www.lokalkapital.se/are/hem>

“We are stakeholders in the local economy. The challenge for each of us is to become a responsible economic stakeholder (savings, consumption, etc.).”

- Operation of the platform



The Åre Local Capital Crowd Equity Funding platform operates as a local investment company.

1. To invest with heart and mind.

Entrepreneurs wishing to see one of their projects supported/financed by the general public (crowd) can present this to the platform. The citizens who operate this platform (mini-crowd) analyse the project, its quality, its viability, and the interest it represents for the community. Following assessment and approval from the platform, every project presented for financing (video, technical details, etc.) is assigned its own presentation space and a counter which displays the capital already invested in this project to date, along with the remaining time before the end of the fund-raising campaign (30-60 days).

The web platform thus allows leaders of an economic project to present their projects, and to any individual wishing to invest in the local economy, conditional on registration of a personal account, to identify potential investments and to support them financially (donations and/or investments). The final decision as to whether or not to support any single project is collective (crowd).

2. Investment in local enterprises

Once the necessary funds have been raised, the platform invests in the project in its own name, as the holder of the funds raised, and delivers a participation certificate to each individual investor. The platform provides investors with information on how each can eventually collaborate with the entrepreneur, as well as the advantages arising from the investment from which the investor can benefit (benefits in kind, services, discounts, etc.). If an aspiring entrepreneur has not succeeded in raising the minimum amount necessary for the setting up of his/her project within the time-limit of the fund-raising campaign, the funds raised are automatically returned to the potential investors.

3. Repayment of the investment

Once the supported enterprise begins to trade, it is able to provide investors with benefits in kind. As soon as it begins to generate profits, the platform earns dividends which will then be used to reimburse the funds investor by individual investors, with the addition of the promised returns. The rate of reimbursement of funds invested by individual investors is set according to the level of profitability of the enterprise concerned. All this is agreed in close consultation with the issuing company and the platform before the investment is announced to potential investors on the web platform. It is the individual investor who bears the risk of bankruptcy of the financed company. The platform's services will be charged to the company in the form of a commission deducted from the raised funds.

The Crowd Equity Funding platform may also, if this clause is included in the contract with the financed company, sell its participation in the issuing company. In this instance, the remainder of the investment is reimbursed and the promised returns are paid to investors anticipatively.

- **First completed project** : financing of a dairy at Åre
- **Success factors** : proximity, social orientation, transparency of the objective
- **Conclusions** : the crowdfunding system allows each person, whether entrepreneur or citizen, to take control of a part of the local economic life: entrepreneurs are not isolated entities, but constituting elements of the local economic system. They become part of an interaction with the stakeholders in the area, make their projects public, and enjoy support in implementing their concepts. Citizen investors benefit from the responsible use of their capital.
- **Link to online documentation** :
<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/lokalkapital.aspx>

B/ Innovation – Public programme for financing innovative entrepreneurial projects By Felix Richter, AiF Projekt GmbH (Germany)



Central Innovation Programme for SMEs (Zentrales Innovationsprogramm Mittelstand - ZIM)
German (federal) public programme for financing innovative entrepreneurial projects. This programme is dedicated to companies and research establishments linked to companies. Its aim is to support enterprises in their efforts to undertake research and to innovate in order to develop new products, processes, and services.

Links to the website: <http://www.zim-bmwi.de>

“A support programme for innovation should not look for excellence at all costs but should above all be a service to companies and address their real needs”

- The **ZIM programme** implemented by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy has two main elements:
 - A first element, (ZIM-SOLO), dedicated to supporting R & D projects undertaken by a single enterprise (“individual projects”), stresses the development innovative products, processes and techniques, and services, without restriction on specific technologies or fields of activity.
 - A second element (ZIM-KOOP) is dedicated to collaborative projects and the networking of companies by supporting the development of, and strengthening enterprises’ capacity for internal innovation.
 - The current ZIM programme is the result of successive developments in the Research Co-operation for SMEs (FOKO) programme launched in 1993 by the Federal Ministry for Science and Education. It has been operating in its current form since 2008 and should end in 2014. Amount spent until the present time: 1,937 million euros.

- Key characteristics of the programme:
 - project and research financing within SMEs;
 - oriented towards the needs of SMEs;
 - open to all technologies in all fields;
 - allows direct applications and provides for their fast-lane treatment;
 - equipped to provide rapid approval;
 - allows multiple grant applications for precise financing requirements;
 - allows multiple applications to be submitted in parallel.



- Requirements for applicant projects:
 - should concern new products, processes or services, which are significantly better than existing ones;
 - should be oriented towards the international state of the art and involve a significant technical risk;
 - should enter a new technological field or a new combination of existing technologies;
 - cannot be realised, or without significant delay, without financing;
 - should represent market opportunities and new employment.

- Eligible costs :
 - Direct staff costs. Base: gross salaries, max. 80,000 € per person per year
 - Contracts with third parties: up to 25% of direct personnel costs
 - Miscellaneous costs: tied to direct personnel costs:
 - for enterprises, up to 100% (up to 10 employees: 90%)
 - for research bodies, up to 75%

- Activities supported by the programme :
 - Individual projects:
 - Financial support for individual R&D projects within an enterprise (EP)
 - Financial support of an enterprise for support and consultancy in innovation (DL)
 - Collaborative and networking projects:
 - Financing of collaborative R&D projects between at least two enterprises (KU)
 - Financing of collaborative R&D projects between at least one enterprise and a research body (KF)
 - Financing of multi-disciplinary collaborative R&D projects (technological fields) between at least four enterprises and two research bodies (VP)
 - Company R&D projects involving the attribution of an R&D contract to a research partner (KA)
 - Financial support for several companies for support and consultancy in innovation (DL)

- Co-financing rates

	EP	KA ⁴	KU ⁴	KF ^{2,4} VP ^{2,4}
Small companies¹				
Western Germany	40 %	40 %	45 %	45 %
New Federal States and Berlin	45 %	45 %	50 %	50 %
Medium-sized companies¹				
Western Germany	35 %	35 %	40 %	40 %
New Federal States and Berlin	45 % ³ (35 %)	45 % ³ (35 %)	45 %	45 %
Other medium-sized companies with up to 500 employees				
Western Germany	25 %	25 %	30 %	30 %
New Federal States and Berlin	25 %	25 %	35 %	35 %
Research institutes				
Nation-wide				100 % ² (90 %)

Admissible costs for financing are limited to 350,000 € for each enterprise
Financing is limited to 175,000 € for research bodies.

1. Small enterprises : < 50 employees – annual turnover < 10 million €

Medium-sized enterprises: < 250 employees – annual turnover < 50 million €

2. Supplementary finance for collaborative projects is awarded to companies exclusively for KF and VP projects if the research body covers 10% of the costs of the project from their own revenues, in compliance with the community framework for state support for research, development and innovation. If companies require supplementary finance for collaborative projects, the research body receives 100% of the co-financing rate, otherwise, 90%.

3. This co-financing rate is guaranteed only if the company can prove that it provides industrial research services.

4. For collaborative R & D projects conducted by companies working with foreign partners, the co-financing rate may be increased by 5% owing to the higher transaction costs.

- Assessment of the programme initiated in 2008:

- Every € invested in the programme generates 12 € turnover in the financed companies.
- Per project, 5 jobs are created and 10 are saved.
- More than 70% of applications received finance.
- More than 11,000 enterprises have collaborated with over 1,400 research bodies.
- Characteristics of programme users: SME.
- Option to work with partners abroad.

- Success factors :

- The programme is “user-friendly”: simple and clear administrative rules for enterprises. Light regulation.
- The programme is “open”: no restriction on sector, area of activity, or technologies.
- The programme is “fast-lane”: rapid approval (3 months max.) of applications.
- The programme is “dependable”: having sufficient financial means to meet demand – having the means appropriate to its objectives (budget).
- The programme is “flexible”: management of the programme to be able to work with companies to finalise their application.

- The programme is “useful”: oriented towards the needs of SMEs.
 - The programme is known about: website, by reputation throughout a wide number of organisations.
- **Conclusions** : a founding programme for the support of innovation for stakeholders (SMEs) who are the mainstays of the economic fabric.

Link to online documentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/central-innovation-programme-sme-%28zim%29-and-erasme.aspx>

C/ Collaboration: Enterprise creation in the rural sphere - Methodology, results and recommendations of the CRER project, Claudia Silva, ADRIMAG (Portugal)



The CRER project was implemented between 2005-2007 (IC Equal) in northern Portugal (Magic mountains – 7 municipalities: Arouca, Castelo de Paiva, Castro Daire, Cinfães, São Pedro do Sul, Sever do Vouga, Vale de Cambra) with the aim of supporting enterprise creation in the rural sphere according to a tested methodology
 Contact : Cláudia Silva - claudia@adrimag.com.pt
 Website : www.crer.pt & www.facebook.com/crer.pt - info@crer.pt

- Project leader’s identity card : **ADRIMAG Association**, active since 1991 in three key areas of local development:
 - Rural development
 - Adult training and education
 - Enterprise creation and support for entrepreneurship
- Key aims of the **CRER project** :
 - Identification of opportunities for economic development in the area of activity of ADRIMAG, linked to the region’s resources and potential: tourism, agriculture, and small trades
 - Promotion of projects and initiatives for enterprise creation by providing support, advice, and training to potential entrepreneurs, along with resources and tools which contribute to a greater equality of opportunity between men and women in rural and urban zones
 - Creation of a structure (resource centre) dedicated to promoting enterprise through the concrete testing of business ideas in the rural area, through the adaptation and integration of methodologies and instruments developed abroad.

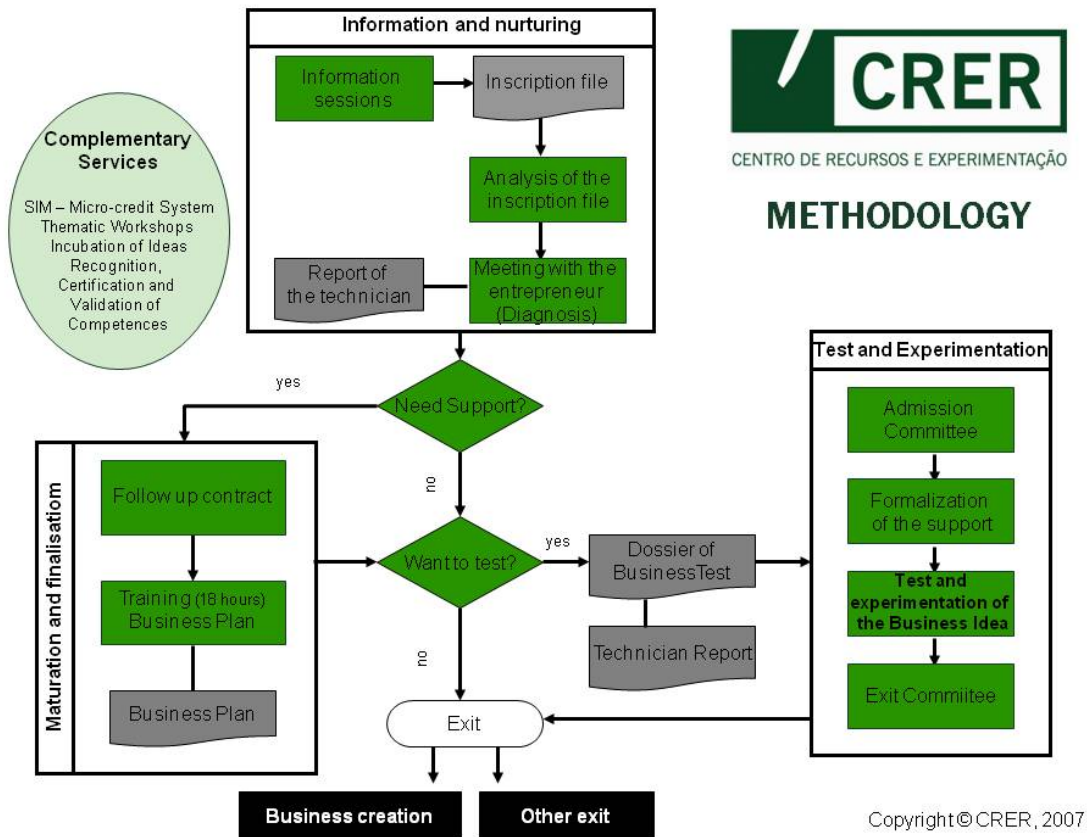
Main results of this project:

Formalisation of a CRER methodology for the support of enterprise creation and the spirit of enterprise. This methodology is the result of a synthesis of various shared methods:

- Incubator Methodology (France)
- Management Boutique Methodology (France)
- Enterprise Incubator Methodology (Belgium)
- Profil Entrepreneurial Skills - Syntra Flanders (Belgium)

Phases of action:

- a) Inform and support enterprise creation and the spirit of enterprise;
- b) Encourage the development and completion of business plans;
- c) Allow the testing and experimentation of business ideas and viability prior to the official creation of the enterprise.



- Case study : creation of a regional newspaper: Discurso Directo
- Dissemination of the method, notably to the Cape Verde
- Success factors: individual support for the project leader and enterprise incubator conditions enabling the project leader to test the project in optimal and secure conditions before its effective launch
- Conclusions: formalised methodology favouring dissemination across rural areas and amongst local development support organisations.
- 1 verbatim : stakeholder's comment, *"Thanks to CRER, I was able to identify the area of influence of my enterprise, the competition, and so on. I understood the stages which enabled me to concretely create my enterprise and my dream became reality! Thanks to CRER, I came to understand enterprise dynamics. I understood that it was possible to achieve success over other enterprises. After all, the future depends just on me!"*

Links to online documentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/creating-business-in-rural-areas.aspx>



D/ Access to land – Land policy in Scotland: Land fund and pre-emption rights of local communities, Stephen Pathirana, Deputy Director, Scottish Government (Scotland)

Land fund and pre-emption rights of local communities

Contact : Community Right to Buy Branch, B1 Spur

Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh EH11 3XD crtb@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Website : <http://home.scotland.gov.uk>

“Community right to buy puts communities in control of local land and land assets which are important to their economic, social and environmental development”.

Project identity card



Initiated after the 1997 elections, Scottish land reform started between 2002 and 2004 with the adoption by the Scottish parliament of six important laws: the abolition of the feudal regime, property rights of agricultural producers, conditions governing access to land and buildings, property rights of rural communities, and property rights of agricultural associations.

A. Scottish land fund

The Scottish land fund provides public support for land purchases by rural stakeholders. The Scottish land fund supports the different constituents of rural communities in the acquisition, management, and development of rural space. The fund (£9 million over the 2012-2016 period) represents a new source of financing for community development in rural Scotland. The aim of the Fund is to help rural communities to become more resilient and sustainable thanks to the ownership and management of their own property heritage.

It offers practical and financial support to allow local populations to work together and to develop their projects and their aspirations, to set up their organisations and realise viable development projects.

B. Community right to buy

Basically, this consists of pre-emption rights allowing Scottish rural communities (local communities and collective interest groups – collective in the broad sense of the term) to buy landholdings.

Thanks to this legislative tool, rural communities (areas with less than 10,000 inhabitants, or 95% of the affected Scottish population) can register their interest in a particular piece of property (the ground and whatever is to be found on it, such as buildings), lakes, streams, rivers, abandoned buildings, etc., and to obtain a pre-emption right allowing the purchase of this property when it is put up for sale. This community right allows the realisation of land purchases in a precise legal framework (administrative procedures and deadlines).

The community right to buy is a two-stage process:

- Registration of a community interest in a specific piece of property/land for a period of 5 years renewable: it is a question of the community identifying the land in which it has an interest, expressing/justifying the reasons for this interest and providing details of the use it intends to make of the property. This interest is registered prior to ministerial approval. A legal structure has to be created in order to carry out successfully the valuation procedure of the registered landholding;
- The right to buy itself: This second stage begins when the owner announces that the registered property/land is to be put on the market. It is the opportunity for the community to purchase it. In the document which is part of the procedure, the community provides details of its intentions for the property to be acquired, and provides for the commitment of the community.

Underlying principles of the Scottish land fund:

- The “Community right to buy” recognises that land is a major asset for rural communities and that access to this can have a significant impact on these communities.
- The key objective of land reform is to remove the obstacles to land ownership and to the sustainable development of rural communities which depend on it.
- The “Community right to buy” is an instrument which can be used to guarantee the purchase of land in the community interest (public interest principle).

Concrete achievements - statistics

When the bill was voted by the Scottish parliament, 25 applications for registration were expected in the first year. The number of properties registered went well beyond these forecasts. Up to the present time, 202 community organisations have been created, 164 expressions of interest in property have been recorded, and 110 have been approved at the ministerial level. 16 have already given rise to the effective purchase of the property in question.

The range of projects involved illustrates the scale of social, economic, and environmental sustainability, or else a combination of these, as foreseen by the legislators:

- Crossgates, Fife – purchase of the "Taft" wood in May 2005. The land has been redeveloped for recreational and leisure activities.
- Assynt, Sutherland – property purchased in June 2005, for the purpose of improvement and biodiversity.
- Silverburn, Midlothian – purchase of an abandoned water reservoir, property of Scottish Water in October 2005. Converted into a community centre.
- Neilston, Renfrewshire – purchase of a Bank of Scotland building in November 2006 to create accommodation and offices.
- Comrie, Perthshire - acquisition of a former prisoner of war camp in 2007, to create a business accommodation centre, the creation of allotments and recreational areas.
- Benbecula – purchase of landholdings in March 2010 for the creation of sports and leisure areas.
- Bute, Argyll and Bute, purchase of a plot in the forest of Rhudodach for recreational purposes.
- Camuscross, Isle of Skye - purchase of an abandoned Scottish Water reservoir for the purpose of a hydro-electric project.
- Catrine, Ayrshire - purchase of an abandoned chapel in June 2011 for the creation of a community and exhibition centre.
- Machrihanish, Argyll and Bute – purchase of a former airbase in May 2011 for business accommodation, the creation of an airport, and community developments.
- Coigach, Rossshire - Purchase of a former « smoking chamber » for a variety of uses: business accommodation and workshop areas.
- Covesea, Lossiemouth - Purchase of a lighthouse for the creation of a platform dedicated to heritage conservation and local history.
- Isle of Jura – Purchase of the island's village store - Jura Stores – in order to guarantee the presence of a store on the island capable of providing necessary services to the community.

Success factors: involvement of communities, legal framework, financial support with the help of the land fund, etc.

Conclusions: The "Community right to buy" associated with the land fund constitutes a powerful land management instrument in the service of rural communities. It allows the community to become involved in the use of properties and ensures that local inhabitants are not excluded from decisions affecting their lives (Community Empowerment). Several positive aspects result from it: increased confidence in the community and its means of action, strengthening of community bonds, improvement of skills and know-how, self-empowerment, etc. In a decentralised way, communities are partners in decision-making on property and its use.



Link to online documentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/land-policy-in-scotland.aspx>

E/ Trend observatory (Creative Wallonia) - Prospection tracking for enterprises, universities and Walloon economic stakeholders, Oxana Rogozina, AWEX



The Trend Observatory is a tracking instrument provided to Walloon economic stakeholders in the framework of the “Creative Wallonia”, programme-framework created in the contexts of the “Contrats d’Avenir” and “plans Marshall” to support creativity in Wallonia. Its aim is to track/research trends abroad to strengthen competitiveness and to stimulate innovation within Walloon enterprises.

Contact : Oxana Rogozina - o.rogozina@awex.be

“Innovate... always innovate!”



- **How?** Owing to:
 - The use of the international network of the Agence Wallonne aux Exportations et à l’Investissement (AWEX) and the Wallonie Bruxelles International (WBI), people in positions covering 100 countries to represent the interests of Wallonia abroad;
 - The agence wallonne des télécommunications (AWT) ;
 - The EASYNOVE network, Walloon technological network, co-ordinated by the Agence de Stimulation Technologique (AST).

And thanks to numerous collaborations with universities abroad.

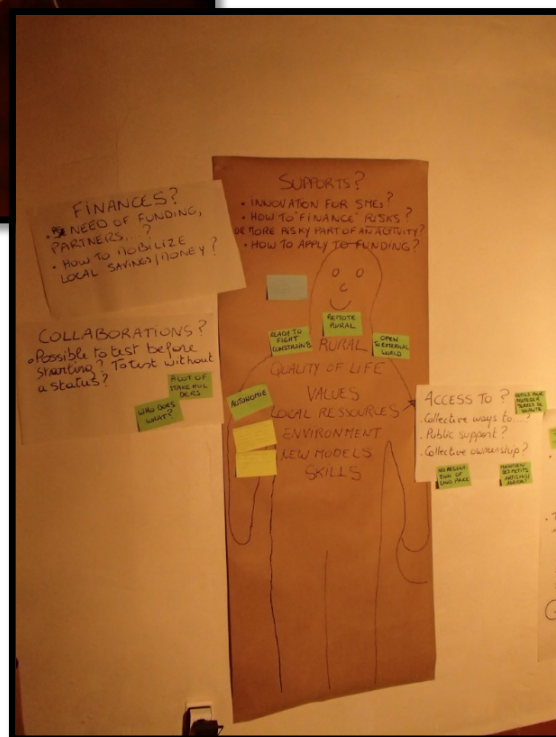
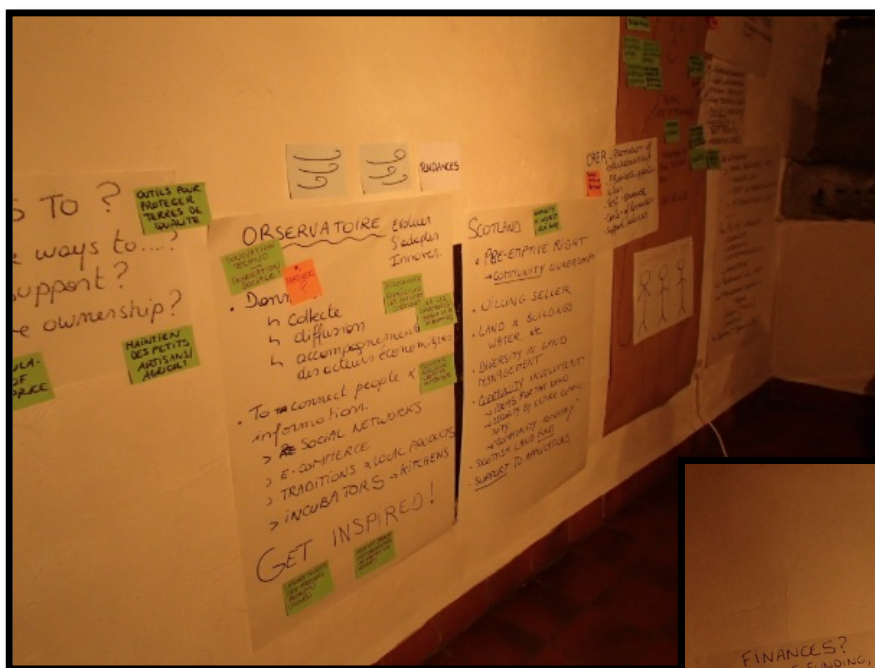
- **Example of a project undertaken by the Observatory in the field of digital archiving :**
 - Identification of the topic to be worked on (in this instance with the TWIST Cluster)
 - Stock-take in Wallonia: preoccupations of the economic stakeholders in the field concerned, technologies to be used, etc.
 - Transmission of the file to Walloon attachés abroad for its research of the topic where they are based => commercial and technological tracking undertaken abroad by Walloon attachés: identification of commercial openings and partnerships and/or potential competitors, etc.
 - Dissemination of the tracking file to the Walloon stakeholders
 - Analysis and development of the information gathered
 - Verification of the technological orientations developed in Belgium around this topic. Are they in step with the global trends, and the needs of the potential client base?

The monitoring developed by the Observatory is a continuous informational process, largely iterative, aimed at an active watch of the technological, commercial, and economic environment, etc. Its objective is to observe, to identify, to decode, to anticipate. It provides for the development, the adaptation of Walloon enterprises and the sharing of knowledge.

Courses of action/support for innovation for rural enterprises :

- Digital reality=> creation of networks, creation of knowledge and expertise-sharing communities, e-commerce via @wt et technofuturTIC
 - Support for local consumption and for traditions : “All in” packages for the promotion of local activity, reference centre for short-chain distribution (Agence de Stimulation Economique)
 - Incubators and enterprise accelerators, entrepreneurship grants, technological cheques
 - Circular economy
- **Conclusions** : the trend observatory established in the framework of Creative Wallonia can undertake active tracking of the technological, commercial, and economic environment in various specific fields of activity. It allows the networking of stakeholders and promotes their adaptation to current and future trends.

Link to online documentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/observatoire-des-tendances-%28creative-wallonia%29.aspx>



3.2. Instruments of public support

3.2.1. The experiences presented

A/ Rural'INOV (Portugal)



The global objective of the RUR@L INOV - Innovation project in rural zones is to study innovation as it is developed and implemented by different types of organisations in Portuguese rural areas. The project aims to identify and describe the profile of innovating bodies and other stakeholders, along with the environment which favours them.

E-mail: ruralinov.utad@gmail.com

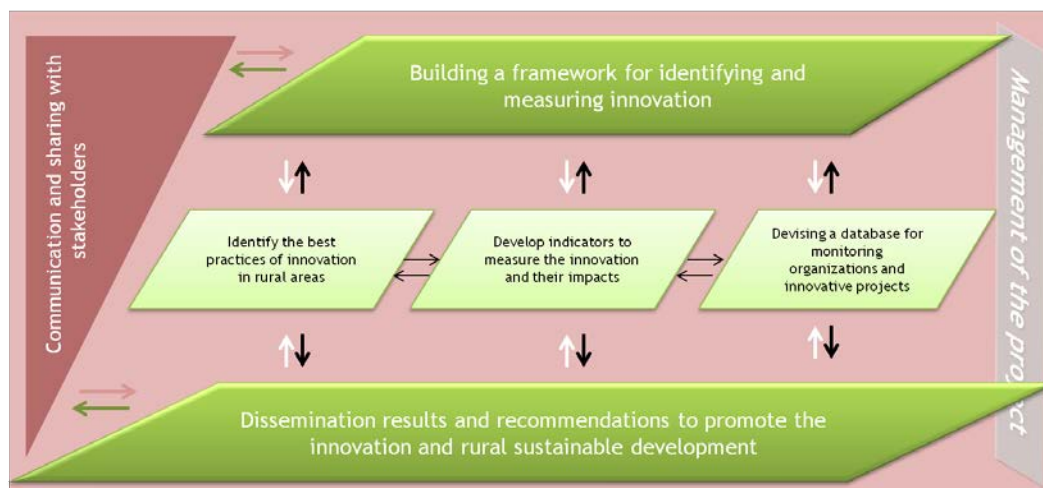
Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/inovaremmeiorural/>

The specific aims of RUR@L projet INOV are:

- to contribute to the development of a flexible analytical framework which allows the identification and measurement of effectiveness of small-scale, non-technological innovation;
- to characterise the innovation process and the profile of the innovators in Portuguese rural zones;
- to identify the key variables which improve or obstruct the innovation process;
- to develop a system of indicators to assess innovation and its effects, both internal and external (for organisations).

RUR@L INOV is co-ordinated by UTAD (University of Tras-os-Montes e Alto Douro) and is being developed in partnership with the DGMARC (Direção-Geral de Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural). The project is being financed by the Portuguese national rural network (PRRN).

The methodological approach combines qualitative and quantitative techniques. It is based on discussion groups, workshop training, case studies and questionnaires. The project uses an interdisciplinary approach and takes in the participation of stakeholders in innovation in order to identify their vision and expectations.



Project duration : December 2011 - December 2013

Some characteristics of innovation in Portuguese rural zones:

- A significant proportion of innovation in Portuguese rural zones is invisible. It currently escapes the instruments available to identify and foster innovation, not least because its application is small-scale and low-tech.
- This hidden innovation is under-valued and ignored by innovation programmes and policies.
- The insufficiency or absence of support for innovation is connected to the diversity and specificity of innovating organisations and their products (they are difficult to fit into the pattern of available instruments on the basis of the criteria of company size, sector, or geography).
- Innovation is a strategy and/or a tool for overcoming difficulties (the market) and resolving problems.
- Its efficiency is especially linked to the level of qualification, experience, research capacity, in drawing on and integrating different types of knowledge.

Some lessons drawn from the project:

- 1) Education favouring autonomous learning is fundamental to an innovative community
- 2) The capacity to learn is a key factor in mobilising and integrating this knowledge
- 3) An innovative culture implies a new administrative culture:
 - With an aptitude for identifying an innovative project/business
 - For developing a flexible framework to assess and support original and unconventional projects/businesses
 - For the generation of environments which encourage creativity (creation of activities and products)
- 4) The design of flexible systems of support for creativity:
 - To ensure financing for innovation (risk-capital)
 - Through networking (allowing diversity and originality)
 - By reinforcing organisational innovation (new business models)
- 5) The need to create inclusive instruments for the support of innovation capable of:
 - identifying hidden models of innovation
 - promoting innovation in successive increments
 - supporting small-scale and low-tech innovation
- 6) The need to create intelligent instruments for the support of innovation capable of:
 - achieving effects throughout the stages of production and the dissemination of innovative skills
 - achieving effects across the creation and development of areas of opportunity for complementary/new projects/businesses
 - achieving effects on the region, the image of the community, and one's self-esteem

Link to online documentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/innovators-in-portuguese-rural-areas-lessons-on-how-to-enhance-innovation.aspx>

B/ Eco-construction cluster



The cluster is a group of businesses centred on eco-construction (construction which respects the environment and that of future generations, while offering occupants a maximum of comfort). The clusters (8 in Wallonia) have access to cutting-edge technology from all the sectors they cover; they apply a bottom-up approach to the entire range of their activities and strategic orientations; they use a project/market approach and are attentive to appropriate choices of technologies/products/services and market needs; the clusters work

towards the networking of the entirety of the sector; they thereby have the capacity to mobilise SMEs rapidly to meet identified needs and promote a collaborative approach to improve the competitiveness of Walloon stakeholders, and to meet the key challenges of the future.

Identity card

- Carrier: the Eco-construction cluster is a non-profit organisation. It currently comprises 192 members and tens of other entities are applying or aspiring to apply for membership.
- Date: the association was created in 2003.
- Location: the Cluster covers the whole of Wallonia. Its headquarters is located at Rue Henri Lecocq 47, at 5000 Namur. It is supported by the Centre Technologique de l'Université de Namur.
- Co-ordinator: Hervé-Jacques POSKIN, tel: 081/82 63 01, Mobile: 0476 299 496, email: info@ecoconstruction.be. Website: <http://clusters.wallonie.be/ecoconstruction-en/>

Main activities

There are 8 recognised clusters in Wallonia ensuring the networking of their members (over 800 members of which 80% are companies). The innovation aspect is important as in 2012, close to 40% of the members of clusters were involved in innovative and collaborative projects.

One of the roles of clusters is to create every variety of partnership, notably technological (R&D, PIT, etc.), and to play a key role in Wallonia in the area of links between R&D (universities, R&D centres, etc.) and the market.

With this aim, clusters contribute to the creation of R&D projects for their members and offer support in the transition from the innovative prototype stage to that of commercial production and marketing (pilot projects, demonstrators, etc.).

The activities of clusters typically involve those of network co-ordinators: conferences, seminars, symposia; directories and websites; awareness-raising/training courses; study trips/visits/delegation hosting; work groups; "b to b" networking - trade fair representation; technology tracking.

Clusters bring the following advantages:

At the economic level: the rapid preparation of complete offers by combining the skills of each of the members.

At the technical level: development of the knowledge of the other members and their activities, from which time-saving benefits in the field, with more complete responses in compliance with best practices; improvement of skills; availability of up-to-date technical information; support for innovation and collaboration.

At the communication level: advantages of enhanced visibility through joint-initiatives (directories, trade fairs, promotional campaigns in the press, etc.).

Success factors

Members of the Cluster commit themselves to adhering to the different principles of eco-construction by signing a charter. This commitment replaces a certificate as members ensure collective compliance with the charter. Additionally, membership of the Cluster goes through a process of peer-recognition: recommendation prior to admission (application), appraisal period (aspirants) before becoming a full member. Relationships built up through personal acquaintance are thus fundamental.

The Cluster allows a candidate builder to be taken under the wing of a circle of professionals who are accustomed to working together and demonstrate the consistency of his/her sustainable project.

In addition, we note considerable motivation on the part of members in that they feel less isolated within their sector.

Conclusions

The Eco-construction cluster is an essential stakeholder in sustainable development and operates on the basis of 3 fundamental principles, the fruit of prolonged consideration based on social factors (local employment), health, urban planning and mobility, eco-materials and short-chain distribution, and naturally, economic viability.



C/ Flemish public land bank By Hendrik Vermeulen, VLM

The development of Flanders, with 28% of its land-area already built up, poses a series of questions and most significantly reveals economic and environmental challenges such as: preservation of biodiversity and the development of Natura 2000 zones, climate change and the struggle against flooding, along with the position of Flanders as a European logistical centre with port access. In this context, the key challenge is to develop a sustainable use of the land, meeting the entire range of needs, from within the current framework of fragmented land-tenure and pressure on the remaining free spaces.

Thanks to the development of the Flemish land bank, two instruments are now producing concrete results: the Local land bank, and the Financing fund.



Main activities

A decree issued in 2006 (16th of June) defines the functions of the Flemish land bank: to manage land tenure mobility, the establishment of an exchange programme for agricultural producers, centralisation of supply and demand for land, and pre-emption rights.

The two instruments:

- The Local land bank: buys land in order to re-allocate it to owners and users as an alternative to expropriation. The reallocation is undertaken in the case of projects involving the creation of natural zones, hydrological management, or new infrastructures.
 - Local bank “The Blankaart”: creation of conservation areas under the Habitats directive (PPT illustration page 9 slide 2)
 - SIGMA Local bank: creation of flood basins (PPT illustration page 11 slide 1)
 - A11 Local bank: creation of a missing link between two ports (PPT illustration page 13 slide 1)

Today, there are 31 local land banks based on six different themes: environmental compensation, the creation of natural zones, land-use planning, hydrological management, new infrastructures, industrial development, etc.). 19 partners are involved in the project: regional and provincial administrations, associations, etc. A budget of 13 million euros per year, totally financed by the project partners, is allocated.

- The Financing fund: this allows land to be purchased pro-actively. It totals 25 million euros. Its use today is focused on areas close to Brussels, where the pressures and momentum of change are considerable.



Conclusions

Resistance to expropriation is strong. The Land bank offers alternative solutions which are widely called-for. In many cases, free space in Flanders is a battlefield between a broad range of interests. There are a great number of instances of conflict. Most of these have a direct effect on agricultural producers. The Land bank allows the preservation of an active agriculture and viable farming units.

The current need would be to have greater control over the effects of high land prices. There is a great deal of work to be done on this.

Link to online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/land-banking-in-flanders.aspx>

D/ land policy in Wallonia

By Eric Méganck, 1st attaché, Direction de l'Aménagement Foncier Rural, Service Public de Wallonie, DG03

Land is an issue involving a wide range of stakeholders: regional, provincial, and communal public institutions, investors, entrepreneurs, agricultural producers, market gardeners, etc. Tools devised to facilitate land management have been developed in Wallonia, but currently suffer from poor co-ordination and are little-used. Today, with the adoption of the Walloon Code for agriculture, land policy is developing. A Walloon land bank is in the process of being created.

Website: <http://environnement.wallonie.be/administration/drce.htm>



*«Inaction is very costly to the community and contributes to the degradation of an increasingly scarce resource: land».
“Land policy should be made to serve strategic land-use”.*

- Project Leader: SPW – DG03 - Direction de l'aménagement foncier rural (Dafor)
- Project duration: /implementation end-2014 - early 2015
- Location: Wallonia: zone subject to strong land pressure and potentially subject to land planning
- Project value: /
- Contacts : Eric Meganck - eric.meganck@spw.wallonie.be - 065/40 01 25

Main activities

The Dafor is a privileged stakeholder in the planning of agricultural and rural land in Wallonia. Its main objectives involve multifunctional land-use planning of the agricultural space (plots, mobility, rural development, water resources, ecological fabric, etc.), the exercise of pre-emption rights for the improvement of agrarian structures, management of the regional Financing Fund and subsidies, of technical support and advice to local public bodies in the creation of rural roadways, and of measures against erosion. It consists of 60 officials distributed across 4 sites in Wallonia: the Province of Hainaut and Brabant Wallon, the Province of Liège, the Province of Namur, of Luxembourg, and eastern Brabant Wallon, and the central administration (Jambes).

In the support of its tasks, the Dafor has access to a range of regional instruments in respect of:

- Land planning: general tools or tools associated with defined responsibilities – urban regeneration, sites for redevelopment, reparcelling, reappportionment, pre-emption;
- Agriculture: land reparcelling, pre-emption rights, agricultural leases, notification of construction projects in agricultural zones, planning compensations, rural development, etc.);
- Conservation of natural zones: pre-emption rights;
- Communes: Communal land-use planning (PCA), urban planning regulations, structural drawings, land authorities, taxes on unbuilt and unoccupied buildings;
- Taxation: cadastral revenue, property withholding taxes, capture of added-value, etc.;
- Common instruments: expropriation, leasing, surface rights.



Three types of land management initiative are the most commonly used in the context of rural zones, and notably in the agricultural sector: pre-emption rights, reparcelling of rural properties, and the development of economic activities.

Pre-emption rights allow the administration to take the place of a buyer. The legal objective is to allow the improvement of agrarian structures in areas appropriate for reparcelling. But this instrument may also be used to facilitate the transfer of farms and the establishment of young agricultural producers, to provide compensation for expropriations, to allow rural planning and the conservation of sites in the rural environment, to mitigate the effects of CAP reform and its provisions regarding land-use, etc. At the present time, nearly a hundred communes in Wallonia are subject to pre-emption rights.

Legislation on the reparcelling of land-holdings is currently under review. This instrument notably allows initiatives to be taken in the area of the mobility of land tenure: the acquisition of land for the enlargement and development of natural zones, the creation of wildlife corridors, the creation or extension of temporary immersion zones, the provision of land for the development of community projects, etc.

In respect of the development of economic activities, the initiatives translate specifically into a redistribution of public lands according to socio-economic criteria: type of agriculture, product quality differentiation, area of cultivation, ties to land, specific development projects, employment creation, etc. The acquisition of 25 hectares by the Dafor in the commune of les Bons Villers is an interesting example of support for development and of the participation of recognised enterprises in the area of the social economy (provision V5b 6.3 of Plan Marshall 2.vert). This project was completed in collaboration with the commune, the GAL, the FRW, Crédal, Terre en Vue, etc.). The Dafor and the Reparcelling Committee provide follow-up support to the commune in the development of the site and the management of land-holdings.

Today, with the creation of a Walloon Code for agriculture, land-use policies are undergoing development:

- land reparcelling is referred to as rural land-planning;
- the objective is mainly agricultural, but along with greening and greater possibilities for action; the fight against erosion, measures to support biodiversity, to support rural development, etc.
- simpler and more rapid procedures;
- elimination of the objective of continuous plots;
- environmental assessment is becoming part of plans and programmes, and increasingly in projects;
- a reduction in the number of public surveys, and their replacement with consultations with the stakeholders involved;
- simplified appeal procedures and improved legal safeguards (individual decisions);
- 2% of the total mass can be sampled for measures in the general interest;
- faster and simpler amicably agreed planning procedures, including those for forest land-holdings;
- planning procedures for works in the public interest, and no longer just subsequent to major infrastructural works.

The creation of a land bank for Wallonia has been the subject of debate.

The Dafor possesses certain instruments which would allow it to assume the role of a public bank: pre-emption rights in areas appropriate for reparcelling, the management of around 1,000 hectares in Wallonia, and the management of funds for rural land policy amounting to 4.4m euros (A.B. 01.02). However, the creation of a land observatory is a pre-requisite to any decision.

This land bank would allow to fight against land speculation to meet the current challenges in terms of access to land: the establishment of young agricultural producers, the transfer of farms, the development of sustainable agriculture and short-chain distribution, exchanges in the event of expropriation, of Natura 2000 zones, facilitation of sales of land-holdings by the owner, etc. A public land bank would also bring about greater efficiency in registration tax collection, and in the creation of equity by banks (farm leases, rentals, outstanding balances, profits from sales).

The land-holdings which would be entrusted to it would first and foremost be properties of the Service public de Wallonie (properties acquired through pre-emption rights, the Région Wallonne public domain, direct purchase offers, excess holdings), and then, on a voluntary basis, land-holdings belonging to communes and the CPAS (Public Centre for Social Welfare), excess holdings of the SNCB (Belgian railways), properties of the Fabriques d'églises et Evêchés or properties belonging to other moral entities: water producers, the Roi Baudouin Foundation, the commission provinciale des Bourses d'études, Facultés Notre Dame de la Paix, etc.

The creation of this public land bank is a considerable challenge which the Dafor intends to assume step by step :

- To draw up an inventory and list the characteristics of regional lands, notably in terms of management. A detailed mapping of public lands will allow the creation of an inventory of existing lands;
- To identify areas in which pressure for land justifies pre-emption rights;
- To draft the Decree of the Walloon government organising the operation of the land bank;
- To create an online platform for pre-emption rights;
- To create an "land bank" internet website as a market-place for supply and demand;
- To determine and adjust attribution criteria;
- To define the composition of the selection Committee;
- To specialise in land leasing and to revise the legislation governing this;
- To implement the necessary procedures, instructions, management contracts etc.;
- To undertake vigorous management of public and private lands;
- To communicate the services and opportunities offered by the land bank.

Other initiatives with regard to land are being developed in parallel. Notably, annual agreements affecting environmental constraints or those of agricultural practice are not covered by land leases. It is now possible to have recourse to surveyors, architects, etc., for property valuations, and to the services of notaries for sales. If the objectives of the agricultural code are observed, sales no longer necessarily need to be restricted to the highest bidder. In a general way, land transactions will be considered in synergy with rural land-use planning.

Success factors

- The land bank will have to communicate effectively to gain the trust of the sector and of land-owners.
- The purely agricultural objectives will rapidly have been achieved.
- There is a need for a specific administration in charge of developing and implementing a land use policy.
- This administration would have to cover a range of sectors rather than any specific administrative category.
- To place this administration within the DGO3 is a source of potential conflict with the other DGOs (operational directorate-generals), for example, local administrative bodies, regional land planning, roads and waterways.
- A system for arbitrating responsibilities for rural spaces should be possible.

Conclusions

The land-holding situation in rural spaces requires a re-adjustment of current land policies. The decision-makers and stakeholders in land use are setting themselves new targets and implementing new, more efficient and co-ordinated management tools. From being initially focused on agricultural lands, land use policies now aim to formulate integrated strategies and synergies in the planning of rural spaces. For this reason, Wallonia aims to equip itself with a public body, such as a land bank, whose objective will be the acquisition and management of properties in the public domain such as can be observed in Flanders or in France with the SAFER. The Dafor, in particular, is the structure on which the Walloon government can rely to implement a land policy in support of access to land.

Link to the online presentation :

<http://reseau-pwdr.be/présentation/accès-à-la-terre-et-problématique-du-foncier.aspx>

And presentation 4 of Day 2 about DAFOR

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/dessins-ensemble-lespace-rural.aspx>

3.3. Collaborative and networking instruments

3.3.1. Deliberations of the group

Whether in the framework of financing local projects, of the revitalisation of an economic sector, of the pooling of labour, or of the creation of producer alliances, the experiences which have been presented reveal the importance of networking and collaboration in the development of innovative entrepreneurial projects, which address the need to find new strengths in an economic context in constant change.

These new forms of organisation and operation do not amount to a break with traditional economic models, but constitute a development which contributes to the sustainability and durability of activities in the rural sphere. They favour in the first instance the creation of synergies within the sector and region, of common strategies to equip these stakeholders with a greater scope for action in their area, of an improved visibility with regard to their partners and beneficiaries, of more diversified and complementary sources of demand, of a guarantee of access to funding and financial support, etc. The stakeholder network is also a place for encounters, for dialogue, for the sharing of good practices and knowledge, as much on the professional level as the human one. It is a primary tool for anyone wishing either to innovate and to develop mobilising projects involving a large number of stakeholders, or simply to associate and collaborate with others in order to continue in the exercise of their activities and their values.

The implementation and perpetuation of these collaborative systems nevertheless require vigilance in several respects.

The identification of an area, its values and traditions, is a powerful unifying force, and it allows an association, a co-operative, or a network to establish itself in the territory, to obtain recognition as an economic stakeholder in its own right, and to develop global and integrated synergies, and therefore better-adapted projects.

In order to gain recognition, communication and awareness-raising between stakeholders in a collaborative project and with regard to decision-makers, potential partners, and the public, are essential. It is necessary to communicate the project effectively, along with the values that it embodies, to associate it with or to create an image, to demonstrate its added-value in terms of its contribution to the local economy, and to base this on coherent arguments.

The long-term viability of these systems also rests on the creation of a climate of confidence and exchange between all the participants. Transparency and communication are the keys to a favourable development of a collaborative project. Amongst the most important tools in this endeavour is the provision of indicators which are relevant and understandable to all concerned.

The experiences presented have also revealed that collaboration will have a successful outcome if all stakeholders share the same ethical values and/or a well-defined common objective known to all.

Finally, support from an organisation specialised in the co-ordination of collaborative systems and representing the area in question offers the advantage of a neutral third party to co-ordinate, stimulate and facilitate conciliation and mediation between the different stakeholders in the system. These specialised advisors also afford a professional approach to the establishment and operation of collaborations.

These systems bring real support to rural entrepreneurs by providing them with the possibility of joining forces to increase their impact, to mutually support one another, to share and enrich their knowledge, to pool resources, to develop activities and vital projects, to innovate and to become more competitive in a market which is continually becoming more closed, and particularly for a small-scale entrepreneur working alone in a rural area.



3.3.2. The experiences presented

A/ Crédal, a financial tool for sustainable local entrepreneurship

By Isabelle Philippe

Set up in 1984, Crédal is an alternative credit co-operative whose social mission is to promote a more equitable and inclusive society, particularly in the use of money. As a co-operative, Crédal holds deposits placed with it by its co-operators (Credal welcomed its 2013th co-operator in 2013) and lends them to organisations in the social economy (solidarity loans), to entrepreneurs (professional microcredits), to people excluded by banks (personal microcredits), to SMEs founded on sustainable values (Impact +), etc. In order to provide a complete service, Crédal supports and advises its beneficiaries to support project leaders who wish to develop their activity, to provide financial advice, or again, through its specific programme “Affaire de Femmes et Femmes d’Affaires”, to support entrepreneurship by women.

Website: www.credal.be

- Project leader: Crédal
- Project duration: Since 1984
- Location: Based in Louvain-La-Neuve and active in Wallonia
- Project value: 23 million euros deposited by 2000 cooperators
- Contact: credal@credal.be; 010/48.33.50



Main activities

The activities of Crédal can be divided into three main areas: solidarity deposits, credits, and support.

Solidarity deposits

Crédal is above all an alternative credit co-operative which maintains 23 million euros deposited by 2000 co-operators who share their values of ethics and sustainability. In 2012, not less than 872 solidarity loans were granted. Thus, 90% of funds were loaned. Crédal is specific in that customers are automatically partners and each co-operator receives a dividend calculated at between 1.5 and 2%.



Loans for projects having social added-value

Crédal offers a wide range of credits adapted to every situation:

Loans	Microcredit for self-created employment	Professional loans	Impact + loans	Solidarity loans	Personal Microcredit
Beneficiaries	In support of self-created employment	Retail sector, hotels/restaurants/cafés, craft-based trades, services to individuals, fruit and vegetable trade, etc.	SME	Entreprises in the social economy: social integration, adapted employment, socially-oriented employment, production co-operatives, non-profits, etc.	People on low incomes, excluded from the banking system, whose objective is the realisation of a life project or an improvement of their circumstances
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ complete and viable project (accounts), ▪ limited or inadequate access to banking services 	Employment in sustainable development sector -	Positive social impact (sustainable development, fulfilment of a social need, quality guarantee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social relevance of the project ▪ Ability to repay ▪ Good management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low incomes ▪ Exclusion from the banking sector ▪ Fight against indebtedness
Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A microcredit up to a ceiling of 15,000 € ▪ No guarantee required owing to the support of Sowalfin² and the EIF³ ▪ Support for the beneficiary for 2 years 	Amount up to a ceiling of 25,000 € and adapted repayment conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to 200,000 € ▪ Variable rates according to social rating (credibility/durability of the enterprise) ▪ Allows the realisation of co-financing and access to the Fonds Bruxellois de garantie and the EIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to 1 million € ▪ Rates from 4,75% to 6 % ▪ Allows the realisation of co-financing and access to the Fonds Bruxellois de garantie and the EIF 	Consumer credit: 10,000 € max. over 4 years Or in partnership with public bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Brussels Prêt vert (Bruxelles Capitale) ▪ The prêt Bien Vivre chez Soi (Wallonia)

Support for enterprise creation and development

Crédal supports and gives financial advice to any project leader, social economy association or enterprise, to organisations and public bodies, who require an assessment etc., and wish to apply for a Crédal loan. The aim is to assess the impact of the project (durability, ethics, and social commitment) and to provide the beneficiaries with greater autonomy by offering them adapted support: collective workshops, individual orientation meetings, etc.

- Crédal Entreprendre is recognised as a SAACE (Structure d'Accompagnement à l'Auto-Création d'Emploi, an autonomous employment creation support structure)
 - o To extend microcredit activity, the "Affaires de femmes et femmes d'affaires" programme, created in 2005, specifically supports entrepreneurship by women in order to allow a

² The Sowalfin: the Société Wallonne de Financement et de Garantie des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises is a public limited-liability company established by the Walloon government in 2002 in order to facilitate access to finance for enterprises using a range of financial instruments such as bank guarantees, co-financing, investment of own risk capital, etc.

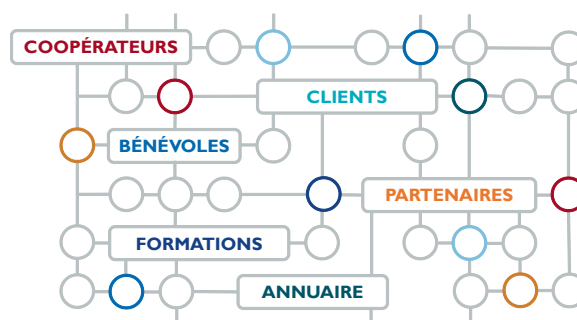
³ The European Investment Fund (EIF): established in 1994 to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), provides risk capital to SMEs, and in particular to new companies and enterprises with a technological orientation. It also provides guarantees to financial institutions (for example, banks) to cover their loans to SMEs.

- specifically female public to try out their entrepreneurial talent, to study the feasibility and profitability of their project, etc.
 - Individual support for self-created employment is aimed at unemployed people who wish to develop their projects: individual meetings, work in groups of entrepreneurs, customised workshops, networked activities with other entrepreneurs, etc.
 - Individual and collective support in enterprise creation for every kind of public
- Crédal also plays a role as an advisory agency (Agence Conseil) for the social economy (on the same basis as Fébécoop, Saw-B and Synéco). This agency addresses itself to associations and enterprises in the social economy or leaders of this type of project (equally for agricultural producers). The support is provided at several stages: at the time of the project launch (assessment of the market, form of incorporation, financial plan), at the time of its development (diagnostic, assessment of the relevance of the developments and solutions envisaged, search for financing), or else with regard to its management (management tools).

Research unit

The Crédal experts operate as part of a research unit which explores new trends, new needs, and novel ways of operating to the benefit of social organisations and local and regional public bodies. The aim for these partners and for Crédal is to develop innovative products: social innovations which create activities and employment, microcredits for sustainable development, community wind turbine farms, Community Land Trust, short-chain distribution, creation of social projects for local communities, etc.

In particular, a Community land trust is a non-profit whose objective is to allow low-income families to become owners of their dwellings by separating ownership of the land from that of the dwelling. By retaining ownership of the land, the CLT allows families to buy exclusively the building, at a considerably lower price. The CLT consists of representatives of the inhabitants, the neighbourhood, and public bodies. If the building is re-sold, a large part of the profit returns to the CLT, which can re-sell the property at an affordable price to another low-income family.



Success factors

- The status of co-operative and the ability to involve a large number of co-operators
- Values of social commitment and ethics which generate support
- The diversity and complementarity of services offered
- Support for a diverse public by means of a flexible product range
- Being at the forefront of changing needs, ways of operating, and innovating!
- A wide network: while the Crédal network is increasingly developing at the local level, it is also present at the European level in the form of a co-operative with partners such as La Nef (France), Fiare (Spain), Cfé (France), hefboom (Flanders), etc.
- Exemplarity: to raise awareness of projects implemented or supported, and to communicate.

Conclusions

Through the activities which it develops and the values it espouses, Crédal is a complete alternative financing tool for entrepreneurs and associations operating in the rural sphere who wish to undertake a sustainable project, who need focused support along with options of access to credit providing the starting-capital for their activities. By supporting sustainable and socially committed projects, Crédal promotes a society which demonstrates more solidarity, which is greener and more resilient, while offering opportunities to all to act more sustainably.

Link to an online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/présentation/credal,-un-outil-financier-au-service-de-l'entrepreneuriat-local-durable.aspx>

B/ An example of a collaborative process: the Pôle d'Excellence Rural Filière Liège (centre of excellence, cork sector)

By Christophe Arrondeau, Director of the GAL Pays Adour Landes Océanes

The cork oak is a native species to Aquitaine which was traditionally cultivated there for many years. While it has tended to disappear since the 1950s (competition from imported materials, colder weather, etc.), the GAL has aimed to offer a new chance to this local and ecological resource by supporting the producers in the cork sector. Having acquired the cork cultivations, these producers consolidated their activities in the form of an association "le Liège Gascon", in order to act as a collective and to promote their know-how. By enlarging their network and becoming an interactive part of the regional economy, the Landes cork sector obtained, in 2011, the Pôle d'Excellence Rural, which enabled it to implement a global development strategy and provide visibility to this local economic sector in the face of competition at the European level.

Website: <http://www.lieliegegascon.org/>



- Project leader: GAL Pays Adour Landes Océanes
- Project duration: Intention to re-launch the local « cork » resource in 2000 ; the Liège Gascon association has been in existence since 2005; the Pôle d'Excellence Rural du Liège Landais has been in existence 2011
- Location: Saint Vincent de Tyrosse, Région Aquitaine, Département des Landes, France
- Project value: 400,000 € to become a Pôle d'Excellence Rural
- Funding from the state, from the LEADER programme, and the participation of local collectivities
- Contact: Lucie Mathieu Jensonnie; +33 (0)5 58 41 82 04 ; lucie@pays-adour-landes-oceanes.com

Main activities

Following the creation of the association "Liège Gascon" in 2005, the need became apparent to become established at the regional level to allow it to broaden its network and to integrate locally. The initiative began by registering the operations of Liège Gascon in the framework of the Charte Forestière Territoriale (regional forestry charter) set up by the Pays Adour Landes Océanes in 2008. This initiative brought about an extension of the network and the creation of synergies with other territorial interests, allowing in this manner a certain level of permanence. In 2011, the Liège Gascon obtained the Pôle d'Excellence Rural seal of quality by responding to an invitation from the DATAR to submit projects. This seal of quality provides both a framework for collaborative work and visibility to the sector. A 12-point programme was undertaken in common by enterprises:

Regional and territorial economic tracking: re-establish ties between local training tools and cork sector producers to develop predictive management of employment and skills, to create a forum for co-ordination and exchange to avoid the sector becoming confined to the region.

Research/Development: modernisation of the local production system. The system for processing Landes cork is small-scale. The enterprises face competition from the very competitive Portuguese industry. Several markets have to be prioritised: agglomerated cork, products made from natural cork, cork residues, and recycled cork.

Creation of a cork oak discovery walk: in order to highlight the ecosystem and the sector. This initiative coincides with the aims of tourist development which is central to LEADER strategy. In addition to the touristic and communication objectives, this discovery walk can be used as a support for training courses.

Implementation of a communication support for the general public: to highlight the cork sector by pointing out its scenic and environmental advantages, its character, its unique identity and the richness of its past, and in this manner to improve its image and show that the sector is still alive.

Organisation of a conference on the future of the cork sector in France: results obtained thanks to the Pôle d'Excellence Rurale resource and appraisal, providing information on the state of the sector (the resource and the industry) in France, a comparison of the activities of the regions concerned (Languedoc Roussillon, Midi Pyrénées, Aquitaine and Corsica), deepening of knowledge and a consideration of the tools to be developed for the sector, issues facing the industry across the world (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Morocco, and Algeria) to take part in discussions of the European network.

The planting of cork oak: an inventory of the resource undertaken in 2005 revealed the risk of a rarification of the resource "cork oak – *Quercus suber*", threatened by clearcutting carried out in favour of maritime pine cultivation and by urbanisation. Natural regeneration is sufficient to allow renewal of the resource, and acorn-harvesting is therefore undertaken.

Creation of continuous training in cork harvesting: the scarcity of labour in this sector requires the creation of courses allowing entrepreneurs to acquire the necessary know-how and practical skills, and to anticipate the labour requirements for the cultivation of trees should these arise.

Mechanisation of production: the low profitability and conflicts of use associated with cork harvesting (schedules, tourist seasons - 20,000,000 overnight stays, demographic growth) are obstacles to the manual production of cork oak. Mechanisation of cork harvesting would bring about a resolution of the conflicts of use (without scheduling constraints), would reduce the burden of work, would improve productivity and reduce the risks of tree damage. A study of mechanisation and some tests will be undertaken before making a potential investment.

Information campaign targeting forest owners: a great number of forest owners are unaware that the cork sector is still active in the region. As a stakeholder of first rank, it is vital to inform them and to raise awareness of the benefits of cork oak for the soil, the productivity of maritime pine, as well as for biodiversity, the landscape and heritage.

Awareness-raising campaign for entrepreneurs in forestry: the majority of cork oaks are found in forest environments, interspersed with maritime pines. The intensive cultivation methods of the latter are often undertaken to the detriment of the cork oak which, in addition, is neglected in first-line replanting operations. Awareness-raising amongst operational contractors aims to change cultivation practices and to protect the resource.

Cork oak and the urban context: the pronounced demographic growth in the region is bringing about a transformation of the character of the habitat and the appearance of built-up areas. An initiative combining education and promotion of the cork oak aimed at the communes should bring about a re-introduction of this variety in the landscape along with its appreciation.

Co-operation: the aim is to establish a genuine co-operation between the Marensin (Landes) and the Néracais (Lot et Garonne) regions, being the two forest zones in Aquitaine which historically were host to the cork oak and to a productive sector. In the framework of the European Rural Network, or again, the GRUNDTVIG "Suberchange" Partnership project, further European collaborative partnerships are foreseen.



Success factors

1. Support for the project by the region is a determining factor as it requires the ability to co-ordinate and track operations, and the maintenance of relationships with training services. The close partnership between the associations for Liège Gascon and le Pays is therefore a positive factor. It is necessary to take into account the capacity of entrepreneurs to promote themselves and establish relationships of trust with those who will implement the initiatives.
2. The PER brings visibility to the sector and an adequate collective framework for work. However, the keys to the smooth functioning of the collaboration remain a willingness on the part of the stakeholders to become involved in the initiative and to pursue a common goal: to regain a first-rate raw material. While collective ventures do get established, collaboration often encounters competitive interests between enterprises.
3. Time is a determining factor. The PERs are set up over a short time-span lasting 3 years (non-renewable) and the launch of the initiative is time-consuming. It is necessary to acquire the capacity to re-launch oneself, to set oneself the objective/orientation and to enrich it in the course of the collaborative process.
4. The structure provided by the PER facilitates access to certain types of credit.
5. The image of the seal of quality conferred by the PER facilitates external communication and improves understanding of the sector. It also has a motivating effect on enterprises involved in the sector.

Conclusions

This collaborative experience, undertaken by small rural entrepreneurs involved in their sector, is rather conclusive, as the entirety of the programme's initiatives, except for a conference and mechanisation initiative, which are having difficulty getting started, has either been implemented or is in the process of being. For the Pays Adour Landes Océanes, the experience has been enriching and legitimising, as it has brought about a consolidation of the networking operations and access to multi-funding programmes. In terms of future perspectives, as the Pôle d'Excellence Rural is not a renewable procedure, the question of the renewability of the initiative has come up: the Charte Forestière du Pays is in the course of being renewed in order to maintain a framework and to develop a new programme of initiatives. In the long term, the creation of a cork "cluster" is envisaged.

Link to online presentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/p%C3%B4le-dexcellence-rural-fili%C3%A8re-li%C3%A8ge.aspx>

C/ Employer groups: Why? How?
By Pierre Neuray, President of the CRGEW

The high cost of salaries, the shortage of labour, a seasonal work-load which is inadequate to justify hiring a new employee, are factors which make it difficult for a small-scale rural entrepreneur to hire new staff. Faced with these conditions, a course of action becomes plausible, “employer groups” (GE). This consists of a system for the pooling of human resources between several enterprises which share out the work-schedules and the costs of hiring and training workers. The GE thus makes these workers available to the companies when they need them. In exchange, the employee benefits from full-time CDI (unlimited-term contract) employment and varied work! Today, in Belgium, there are 4 employer groups providing jobs for 24 employees: Jobiris, JobArdent, Vert'Emploi et Basic+.

Centre de Ressources pour les Groupements d'Employeurs en Wallonie (ASBL) : <http://www.crgew.be/>
CCI Liège-Verviers-Namur : <http://www.ccilvn.be/>



- Project leader: Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Liège Verviers Namur for JobArdent
- Project duration: JobArdent was created in 2008.
- Location: Province of Liège
- Project value: /
- Contact: Pierre NEURAY, Président CRGEW, T : +32(0)495-54.84.31, pneuray@gmail.com
- Philippe OUTMANNNS, Manager JobArdent GIE, Financial and Administrative Director, CCI Liège-Verviers-Namur, T : +32(0)87-29 36 17, po@ccilvn.be

Main activities

a) How is an employer group established?

Under the provisions of the legislation of 2000, imposing a rigorous but light framework, certain conditions have to be met to create a GE:

- The association of enterprises has to be in the form of an Economic Interest Group (“Groupement d’Intérêt Economique”)
- It has to have a single social objective
- It has to be approved by the Minister for Employment
- The employee is hired under a CDI, exclusively full-time
- Employment is offered to candidates who are difficult to place.

In practice, the creation of a GE will require working in stages. It is first necessary to identify the group of enterprises who can ensure a full-time occupation. This requirement constitutes a brake on the creation of a GE as it is not easy to find rapidly the required number of enterprises who can fill this full-time employment. It is then necessary to establish the conditions of the collaboration (time of occupation, remuneration, etc.) in order to be able to work in a defined framework which is clear to everybody. Once these steps have been accomplished, if no existing GE can be joined, a new GE can be created. It is necessary to define its legal status, an ROI, to obtain certification, to define conditions relating to VAT, etc. The GE thus created can then hire its first worker while benefiting from public subsidies for employment just like any other enterprise. Each enterprise then receives a monthly invoice issued by the GE.

Several stakeholders exist to support and advise entrepreneurs who wish to create a GE: at the regional level, the non-profit Centre de Ressource pour les Groupements d'Employeurs en Wallonie (CRGEW), and in the field by the CCI (chambers of commerce), the Agence de Développement Local (ADL/local development agencies) and the Local Action Groups (GAL).

b) What advantages do GEs offer enterprises?

Firstly, in contrast to traditional employment agencies, a GE will be able to build up loyalty in a worker who will be continually working with the same enterprises. Acquired skills can therefore be used for the enterprise over the long term, and in an environment known to the worker, which improves productivity. Investments made in the recruitment, training, and placing of this worker will have been covered. In addition to this, the flexibility of a GE allows the volume of hirings to be adjusted to the needs of the enterprise. And then, the cost of a salaried employee in a GE is lower than that of a temporary worker, and allows access to employment subsidies. Administrative workload is minimised as the invoicing occurs once at the end of each month.

From a more global standpoint, the GE contributes to enterprise growth. It allows them to enjoy the benefits of labour which was not accessible to them owing to insufficient workloads, to the impossibility of financing the employee on their own, or to the seasonality of demand for labour, etc. To that, we can add the professionalisation of enterprise activities on the one hand, as the time spent undertaking certain tasks before hiring can now be devoted to other development activities.

c) And the worker? What does he gain?

From the employee perspective, workers enjoy the benefits of a CDI (unlimited-term contract) for full-time employment. Their work is varied, which makes it more interesting and enriching. It is equally an opportunity to become involved in a positive experience!

At the regional scale, the GE is therefore an efficient vector for jobs and trains workers to assume varied and flexible employment, which benefits both the enterprise and the worker.

d) An experience in Liège: JobArdent

The GE JobArdent was created in April 2008 and today counts 51 members (SMEs of between 1 and 350 workers) and employs 10 workers shared by 38 SMEs. In 2013, JobArdent experienced several changes in occupation: enterprises leaving (mergers, organisational changes, etc.), and joining, new groups of enterprise formed or in the process of being, resignations (setting up as self-employed, lay-offs, etc.).

In terms of its operation, JobArdent doesn't possess any capital but does have access to an advance of funds. It also possesses a fund to cover social liabilities. Invoicing of enterprises is carried out on a *prorata temporis* basis, at cost. If an enterprise wishes to leave the GE, it has to provide notice of departure.



Success factors

In order to ensure that an inter-enterprise collaboration set up in the framework of a GE functions efficiently over the long-term, the following is necessary:

- A complementarity of interests in order to avoid competitive conflicts,
- The same needs and skills to allow a single person to undertake the same tasks in different enterprises,
- Geographic proximity to facilitate travel by the employee,
- From a relational standpoint, the collaboration should be undertaken in a spirit of confidence and goodwill, and the trustworthiness of one's partners has to be ensured,
- Enterprises have to demonstrate flexibility,
- Over time, they become accustomed to pooling their labour,
- The staff hired has to be suited to this type of position,
- The objective should not be networking,
- The presence of a third party, professional and legitimate, for professional and stable management, is indispensable. This third party should count amongst his/her professional skills the ability to manage networks of stakeholders, and situations requiring their co-ordination to achieve a common aim.
- Management of human resources should be pro-active
 - o Workers: workload volume, pressure, integration, etc.
 - o Enterprises: foresee the work, accept sharing, integrate part-time work, etc.

Conclusions

By allowing the pooling of labour and the adaptation of the workforce to the level of economic activity, the employer group is meeting the challenge faced by small rural enterprises in terms of employment (availability of labour, cost, seasonal or intermittent work, etc.). However, GEs are still few in number in Belgium if we compare this situation with that of France, where they are developing everywhere and in all sectors, amongst which agriculture. In Belgium, the current legislation is partly responsible for this lack of enthusiasm. It is therefore essential to change the legislation currently in force to allow the hiring of part-time workers (with the eventual possibility of extending this to full-time), and also by opening GEs to types of workers other than just the unemployed. In parallel, promotional initiatives should be implemented and notably with the help of stakeholders in the field, such as employer federations, professional associations, the CCI, the GALs, the ADLs, etc., with a view to demystifying this collaborative system which is so encouraging to small rural entrepreneurs.

Link to the online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/le-groupement-demployeurs-pourquoi-comment.aspx>

D/ RegionalWert AG (“regional value” Association)

By Peter Voltz

“DIE AGRONAUTEN” is a non-profit association for research into sustainable regional agriculture which aims to ensure added-value to food products and agriculture through innovative practices in the use of land, along with the popularisation of these practices outside academic circles. The members of “DIE AGRONAUTEN” are from different backgrounds: agricultural producers, regional co-ordinators, sociologists, geographers, economists. In 2006, this association established a regional “citizens’ public limited liability company” – RegionalWert AG – for the support and promotion of local agriculture in the production, processing, and marketing, along with applied research.

Website: <http://www.agronauten.net> - <http://www.regionalwert-ag.de>



*“The concept is to find the greatest number of synergies”
“If you’re a small producer and you want to influence the market... forget it”*

- Project leader: Peter Volz, member of the “Agronauten” network, and Christian Hiss, director and founder of RegionalWert AG.
- Project duration: beginning of September 2006
- Location : south-west Germany, Region of Freiburg em Brisgau, (Hauptstraße 140, 79356 Eichstetten am Kaiserstuhl)
- Project value: RegionalWert AG counts more than 500 citizens currently in 16 enterprises supported by a capital of 2,230,000 € (1,700,000 € in 2011)
- Contact: Peter Volz, peter.volz@agronauten.net, Tel +49/ 761 610 2900

Main activities

- Starting-point: the observation that only 5% of regional consumption was locally produced.
- Citizens' support for agriculture: raising of capital, investments in local systems of production, processing and marketing (short-chain distribution), assistance in the transfer of farm-holdings, recognition for the social and environmental services of agriculture.
- Strategies in the fight against the wastage of food products.
- Organisation of visits, of tasting sessions, and encounters.
- Information on the future of agriculture – particularly in schools.
- Networking of European initiatives for sustainable regional agriculture.
- Assessment of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the activities of the co-operative through the tracking of 64 indicators.

Success factors

Shared values on the issue of sustainable agriculture and a strong cultural identity attached to the region and its production. An important initiative was therefore implemented to rediscover old varieties of lentils and to recreate a sector corresponding to traditional food products (noodles with lentils).

In addition to this approach, which was anchored in shared values, the association sets out to undertake a very professional initiative, by equipping itself with the capital, the research, and the equipment, to meet the regulations, which are draconian.

Conclusions

The local group for sustainable agriculture takes time and relies on considerable awareness-raising and communication, but this is the only way in which to influence market trends.

Identification with a region, its values and traditions, is a powerful tool for harnessing support.

Confidence and shared values are key factors, brought about by transparency demonstrated in numerous encounters, as well as through the availability of relevant indicators.

Link to the online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/regionalwertag.aspx>

E/ Beef from Gaumais pastures, grouped production of diversified, ethical, and environmentally-friendly Gaumais products.

By Michaël Masson, GAL Cuestas

The creation of a high added-value product (3 year-old beef raised exclusively in pasture) was conceived as way to respond to the development of the European agricultural policy which took greater account of environmental factors: MAE (Agri-Environmental Measures), Natura 2000, etc. A specific sector was therefore created on the basis of a specification list and based on networking between producers, retailers (butchers) and consumers (collectivities, private individuals). This initiative was undertaken thanks to a stakeholder in local development and administrative support. The work led to the creation of an agricultural co-operative and to the development of other sectors (organic heifers, pork, poultry, lamb, vegetables).

Website: <http://boeufgaume.wordpress.com/>

Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=MG9wpC7zpHE

*“Our co-operative has resulted in an evolution, not a revolution, as does the alternative local currency, the ‘Epi lorrain” (we have reaped advantages from the constraints and opportunities to develop sectors).
(A founder of the co-operative).*

*“Large-scale distribution isn’t the devil in person, we can find common interests”
(N. Ancion)*



- Leader: GAL Cuestas (asbl/non-profit) and Coopérative fermière de la Gaume (SCRL)
- Dates: Launch of the specification list for “Bœuf des prairies gaumaises” in 2008, of the brand in 2009, and of the co-operative in 2010.
- Location: Gaumais region (Etalle).
- Contact: Michaël Masson, *Project officer for Agriculture at GAL Cuestas*, 20 rue du moulin B-6740 Etalle m.masson@cuestas.be, Tel.: +32/63 45 71 27, Mobile: +32/473 68 05 03. Nicolas Ancion, Co-ordinator for GAL Cuestas, contact@cuestas.be, +32/ 63 45 71 26

Main activities:

- Starting-point: Modification of the CAP to take greater account of environmental considerations.
- Preliminary research: prognosis for agriculture in 2020 (re-localisation and closer ties with consumers) and the definition of a sector which corresponded to the identity of the region.
- Drafting of a specification list making use of environmental obligations (50 % of the region in Natura 2000, MAE on late mowing and extensive rearing).
- Work on awareness-raising and structuring (creation of a brand and of an agricultural co-operative).
- Technical and administrative support from the GAL, a vital structure for the launch of the initiative (help in calculating prices, positioning of the product)
- Virtually autonomous development of the co-operative, diversification of products: organic heifers, open-range pork, poultry, and lamb).
- Planned: the creation of a meat-cutting facility and a distribution warehouse to market local products to local consumers, along with collectivities and professionals.

Success factors

A regional development structure to gather support from stakeholders, and to support studies and research. The creation of a climate of confidence between agricultural producers, consumers, and the development structure.

Conclusions

A common approach is necessary to influence the market with a view to making use of local constraints. Different tools are required: a specification list, a co-operative, communication tools, collective structures, etc. Work on regional identity cements the project, but confidence is also a key factor.

Link to the online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/coop%C3%A9rative-fermi%C3%A8re-de-la-gaume.aspx>



3.4. Local initiative networks

3.4.1. Deliberations of the group

The presentation of accounts on local initiative networks, which are highly diversified (short-chain food distribution, access to land, research and development in digital technologies and automated systems, local capital, etc.), has revealed the presence of considerable local vitality in the development of entrepreneurship in rural contexts.

Rural also means the local baker, the butcher, the carpenter, the bank branch...it involves these inhabitants in their search for sense of belonging and social commitment.

But it also includes these multiple and varied skills which are only asking to express themselves.

For example, new technologies offer a new range of options to rural communities. It is up to the latter to make use of them. The skills exist, it's just a question of giving them the means to express themselves and to pool their means.

Each of the experiences presented was part of a networking initiative supported by a flexible and informal network allowing for synergies between local stakeholders. We are speaking about a desire to succeed on the basis of one's own efforts, to re-appropriate one's everyday environment (in defiance of the argument: it's too complex for you to understand), the search for mutual support, social commitment, and the (re-) creation of ties.

Whether with the aim of:

- promoting local production, out of admiration for the culinary traditions of the region and development of tourist activity,
- gaining support for a high-speed connection to the village (Fab'lab), the fight against obsolescence and the transmission of know-how in web 2.0 technology and automated systems,
- gaining access to land and re-connecting citizens to food production,
- stimulating the development of local economic projects and complementing more traditional offers of finance, which are less accessible and adapted to small entrepreneurs in the rural world or to agricultural producers.

These experiences are the basis for a self-sustaining economy which can grow in rural areas. Networking under the AFN network banner allows, for instance, members to rally under a local brand and to enjoy the benefits of common communication (website, social networks, etc.). By joining together, small enterprises can adopt a strategy based on critical mass, whether for the purposes of marketing or distribution.

Over and above skills, it is also a means of mobilising local and ethical investment.

These are also experiences which bring together contemporary social issues with the need for alternative financial mechanisms which support local entrepreneurs. These encounters therefore create meaning, and factors in support of social cohesion. Little by little, we come out of the circle of militants or radicals to ally ourselves with other local community citizens, who create a genuine movement in support of local development.

Certain points have to be highlighted in order to avoid difficulties.

An underpinning at two levels: the local and the international network. Exchanges are conducted in every direction. The local initiative should not close in on itself. It is an opportunity for new collaborations and mutual enrichment, whether with other rural communities or urban ones.

- The use of urban investment to invest in land could, for example, be the opportunity to forge a new relationship between town and country.
- The introduction of a Fab'lab in an international network improves the potential for innovation. It's an open, collaborative spirit, which is stimulating.

The organisation of different functions of the network requires consideration. In most of the experiences, the aims of awareness-raising, of education, and of support, are separated from those of management (non-profit as opposed to co-operative). The professional skills are not the same. The question has not been gone

into, but there seems to be an underlying logic to this separation. In addition to this, the management of growth (success) remains a challenge. How do you remain consistent with the initial spirit and internal democracy? Tools such as the drawing up of a charter, a transparent style of management, and social innovation have to be implemented.

These experiences can also become tools for local public communities. The acquisition of landholdings can, for example, bring about the protection of certain particularly delicate boundaries (water capture, biodiversity, etc.). Or else, the development of an automated, digital, or electronic laboratory can be an aid in the development of new services for the community (waste management – fight against obsolescence).

Finally, the debates make clear the needs for training and support. Whether in the form of apprenticeship or internship in agricultural production units (enterprise incubator with access to land), or else of exchanges in the case of technological laboratories, and particularly with schools in the region.

In conclusion, these new forms of collective entrepreneurship often offer support for rural entrepreneurs and citizens by implementing a high level of local initiatives. These initiatives make use of their own resources such as local skills and know-how by pooling them (reinforcement). This provides tools for rural communities, allowing a progressive re-empowerment with regard to their environment and development potential.

3.4.2. The experiences presented

A/Alternative finance network - Financité

Established in 1987, the Alternative Finance Network is known today under the name of réseau Financité. From the end of the 1970s, citizens wished to develop systems for making savings and loans locally, in order to re-introduce a human dimension to economic functioning and a different relationship to money. Financité is now established as an ASBL (non-profit) employing 11 people and a network counting 90 member associations.

Website: <http://www.financite.be/>



“Alternative financing also allows urban-dwellers to respond to socially committed initiatives with the rural world”.

Main activities

Three types of initiative are jointly undertaken by the Network:

- Support of local groups bringing together citizens who wish to be informed of alternatives to the traditional economy and to bring about economic practices which are more ethical and socially committed (local currency projects).
- The development of research and publications on responsible financing.
- A lobbying action targeting social and public stakeholders.

Success factors

Forum for contemporary social issues and the needs for alternative and socially committed financial mechanisms.

- Agriculture: allow greater access to land using a range of financial instruments.
- Allow distribution of production, particularly by using a common or collective procurement group, with the option of pre-financing the agricultural producers and allowing them to distribute their production.
- An alternative local currency such as the “Epi lorrain” in Gaume, with the possibility of a connection where this wasn’t obvious. The currency creates this connection.

Conclusion

The existence of an alternative financing network brings about the stimulation of the development of local economic projects, and a complement to the availability of more traditional means of finance, which are less accessible and less suited to the small entrepreneurs of the rural world and agricultural producers.

Link to the online presentation :

http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/media/348598/131121_ppt_financement_alternatif_citoyen.pdf

B/ Fablab – a production laboratory or how to revitalise rural regions

Imagine a place in which to conceive, create, implement, innovate, share, collaborate, build, and to improve, using electronics, digital media, automation, etc., in a small village of 350 inhabitants! A local facility, skills and shared tools and membership of a network of Fab'labs established on the basis of a common charter, and it's an entire technology 2.0-based system which is brought into being, from the repair-shop to a research and development facility for an enterprise.

A collaborative and open facility...enhances the self-esteem of the whole community

An association counting 70 volunteers, located in Biarnes, in the Jura.

Internet collective created in 2008, which led to the creation of Fablab in 2010.

Contact: Pascal Minguet - pascal.minguet@gmail.com

"The rural world has nothing to envy the urban one and even has a great deal to contribute to it".

Main activities



A Fablab is a local laboratory which makes invention possible by allowing individuals access to digital manufacturing. It begins with the observation that it is impossible to master all technologies alone. By pooling our skills, we can do everything: from repair to invention. Do it yourself.

This exchange network doesn't only concern the inhabitants, but also socio-economic stakeholders.

The Net-IKi FabLab currently works with three lycées, the Université de Franche-Comté, local enterprises and tradespeople. Since September, it has been a partner in two regional competitiveness hubs: Microtechniques and Plastipolis. It is moving to version 2 and its economic model is gradually undergoing refinements.

Success factors

- An underpinning at two levels: the local and the international network. Exchanges are made in every direction.
- A real bottom-up drive. The local network began from a neighbourhood campaign to provide the village with a broadband connection.
- The melting-pot association 2.0 (internet, social network etc.).
- A real know-how in technology 2.0.
- Its intergenerational character and a will to fight against programmed obsolescence.



Conclusions

New technologies offer new possibilities to rural communities. It is up to the latter to make use of them. The skills exist, it's just a question of giving them the means to express themselves and of pooling their resources.

Link to the online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/fablab-laboratoire-de-fabrication.aspx>

C/ « Start Up, Development and Management of Food Network »

By Howard Wilkinson – Ayrshire Food Network – Scotland

The Ayrshire Food Network (AFN), based in Scotland, was created in 2002, and unites producers, food specialists and small-scale family enterprises (restaurants and coffee shops, holiday cottages and rural bed-and-breakfasts) in Ayrshire and Arran. This network allows the pooling of promotional activities and the distribution of local production: food products, drinks, tourist products (culture and heritage).



“...you don't have to be big to do something rather special. It's about thinking collaboratively. On our own we're nothing. Working with other people, we are rather special.”

“The word “consumer” is a horrible word. It means that you take and that's it. Prosumer is certainly a better word !”

- Leader: Howard Wilkinson
- Date of creation: 2002
- Location: Ayrshire and Arran– Scotland
- Key figures: 20 producers in 2002, 58 producers in 2013,
- A annual subscription fee of 90€
- Contact: howard.wilkinson2@btinternet.com
- Website: <http://www.ayrshirefoodnetwork.co.uk/>

Main activities

- Networking and development of collaborations between local stakeholders.
- Distribution and logistics from BtoB + end-user.
- Promotion of local production and touristic activities (branding).
- Improvement of the IT techniques and use of social networks.

Success factors

Members operate collectively to achieve a common goal: the network provides a local supply chain, reflecting local traditions, which induces a strong sense of commitment.

In terms of organisational structure and leadership, the organisation remains informal and consists of a public/private partnership, part of a fabric of complementary networks, the whole managed by a “social engineer”.

The network is financed through the support of its members (annual subscription fees) and the support of government agencies (development subsidy programmes) or European funding (example: LEADER Tastes Of Rural Europe – TORE funds). Crowdfunding is also a source of financing for certain projects.

The commitment of members depends essentially on the skills of the leader and is correlated to the advantages which the members recognise in or obtain from the network: the more benefits they enjoy in terms of their own activity, the more their commitment becomes effective, and conversely, the more they invest themselves, the more they get in terms of benefits. Work is undertaken on a voluntary basis.

Benefits and knowledge from within an organisation: the range of benefits is relatively difficult to qualify or quantify, but there has been a noticeable increase in the level of commercial exchange, a transfer of knowledge and good practices amongst the active members.

An informal and innovative environment: working in a flexible network, in reality a loosely-knitted mesh, allows members to mix and match their level of commitment according to the benefits they obtain.

By means of a regular SWOT analysis, the network conducts self-assessments and develops; this allows it to modify and adjust its way of operating.

Conclusions

The strength of the AFN network rests on its flexible and informal structure, allowing synergies between local stakeholders (producers, the hotel and restaurant sector, end-consumers) with the aim of promoting local production, an awareness of the culinary traditions of the region, and the development of touristic activities. Networking allows its members to rally under a local brand and to enjoy the benefits of common communication (website, social networks, etc.). By joining together under the banner of the AFN network, small enterprises can adopt a strategy based on critical mass, whether for the purposes of marketing or distribution.

Link to the online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/start-up,-development-management-of-food-networks.aspx>

D/ Terre de liens

A French association created in 2003 from the convergence of several tendencies linking popular education, organic and biodynamic agriculture, ethical finance, socially committed economics, and rural development, Terre de liens sees itself as a laboratory for land management by a civil society. Today, it is an associative network, a social economy enterprise (la Foncière), and a Foundation.

Website: <http://www.terredeliens.org>



“Terre de liens sees itself as a laboratory for land management by a civil society.”

- Founders: NEF (socially committed financing) Movement for biodynamic agriculture and the network for experimentation and liaison of rural space initiatives.
- 1 national association in France, 20 regional associations, 1 Foundation, 1 social economy enterprise, 150 farms, close to 3000 hectares, 33 million € in shares.
- 60 salaried employees

Main activities

Terre de liens has the mission of acquiring agricultural holdings and thereby preventing their disappearance, by ensuring their long-term preservation through ecological and responsible use, to rent these lands to agricultural producers, for organic and small-scale production, to share the benefits of these experiences with all the stakeholders involved, to create new responses to the agricultural land crisis, and to unite citizens, decision-makers and agricultural stakeholders around these issues.

Terre de liens is also involved in the management of buildings (64% of property) and support, particularly by accommodating enterprise incubators within farms (2/3 ha placed at the disposal of projects under development).

Success factors

- Encounter between issues raised by a land-holder (heir) and the creation of a foundation to ensure access to land.
- Generating commitment on the part of citizens.
- Collaboration between the agricultural producer, financing structure, and the citizens' network.

Conclusion

The movement is gaining in strength and is reaching a critical (and essential) size in terms of citizens' management of land. It is necessary, however, to manage growth while remaining consistent with the original spirit and internal democracy.

Link to the online presentation :

http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/media/348592/131121_ppt_experiment_collective_solidarity-based_access_to_land.pdf

E/ Terre-en-vue

Inspired from Terre de liens, Terre-en-vue is a citizens' movement which developed from an associative network focused on the agricultural issue. This association brings together citizens, organisations, and public stakeholders who wish to facilitate access to land in Belgium. Its activities are organised into three bodies: a non-profit, a social-purpose co-operative company, and a foundation (currently being created). It collaborates with its Dutch-language counterpart Land-In-Zicht.

Contact: Terre-en-vue ASBL & SCRL FS - 16, Place de l'Université at 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve – Belgium

E-mail: info@terre-en-vue.be

"The difference with France lies in the average purchase price for a hectare: 40,000 euros in Belgium compared with 5,000 euros in France".



- Developed from the soutien à l'agriculture Paysanne network in collaboration with NGOs and the CREDAL
- Incorporation signed by 15 associations in 2012
- 114 co-operators holding 1349 shares at end- 2012.
- Several projects under development: Marion farm, Larock farm, Bourdon project, etc.

Main activities

An ASBL (non-profit), co-ordinating structure for the movement, which handles:

- project support,
- the creation of an associative and public network focused on the issue of access to agricultural land,
- the development of expertise and of an advocacy to facilitate access to land.

A social-purpose co-operative, a financial tool for the movement, which brings together citizens' capital to allow the acquisition of farm-holdings and their provision to agricultural producers involved in sustainable production, with the aim of producing healthy and environmentally-friendly food, supplied by means of short-chain distribution, in the context of the local economy.

To guarantee environmentally-friendly management of land, an environmental easement is incorporated in the property deed.

Success factors

The association aims to facilitate 4 types of access:

- Access to the market: to network in order to facilitate access to the market to allow the producer to focus on production;
- Access to know-how (support);
- Access to the commercial sphere for transparency in land sales;
- Access to credit;

These four aims meet current needs.

The creation of the co-operative, for example, was undertaken rapidly, as there was a project to support from the very start. There is also a need for citizens to re-connect with the places in which food is produced.

Link to the online presentation :

http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/media/348601/131121_ppt_mouvement_terre-en-vue.pdf

F/ Les Cigales

Citizens' movements dating back to over 30 years from all over France are at the origin of Les Cigales ("the grasshoppers").

A CIGALES club (Club d'Investisseurs pour une Gestion Alternative et Locale de l'Épargne Solidaire/ Investors' club for alternative, local, and socially committed investment) is a **socially committed risk capital organisation** which harnesses its members' savings **for the purposes of creating and developing small local and collective enterprises** (SARL, SCOP, SCIC, SA, association, etc).

The **Fédération des CIGALES**, association created under the provisions of the law of 1901, a recognised social enterprise for youth and popular education, has the mission of co-ordinating and developing the movement constituted by les **CIGALES**.

The movement counts around 200 active clubs and 1800 members.

Contact: <http://ns354727.ovh.net/~fedecigales/>



"Les CIGALES are at the crossroads between local investment, ethical investment, and social investment".

Main activities

The citizens' investors' club is made up of between 5 and 20 people who pool part of their savings. It meets several times a year to receive project initiators, decide on their investment, and to allocate this collective investment to the capital of enterprises. This is undertaken in a flexible if constraining framework, as the legal and fiscal structure does not allow investment in every type of sector (example: difficulty in the agricultural sphere).

It's a place for exchange and self-education on questions of local economics and development, where investors and project initiators encounter socially responsible and committed economic behaviour.

The club has a lifespan of 5 years, which may be extended once. At the term of its lifespan, it undertakes the liquidation of its portfolio, shared pro rata according to the initial investment of its members.

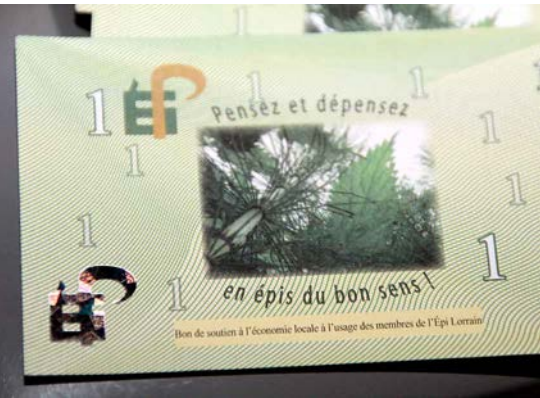
THE ACTIVITIES OF LES CIGALES IN 2010

- The average number of members per club: 13
- The average monthly savings amount: 21€
- The average number of projects examined by each club: 3
- Legal status of invested enterprises: 68% SARL, 14% associations, 18% SCIC/SCOP.

Success factors

Citizens who invest in projects (a little less directly than in the case of crowdfunding) are in step with the expectations of society. They come out, so to speak, from the circle of militants and come into direct contact with Mr and Mrs everybody, whose interest is in developing a more ecologically-friendly agriculture, etc.





4. Field visits

4.1. Local economy financing and projects

A/Vents d'Houyet

Launched in 2002, the main aim of the NPO (non-profit organization) Vents d'Houyet was to build a citizens' wind turbine, in support of its eco-hamlet project for Maisoncelles. Over the course of time, the association took on a more ambitious objective: entrepreneurship and socially committed financing. The ASBL relies on profit margins tied to energy investment to enter sectors such as eco-construction, agriculture, training, and food production.

Website: <http://www.vents-houyet.be>



The main activities

- Renewable energy: studies, financings, and implementations of wind turbines, under the control of autonomous citizens' co-operatives, installation of photovoltaic generators.
- Creation of Terre-Académie: eco-construction show house.
- Development of eco-neighbourhoods: purchase of building plots, partly by VDH, and partly by 2050 Vue sur mer. The conditions of purchase of the plots include working with local craftspeople (specification sheets, shareholder's agreement, etc.). To obtain a plot, the candidate buys a share and becomes a project member.
- Organic food: co-founder of the company "2050 Vue sur mer" (farm).
- Mobility: creation, along with the commune of de Houyet, of a mobility centre using solar energy and electric vehicles.
- Education and training: establishment of the Académie du Vent for children aged 6-12 years and Terre Académie, training centre for eco-construction trades.
- Art and culture: the wind organ, solar movie and solar sunflower.

Focus points of the group

- How has VDH generated profits?
 - ➔ The ASBL Vents d'Houyet takes direct responsibility for risk activities, such as preliminary studies, etc. It then sells rights in the commercial development and implementation to co-operatives which it has created in parallel. This avoids investors and members having to incur risks during the preparatory stages.
 - ➔ The ASBL is a rapid development tool to stay in the race confronted with classic investors from the private domain. Given that future wind-farms will be implemented on the basis of invitations to tender, the risk is diminishing, and the ASBL has re-incorporated itself as a Société commerciale à finalité sociale (social enterprise).
 - ➔ The co-operatives are: Allons-en vent (childrens' wind-turbine), Alerte ça souffle (commercial co-operative), Emission Zéro (large-scale wind-turbine financing), 2050 Vue sur mer (co-operative dedicated to eco-construction and regional development).

- What was the triggering event?
 - ➔ “We have wind on this ridge, we could put a wind-turbine here!”. The wind is everybody’s. One of the main reasons is to produce energy oneself using a common resource. The idea was also to come together to be able to do more and increase the capital base.
 - ➔ The difficulty at the beginning was the absence of a legal framework when it came to electricity generation: the state monopoly in the sales of electricity and the lack of public enthusiasm for such projects. The development of the legal framework allowed the group to move forward and gain momentum.
- How was the project realised, financially?
 - ➔ The idea grew from a hard core of between 3 and 8 motivated and skilled people, who got along well. They were joined by sympathisers (who got involved because the project was attractive and the financial plan was viable), and investors (who entered the project for financial reasons).
- What obstacles did you meet?
 - ➔ At the beginning, a lack of public confidence.
 - ➔ Questions of management, along with the need for a leader, of finding the right team.
 - ➔ The additional work-load of managing the citizens’ side, compared to a traditional financing system.
- What are the advantages?
 - ➔ A production system supported by the locals, which limited opposition to the project’s implementation.
 - ➔ A low level of individual risk.
 - ➔ Short-chain distribution, even if only in theory.
 - ➔ The sharing of production: the aim is to produce a product which everybody needs and not money at any cost.
 - ➔ Management based on volunteer or expense compensation. If there are salary payments as such or dividend distributions, the project is weakened, investment goes down, as does the co-operative principle.
 - ➔ Control over the resource by local people prevents someone from outside from taking over the resource. Wind is a resource deposit.
 - ➔ In terms of added-value, the Houyet commune has increased its public visibility.

B/The Epi lorrain

The Épi is a local currency complementary to the euro for the Belgian Lorraine and its surrounding area.

1 Épi = 1 euro

It comes in the form of 5 coupons of support for the local economy, or in notes having a face value of 1, 5, 10, 20 and 50 Épis.



Website: <http://www.enepisdubonsens.eu>

In contrast to the euro, which is used to do one’s shopping, to speculate, etc., the Épi only serves one purpose: to perform everyday exchanges, those which are essential to day-to-day life in the region of Belgian Lorraine. This region is rather prosperous given its proximity to Luxembourg, whereas along the French frontier, there is a noticeable impoverishment of the villages.

Starting-point

At Meix, the main grocery has closed, but the banks are refusing to back prospective buyers. Women facing difficult circumstances, disadvantaged in terms of mobility, decide to take it over. They distribute leaflets with the proposal to issue shares and raise funds amounting to 5,000 euros. The commune completes the fund-raising by adding another 5,000 euros. This doesn’t amount to a salary, so the original store-holder decides to go ahead with 5-6 volunteers who help with cleaning, with invoicing, etc. They also set up a small bistro. The profits generate other projects.

The joint procurement groups, for example, organise deliveries to the store by producers. Around twenty producers agree to supply 360 subscribers who pre-pay for baskets of produce. Producers and consumers establish a participative certification.

Farm produce is expensive to transport. The “Solidairement” network develops: pooling of farm production targeted to restaurants, small collectivities and communities, by placing orders through a website. The organisation of rounds is arranged around the needs of the supplier and the eater. Eight jobs are created and volunteers join the project. In all, eight jobs are created and 12 volunteers are recruited.

Little by little, the group becomes interested in the euro, and following an evening information-session by the Réseau Finances Alternative, decides to develop an alternative: a regional currency. The ASBL L’Epi lorrain has been created.

The main objectives of the ASBL are:

- To create a local currency complementary to the euro, usable by all those who wish to promote an economy that is local, ethical, and sustainable.
- To raise awareness amongst fellow-citizens in order to explain to them the strengths, weaknesses and drawbacks of the euro system and of the positive results which local currencies can bring.
- To invite the Walloon government to consider the importance of complementary currencies.

A network of exchange bureaus is being established and the province supports the printing of banknotes with security features. Seventy stores are involved (bakeries, carpentry, medical practice, accountant, etc.) on the basis of a signed agreement with the ASBL. Citizens are “épi-carriers”.

Suppliers increase their number of customers. Suppliers use the épi to do their shopping and buy services (e.g., accountant = 10% of salary in épis). The supplier can give change in épis and make new customers. The ASBL tries to enlist new partners in the scheme to widen the range of application of the épi. The euro retained in the region is the épi. If the épi is converted into euros, there is a loss of 3%. The deposits are deposited with TRIODOS or converted into shares at CREDAL. They are re-invested in local projects through micro-credits. At the current time, 60,000 euros have been converted into épis.

In terms of viability, the ASBL has received subsidies for two employees, there is no shortage of volunteers, and the structure is sound thanks to member subscriptions.

Videos:

- Description of the Epi - http://www.enepisubonsens.eu/pages/LEpi_une_monnaie_locale-5987399.html
- Why the Epi - http://www.enepisubonsens.eu/pages/LEpi_pourquoi_-5987401.html

Contact: maresix@hotmail.com

C / Colibris Famenne



“Colibris” is a movement of citizens who wish to collaborate in building a truly ecologically-friendly and humane society. This movement is dedicated to Transition. This is of course the case of the Colibris-Famenne group through its “farmer market”, the implementation of the first local group at the Marion farm of the Land co-operative “Terre-en-Vue”, etc. It was host to so many local producers (rearers, fruit and vegetable growers, etc.) that active consumers of the two regional GACs (joint procurement groups, equivalent to the AMAPs in France), based on the Colibris movement’s charter.

Several projects have been initiated, starting essentially with the aim of agro-ecology:

Local group “Terre-en-Vue”: Around thirty families in the region have collectively purchased 7 hectares of productive land from the Marion farmer, rearer of heritage breeds and organic meat producer. This project is the first purchase by the land organisation in Belgium (inspired by Terre de liens in France).

The Colibris-Famenne farm market is an initiative for encounters and short-chain distribution by producer and consumer citizens: it meets every month in one of the villages in the region. It counts 300 supporters.

- **Shared meat-cutting facility:** Project under development involving several local organic rearers to gain recognition for their products in a completely organic sector.
- **Consumer/Producer groups:** This group consists of several local agro-ecological fruit and vegetable producers and consumers, who are considering a common marketing system for their products.
- Co-organisation with cultural, associative, agricultural and educational partners in the region of the **Festival "Terre Ferme"**, the International Film Festival on Ruralism, with conferences, action theatre in villages, etc.

In the context of the Ferme Marion, a local group is forming to support Claudy, who has to fight against a land speculation project and the loss of his lands on the one hand, and Thibaud, prospective fruit and vegetable-grower, who would like to become established. Together, citizens and producers, they are buying land and organising delivery of products to Colibri.

Contact: <http://www.colibris-lemouvement.org/>

D / The Ferme Marion (Wavreille) and "Pense à 2 mains"

Location: Province: Namur - Commune de Rochefort

Local group: 36 Co-operators

Project leader: Claudy Marion

Contact: jean.vanderelst@hotmail.com



In 2011-2012, the ASBL Terre-en-vue supported a first local project in Wavreille, in the Rochefort region.

The project was born from the "Colibri-Famenne" group's desire to support its agricultural producer, Claude Marion, by collectively purchasing 7,5 hectares of agricultural land (meadowland) to allow him to develop his project to breed "blondes d'Aquitaine" organically.

The project was supported by the ASBL Terre-en-vue and the land was acquired by the Terre-en-vue co-operative on the 25th April 2012, in support of the local economy.

In concrete terms, the ASBL took part in local group meetings, lent its support to negotiations with the seller, and in drawing up the deed of sale.

Thibaud and his association "Pense à deux mains" joined Claudy's project and established themselves on a plot of around two hectares dedicated to permaculture. The production location is also an educational setting, used for the transmission of knowledge. With this system of neighbouring cultivation, this plot of land supplies 50 people in vegetables. Thibaud and Claudy also cultivate red spelt and make bread.

E / The Lesse Brewery



In 2010, a group of friends, who were both a fraternity and beer enthusiasts, decided to re-launch beer production in the former Brasserie La Rochefortoise, which had been closed since 2000.

"Yeah, cool, we'd certainly buy up a brewery..."

The main object is the creation of an activity and not the search for the maximisation of profit. They therefore created a social co-operative (Société Coopérative à Responsabilité Limitée à Finalité Sociale, SCRL FS, to be more precise), whose social purpose is to relocalise the economy, to create economic activity in the

rural sphere, and participative activity. The associates are only looking for a limited financial advantage, and the profits generated by the company are re-invested in the project with a view to fulfilling its social mission. With the help of the CREDAL, an alternative credit organisation, they created a co-operative company and launched a recruitment campaign for co-operators. Once the minimum capital had been raised, CREDAL granted them a loan, and they were able to buy the entirety of the former brewery's equipment. Stored in a rented former stable, this equipment had been idle for about ten years. After having acquired the rental of the building, they spent nearly six months renovating both the building and the equipment to bring them up to current standards.

Commercial development

- Agricover (social co-operative for ecologically-friendly producers)
- Réseau Solidaire (short-chain distribution network)
- Resellers in Flanders
- Decision not to enter the export market like other small breweries as it is already occupied by large brewers
- Distribution through the co-operative network, the farm shop, OXFAM.

Operation of the co-operative and the role of co-operators

- Distribution of shares
- Purchase of the first sub-standard beers (liquid assets) in the starting phase to stabilise revenues.
- Commercial development and marketing campaign as commercial ambassador
- Graphic design for labelling: competition amongst the co-operators
- Support for small jobs: electricity, renovation, etc.
- Discount per crate for the co-operator

A few figures:

- 2 part-time employees + 1 complementary activity + 2 full-time self-employed
- INVESTMENT: 100,000 € (compared with 500,000 to 1,000,000 € for the same type of brewery)
- 53,000 € in machines (+ re-conditioning office equipment, etc.)
- 80,000 € CREDAL / 30,000 € working capital → appeal to the co-operative > 65,000 € → additional investment.
- Search for partner agricultural producers and partner with CREDAL
- 2000 l/week

Contact: <http://www.brasserie dela lesse.be>

Link to the online presentation : <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/roadbook-financement-alternatifs-de-projets-locaux.aspx>



4.2. R&D and innovation in the agricultural sector

Context

Innovation and creativity come in every form, are on everybody's lips, on the 2014-2020 programme agenda (Partenariat pour l'innovation – Stratégie Europe 2020, Créative Wallonie, etc.). The workshop aimed to familiarise participants with the concept of innovation and creativity in agriculture by identifying the ingredients, the triggers, the added-value.

*Creativity is the capacity of a group or an individual **to imagine or build and bring about** a new concept or an original solution to a problem.*

*Innovation, is the **implementation** of a product (goods or service), of a new or significantly improved process, of a new marketing approach or a new organisational approach to enterprise operations, organisation of the workplace or external relations. ⁴*

This definition, taken from the OCDE's Oslo manual, may be compared with those provided by the participants to the Seminar.

The idea of dreaming comes first. An individual (or a group of people) in a process of innovation, is first of all able to dream, to **Imagine** (and bring about a) **New and Novel Orientation** for a **Viable Activity** in a **Trading Environment**. It's a question of going off the beaten track, to have the boldness to reach a new target, to look for alternatives to traditional approaches, to develop novel techniques, procedures and structures which provide answers to needs or to anticipate future challenges.

But it is also a question of rediscovering and adapting old techniques and traditions and of reinforcing collaborations and exchanges to facilitate the creation of synergies. To innovate presupposes the capacity of people and organisations to go beyond their knowledge and skills, and solve problems in unexpected ways. Finally, innovation is often not recognised as such until it is fully implemented.

A / The Hemp Sector in Wallonia

Abandoned for several decades, hemp is beginning to be cultivated again in our region. The current environment (energy prices, sustainable development, more ecologically-friendly agriculture, etc.) is opening new perspectives for this diversified and innovative crop amongst Walloon agricultural producers and industries.

Hemp is in fact a plant with multiple advantages:

- Its cultivation does not require the use of phytosanitary products;
- It is a good starter-crop;
- It improves soil structure;
- It produces an impressive volume of biomass over 3 months (8 to 12 tonnes) ;
- It provides a range of products based on the seed (a seed rich in omega-3 and -6 fatty acids, vitamin E and D, food proteins and fibres) together with straw (high absorbant and insulating qualities, carbon trap).

Difficulties nevertheless persist as an obstacle to its development:

- hemp suffers from its kinship with cannabis (lack of information);
- hemp has a multiplicity of applications, but their conversion sometimes requires processes which are expensive to develop;
- cultivation and conversion requires know-how and experience.

10 years after the first initiatives to re-launch hemp cultivation in Wallonia, the development of this sector offers producers with interesting prospects for diversification. The raw material produced allows partner enterprises (paper-manufacture, textiles, food, construction, cosmetics, auto-manufacture and plastics

1. ⁴ Oslo Manual: Proposed Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Technological Innovation Data

engineering) to innovate and move forward in the field of sustainable development (for example, 1m² of composite hemp wall captures 32 kilos de CO₂).

Stakeholders/involved parties

The main stakeholders in the hemp sector in Wallonia today are:

Sector – the NPO (non-profit organization) Chanvre wallon, which works for the promotion of hemp-based products for every market, and for the structure and development of the sector in Wallonia. The non-profit also undertakes different research and development projects: www.chanvrewallon.be

Agricultural producers - Belchanvre is a co-operative enterprise established in 2012. It brings together for the most part leading-edge producers of industrial hemp in Wallonia. It develops its activities on a sectoral basis, from hemp cultivation to the conversion of finished products (retted straw for fibre production, sorted and dried seed for human food products). Today, the co-operative is working on the creation of a de-fibering line in Wallonia; <http://belchanvre.be/en/index.html>.

Processing companies:

- ▶ Established in 2007, **ChanvrEco** is an industrial hemp processing company (SA). It produces hemp granules specifically for insulation applications (Prohemp product range), but all the other constituents of the plant are put to use: fibre in durable composites, (short and semi-short fibre range for the production of different polymer-hemp composite materials), hemp shives for ecological floor-covering, (100% hemp range), and seed for organic human food products, www.chanvreco.be.
- ▶ **PurChanvre**: produces and markets hemp oil and husked hemp seeds for food products from hemp cultivated exclusively in Wallonia. Since 2012, its production has been based on organic agriculture. It will soon be offering hemp flour; www.purchanvre.be.
- ▶ **IsoHemp**: an SPRL (private limited liability company) which produces hemp blocks for the construction/renovation sector; www.iso hemp.be.

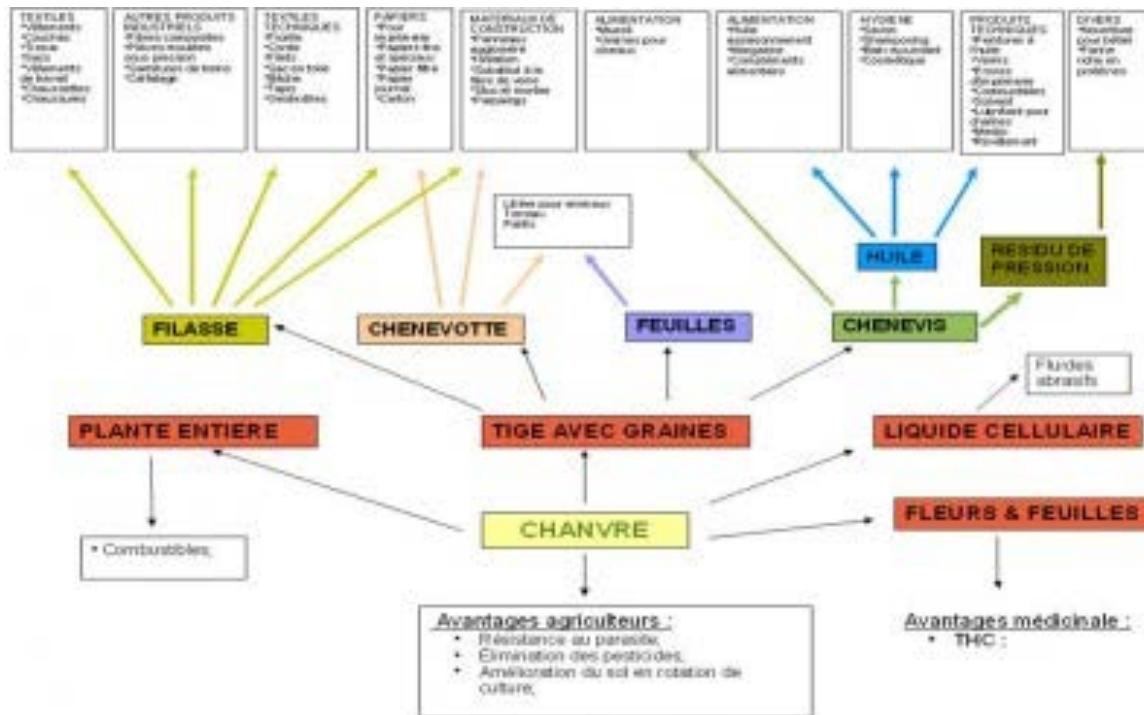
Distributors: EVIA Partner, La Maison écologique, Ecobati, La maison verte, Eco-logis, etc.

Researchers: Centre wallon de Recherches agronomiques (CRA-W), Université catholique de Louvain, Centre de ressources Technologiques en Chimie, Celabor.

Cross-frontier collaborative project, “Polychanvre”: the aim of the project is to perfect a process to incorporate hemp (ground stems) in a synthetic polymer matrix to create high-quality composite materials for use in the auto sector (moulded parts) and construction (extruded panels). The ultimate objective is to create agro-composites having the same mechanical characteristics as synthetic composites.

Markets for this crop

Hemp has a very wide range of applications. A large number of these are presented in the chart below.



The range of the markets presented is not entirely developed in Wallonia, even though the number of stakeholders and applications hasn't stopped growing in the last two years. The youthful hemp sector is currently prospecting the most promising and accessible potential markets, which are essentially in the construction, plastics engineering, and human food sectors.

Currently, production of Belgian hemp makes use of the three main sub-products of the crop:

- **the fibre**, mainly used in the manufacture of insulating wool and the reinforcement of a variety of plastics.
- **the shives**, for construction (quick-lime/hempcrete), horticultural mulches, and animal bedding;
- **the hempseed**, used mainly in human food products (oil, whole and husked seeds, cookies, etc.) and in animal feed (birdfeed and fishing).

Owing to the lack of a de-fibering facility in the region, Belgian fibre is currently produced abroad. However, the utility and the advantages of the yarn could very soon stimulate the appearance of new processing enterprises.

History of the hemp sector in Wallonia, experiences and lessons

Different phases have marked the re-launch of hemp in Wallonia:

- ▶ Study undertaken by the asbl (non-profit) Sorghal (in the 1990s) and the acquisition of this by ValBiom in 2004
- ▶ Study trip and hemp re-implantation project in Wallonia in the framework of Lux2010 (2005)
- ▶ Creation of the association "Chanvre Wallon" in 2006
- ▶ Field trials at Michamps
- ▶ 3rd Biomass convention organised by ValBiom (November 2006)
- ▶ Creation of the SPRL (private limited liability company) Chanvréco at the beginning of 2007

The whole of this development was supported by the determination of these stakeholders, who believe in the future of this sector, at a time when industrialists and decision-makers were not showing any interest in this crop. At every stage, the "ingredients" of innovation were present:

- ▶ The creative/passionate/wild spirit of the first initiators;
- ▶ Answers to new consumer needs (trigger-factor for innovation) through the creation of new insulation products: R&D, the search for new conversion processes, tests, analyses, creation of standards and the certification of products (significant costs)
- ▶ Difficulties in finding risk capital

- ▶ Partnerships with agricultural, research and industrial partners (skills and resources mobilised)
- ▶ Encounter with resistance associated with habits faced with new products (scepticism, derision, etc.)
- ▶ Administrative/regulatory constraints to new types of production and products

Link to the online presentations :

- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/fili%C3%A8re-chanvre-en-wallonie.aspx>
- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/innovation-en-agriculture-%C3%A0-travers-la-fili%C3%A8re-du-chanvre.aspx>

B / NewFarm



Innovation marks the development of Eric Stöcklin, agricultural engineer, fruit and vegetable-grower and technical consultant in plant cultivation, manager of NewFarm.

- ▶ 1985: creation of a market garden farm at Leuze-Eghezée in the Province of Namur to fulfil a life's dream: to work on the land and support his family by producing fruit and vegetables.
- ▶ 1988: launch of the production of 4th Range salads (ready-to-use vegetables) in response to the viability of the initial project.
- ▶ 1995: establishment of a farm in Portugal in response to a commercial need: to supply 12 months a year and to seize an opportunity to improve the profitability of the enterprise.
- ▶ 2002: development of Outils d'Aide à la Décision (decision-making tools), first in response to his own needs, and secondly for internet sales for other producers and consultants (measurements and weather forecasts, tracking and forecasts of disease outbreaks, advice on the application of fungicide and plant nutrition, etc.) => <http://home.newfarm-agriconsult.com/eng>
- ▶ 2011: installation of a hydroponic production unit to resolve the problem of soil fatigue, back fatigue, and to respond to distributors' requirements for salads with roots (hypermarkets and supermarkets)
- ▶ 2013: opening of the farm to consumers (pick your own) to respond to demand for ultra-fresh (still living) produce and to escape the power of distributors (hypermarkets and supermarkets).

Each stage of this development created/required new challenges, the adoption of new practices, new means of organisation, new financial tools, new commercial partnerships, and a choice of options allowing a resolution of the difficulties encountered, while consolidating previous successes.

For Eric Stöcklin, creativity is a state of mind, stimulated by:

- ▶ The desire to change a situation
- ▶ The search for solutions to meet needs or resolve problems
- ▶ Curiosity and openness of mind

It is also an aptitude for:

- ▶ Knowing how to make decisions
- ▶ Not being afraid of change

To be creative in a rural context:

- ▶ To let oneself dream
- ▶ To gain access to skills
- ▶ To collaborate and share willingly
- ▶ To set human and financial targets
- ▶ And then, to ACT

C / Agricovert



AgricoVert is a marketing, processing, and training/consultancy co-operative for producers working in harmony with the environment and with consideration for local development.

Today, Agricovert consists of:

- ▶ 25 producer co-operators (market gardeners, breeders, tradespeople), of whom 5 are in an enterprise incubator
- ▶ around a hundred co-operators /consumer-stakeholders of whom 4 are on the board of management

The aim is to create a collective body to enhance the value of the agricultural profession, while providing healthy and sustainable food through:

- ▶ Quality and local agricultural produce
- ▶ A support for small-scale agriculture
- ▶ Local and equitable trade
- ▶ Support for low-qualified employment
- ▶ Support for young agricultural producers who wish to set up in organic farming (on a human scale)
- ▶ A social project

Agricovert is responding to the requirement from a growing number of consumer-stakeholders who wish to be supplied with quality agricultural produce using short-chain distribution systems, to help producers establish themselves and to support small-scale farming.

The creation of a co-operative which brings together producers and consumer-stakeholders allows:

- ▶ the supply of seasonal, healthy, and quality local vegetables and fruit to consumer-stakeholders
- ▶ the creation, with producers, of marketing channels which use short-chain distribution and which guarantee them a decent income,
- ▶ the provision of support to young agricultural producers based on organic principles,
- ▶ the provision of long-term employment, notably to poorly-qualified people,
- ▶ the support of exchange of know-how (continuous training, exchange of practices, etc.) and services

(logistics, administrative tasks, communication, etc.)

- ▶ the advantageous use of knowledge of legal procedures for obtaining access to land,
- ▶ the re-establishment of ties between the consumer-stakeholder and the producer,
- ▶ the raising of awareness in the consumer of a sustainable and environmentally-friendly agriculture

One of the innovative aspects of the Agricovert project lies in the fact that the co-operative is developing from 3 initial hubs/cells and in accordance with a **sociocratic** methodology (participative interaction leading to a more active contribution and greater accountability on the part of all members of an organisation. Decisions taken on the basis of consensus, not majority.)

Hub 1 - producers (breeders and market gardeners) who, by means of monthly meetings:

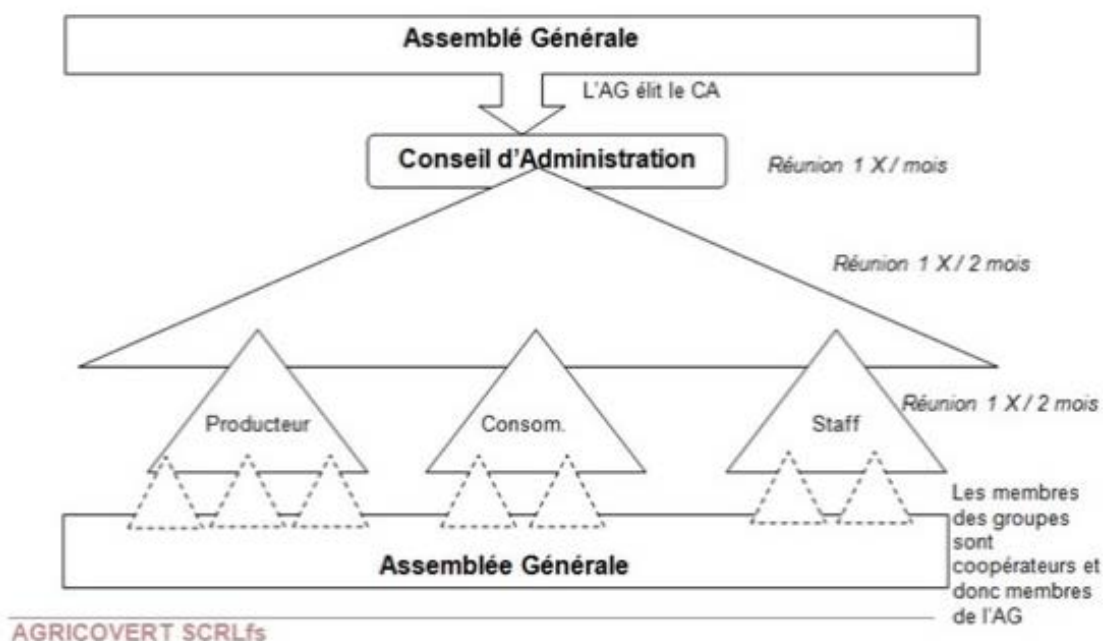
- ▶ establish production prices
- ▶ organise meetings and technical exchanges
- ▶ plan cultivation programmes
- ▶ organise mutual support between producers
- ▶ pool common services

Hub 2 – consumer-stakeholders (joint procurement groups, private individuals, etc.) who through quarterly meetings undertake:

- ▶ the promotion of short-chain distribution
- ▶ recherche in a range of sources of subsidy/support
- ▶ awareness-raising in matters of healthy food
- ▶ communication

Hub 3 – permanent team: responsible for the commercial development and communication (conception/consideration) of meetings between producers/consumer-stakeholders and the implementation of development projects (agricultural distribution centres, etc.), for the pooling of common services, for the creation of quality assessment tools for the small-scale production market, and the promotion of production.

Structure participative de gestion de la coopérative



Today, Agricovert distributes more than 500 baskets per week (phase 1).

A shop has been opened (small-scale producer market).

Agricovert now has to undertake (phase 2) the eco-construction of an agricultural distribution warehouse in Gembloux (end-2014) using financial support from the Walloon Region, in partnership with the Gembloux Faculty (availability of 8.5 hectares under lease). Three avenues of commercial development are envisaged:

- ▶ Baskets
- ▶ Small-scale producer store/market
- ▶ First-stage processing/cutting facility

Phase 3 of the project aims to extend the present one in parallel to phase 2 (2013-2014) through:

- ▶ Establishment of a legal and financial advice hub: support for establishment, (financial plan, access to land) (partner: CREDAL)
- ▶ The creation of an enterprise incubator
- ▶ Establishment of a centre for technical and organic agriculture: practices of cultivation (from sowing to harvesting)

Phase 4 will involve project spin-offs

<http://www.agricouvert.be>

D / Bureau Economique de la Province de Namur (BEP) & Boulangerie Legrand



The BEP is attentive to contribute to food autonomy and to re-assume the function of food-source for the region. This is why it has incorporated the development of short-chain distribution (SC) in its strategy (re-localisation of production and distribution using a network of local producers). In this context, the BEP sets itself the mission to offer producers support tailored to their needs in order to promote their economic development and its permanence.

Two types of support are offered:

Individual support, through which the BEP encourages the creation of short-chain distribution networks and consolidates existing activities by strengthening local support:

- ▶ General assessment
- ▶ Support on strategy (business management consultancy, innovative management, etc.)
- ▶ Feasibility study (technical and economic)
- ▶ Support in drawing up a financial and business plan, search for capital
- ▶ Innovation: planning of requirements and critical points (product development, diversification, etc.)
- ▶ Support for infrastructure and logistics
- ▶ Funding and subsidies (grants, investment aid, etc.)
- ▶ Introductions to specialists
- ▶ Networking
- ▶ Creation of contacts and promotions

Collective support, through which BEP promotes producer associations (group co-ordination) by conducting technical and economic feasibility studies to create food processing/logistical platforms; local abattoirs, collective meat-cutting facilities; short-chain bakery, eco-construction (hemp), processing project: vegetable processing, patisseries, marketing tools for collective use.

BEP's initiative is focused on three areas

- ▶ Information-sessions for producers
- ▶ Support for the co-ordination of projects under development
- ▶ Advice, expertise and support for the operational implementation of the project

Link to the online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/bep-d%C3%A9partement-d%C3%A9veloppement-%C3%A9conomique.aspx>



Example of the Boulangerie Legrand (<http://www.boulangerie-legrand.be>) supported by the BEP in its project to develop a sector of locally-produced cereals adapted to a relatively unmechanised bakery sector.

The project led by the Boulangerie Legrand consists of creating a range of bakery products manufactured from locally-produced **heritage** and/or **adapted** cereal varieties in order to meet two challenges:

- ▶ **To limit the use of additives** in the flours used through locally-sourced production and processing of cereals using short-chain distribution
- ▶ **To find an answer to gluten intolerance and allergies** experienced by a rising number of consumers: certain cereals are low in gluten, or offer improved tolerance

The project has a multiplicity of objectives:

- ▶ To unite local agricultural producers, millers, bakers and consumers around the production of healthy foods (flavor, digestability, etc.)
- ▶ To ensure exemplary traceability
- ▶ To develop the image of nature and human identity
- ▶ To give recognition to the wealth of our soil and to the associated skills
- ▶ To offer a fair remuneration to our partners

Phase of the project

- ▶ To identify old and new cereal varieties of bread-making quality to meet LEGRAND requirements;
- ▶ To test the crop protocols which are appropriate for them under our soil and climate conditions;
- ▶ To establish a local production sector;
- ▶ To test and validate a range of bakery products;
- ▶ To disseminate Legrand methods and concepts

Partners in the project

- ▶ CRA-W (Walloon Agricultural Research Center), Quality Department: scientific analyses of cereals and flours: some of the tests conducted in the laboratory / Plant Production Department: trials in micro-plots.
- ▶ Eddy Montignies: Identification and selection of seeds, volume calculations, test logistics, cultivation tracking, etc.
- ▶ Local partner agricultural producers: new cultivations
- ▶ Artisanal local miller
- ▶ Artisanal local baker
- ▶ ASE (economic stimulus agency, Innovation grant)
- ▶ BEP (Namur economic development agency)

Expected impacts of the project:

- ▶ Local employment through the re-localisation of production and a reappropriation of the tool of production.
- ▶ Greater price stability.
- ▶ Economic added-value: the low level of mechanisation and the skills of the bakers (who adapt themselves to virtually any type of flour) allow the use of a very wide range of Walloon cereals in bread-making.

The project would allow the use of bread-quality (320 euros/tonne), the equivalent of 26 hectares which are currently dedicated to animal-fodder (260 euros per tonne).

E / Pierre Lemaire, agricultural producer

At the age of 21, Pierre Lemaire started an agricultural practice without being himself the son of an agricultural producer. In 1985, in association with four others, he launched the Yerne co-operative, specialised in carrot-growing (30 tonnes in the first year). In 2000, he converted his enterprise to organic with the aim of rediscovering the fundamentals of agriculture. A triggering factor in this conversion was the need to restore the structure of cultivated soils. Now independent of the Yerne co-operative, he cultivates 150 hectares organically, half cereals and half vegetables (potatoes, green beans, celery, peas, etc.). Most of the output is marketed through long-chain distribution (large crop volumes).

Throughout his career, through observation, field visits (seizing experience where it is to be found!) abroad (the Netherlands, France), commercial contacts, etc., Pierre Lemaire has been searching for ways to improve his professional practices.

Precision agriculture (the principle of managing plots of land in such a way as to optimise yields and investments, by taking greater account of the variations in environments and conditions in different plots, even at sub-plot scales) now constitutes an answer to his preoccupations with management precision.

The use of satellite images of plots, GPS equipment, cameras etc., provides an efficient decision-making system for the optimisation of yields and investments, while making savings of natural resources, money and energy.

For Pierre Lemaire, "Innovation consists of disparate ideas that you bring together". Innovation is a passion for risk-taking and entrepreneurship, but which encounters resistance factors such as fear of the unknown, administrative constraints, etc.

F / INNOVATECH



<http://www.innovatech.be>

InnovaTech (Technological Innovation) is an NPO (non-profit organization) created in 2001, funded by Wallonia and the ESF (European Social Fund), consisting of a staff of 21 people working in support of SMEs in Wallonia in all sectors of economic activity.

Its purpose is to increase the number and quality:

- ▶ of technological innovations in Wallonia
- ▶ of innovative enterprises

for the generation of added-value and the employment which it entails.

The ASBL implements stimulative initiatives and provides individual or collective support and training courses. The innovation in question doesn't just concern high technology or large companies, and the innovation "produced" is not necessarily complex or restricted to an elite.

- **Idea:** We start from the company idea **or** we establish an internal/external creative process followed by a multi-criteria selection grid. A single question, a single aim: how to bring about this idea?
- **Stage 1** – Implementation of an audit of innovation practices: *"detailing the strengths and weaknesses of an enterprise in terms of innovation"*.
- **Stage 2** – Analysis of an idea from different perspectives / feasibility study: *technical solution to be validated, state of the art, introduction of design, market validation, profitability to be assessed, team to be reinforced, legislative framework to be defined, etc.*

- **Stage 3** – Search for technical skills, establishment of a technical partnership, intellectual property questions and planning
- **Stage 4** – Project tracking
- **Stage 5** – Communication

For Innovatech, to innovate is to adopt a state of mind, to be open, to be creative, to get out of the box in an organised and methodical manner. To innovate is:

- ▶ To develop a new product, idea or service, to imagine, bring about or work on one's manufacturing process (to make it more efficient).
- ▶ To improve what already exists. To use techniques to gain a competitive advantage in a market, either existing or yet to be created.

Why innovate? Is it always necessary to innovate? It is also a means of continuing to exist. It isn't always a choice, as it is often necessary to question oneself to continue to exist, to respond to the shortening of product life-cycles, to adapt to customer needs, and to conquer new markets.

The obstacles to innovation are numerous:

- ▶ Fear of failure
- ▶ Poor control over risk
- ▶ Assessment over the medium-term <> Immediacy
- ▶ Poor knowledge of the extent of the initiative (from where to where?)
- ▶ Lack of resources
- ▶ Too little time, nose too close to the grindstone
- ▶ Lack of training
- ▶ Multi-dimensional approach
- ▶ Lack of ideas

Conditions of success in innovation:

- ▶ Financial resources: financial systems of support are available in Wallonia.
- ▶ To give oneself time.
- ▶ To train oneself: one is often not trained to be creative.
- ▶ To surround oneself and to reach out for skills wherever they exist. Accept to find advice and skills elsewhere to complement one's own.
- ▶ To organise oneself to manage innovation methodically.
- ▶ To commit oneself (the driving force of passion).
- ▶ To know where one wants to go. To know what one wants to do or not.
- ▶ To define one's objectives. To remain on-track relative to the initial objectives.
- ▶ To gather ideas, and to generate new ones by looking at what is being done elsewhere.
- ▶ Select ideas. Examine the feasibility of a project: is it technically possible to develop a new product? University network, teaching institutions which offer the prospect of answering this question, the acquisition of access to expertise. Use them! Harness them!
- ▶ Don't ignore others. Where can partners be found? How can they be drawn into the project?
- ▶ Identify quickly the sources of capital and estimate the profit. Quickly put down some to see if it's economically viable.
- ▶ How do you reach your customers? Prospection?
- ▶ What has already been done by others? Some things are protected by others, don't encroach on them.
- ▶ Involve financial partners.
- ▶ Communicate facts about one's project.

Examples of projects supported by Innovatech (several videos available on the website :

<http://www.innovatech.be>)

- ▶ Pépinières Poncin Sa / Bertrix (ornamental logs) => http://www.pepinieres-poncin.com/en/index_en.html
- ▶ Argio Sa / Tubize (terra cotta bricks) => <http://www.argio.com/en/>
- ▶ Alvenat Sa / Achêne (range of sauces and marinades based on colza oil) => <http://www.alvenatproduction.com/en/homepage/>
- ▶ Frajalux/Binche (sugar-free ice-cream)
 - ▶ Ovogenics (food supplements based on quail eggs) => <http://www.ovogenics.eu/en/>
 - ▶ Isohemp Sprl / Fernelmont (hemp-lime blocks)=> <http://www.iso hemp.be/en/>
- ▶ Chanvreco / Tinlot (hemp-based granulate mixed with lime for making hempcrete (BCC)) => www.chanvreco.be/

Link to the online presentation :

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/innovatech.aspx>



G / Synthesis

The ingredients of innovation in different initiatives

Circumstantial elements/triggering factors which spur innovation

The first triggering factor identified in the different accounts is the wish (profound desire) to bring a response to a personal or collective need (utopian or otherwise). Whether this is a need to overcome an obstacle or difficulty (New Farm), to adapt a conversion process to develop a new product (hempcrete), to perpetuate farms and to develop new forms of organisation (Agricovert), or to meet new consumer needs or societal challenges (Boulangerie Legrand, Yerne, Chanvre).

Innovation can also consist of an innovative product (hemp, bread, etc.), an innovative process (cultivation and harvesting, hemp conversion, etc.), an innovation in distribution (short-chain), an organisational innovation (sociocracy, producer/consumer relationships, etc.).

The second triggering factor is linked to a form of originality, passion, or boldness. And subsequently, to gaining access to skills where they are to be found. Not to be afraid to share and to collaborate. To setting human and financial objectives. Once this process has been put into motion, it's time to act.

Innovation sometimes starts from an unexpected or original idea based on a tradition (hemp cultivation), once abandoned, and re-introduced in a new context. More difficult, as owing to its novelty and unconventional nature, it encounters skepticism on the part of society. It entails a process of reconsideration and rediscovery. To innovate is to think and to be different, but without excess, at the risk of becoming isolated from society.

Method or process which brought about the emergence of this sector

In order to succeed, a novel idea has to occur at the right time, when the market is ready to accept the product, the idea. An identical product at a different time will not be as successful.

A host of ideas are required. Accept that today's idea isn't the right one, and that tomorrow's may be better. Then examine the feasibility of this idea.

It also means becoming a campaigner (Newfarm, Chanv, etc.), abandoning traditional mindsets, allowing new mental pathways to emerge.

From this point on it is vital to facilitate experimentation, to start small and to re-adjust. It is a question of acquiring new skills or re-learning in a system which will naturally offer resistance. This all takes time.

Tools, spaces, and procedures are from this point all necessary to allow the emergence of a new sector.

Factors which inhibit innovation

One of the first factors to inhibit innovation is linked to financial requirements. You have to cover losses incurred over the first years (5 years in the case of hempcrete), needs for certification procedures (a thermal test costs 1000 euros), the acquisition of new skills.

A resistance noted in several accounts consists of administration (bureaucracy) and the slowness or inertia that these procedures engender. It was notably the case for Agricover, and also for hemp. The sale of seed and food products based on hemp is proscribed in Belgium. An exemption from this proscription is therefore required, based on paid analysis of seeds proving that they do not contain THC.

Innovation projects require a diversity of skills. One of the main difficulties is to bring skills together, to be open to and surrounded by them, and to attract other skills.

Finally, the accounts have sometimes highlighted the problem of finding labour, the fear of the unknown, and the fear of failure. You have to be open and to accept to get out of the box.

Needs of stakeholders: tools, systems, partnerships which have enabled stakeholders to innovate and overcome resistances.

The different accounts have highlighted the importance of grants (vouchers for technological services, grants, etc.) in the Walloon Region. For all certification tests, for example, companies have access to vouchers for technological services, economic stimulus agencies, who reimburse $\frac{3}{4}$ of research costs.

There is also a series of European research programmes for which the CSTC ("Centre Scientifique et Technique de la Construction") judges that these are products of the future, and selects and invests in those products.



The provision of advice is greatly appreciated. Whether from provincial agronomic services, the Walloon Region, from intercommunal planning teams, or from research centres (ERC). It is necessary to be conscious of one's limitations and to identify the skills to be acquired or obtained through partners.

The acquisition of skills concerns not only the manufacturing process of a new product. The aim is to introduce this product into a traditional distribution system, which will be handled by distributors and used by entrepreneurs or consumers using techniques which they are not necessarily acquainted with. Training is therefore required in the acquisition of new skills by professionals and consumers. Alliances have to be built with training organisations. Individual training (coaching, feasibility study, search for investors, etc.) is certainly an advantage.

The quality of the partnership useful in innovation is also emphasised as being a major advantage if a project is to be durable. It is above all a human adventure which presupposes a capacity for adaptation and co-operation. In the case of the Legrand project, the challenge was to bring together partners (agricultural producers, mills, consumers), to produce healthy food products which met the needs of consumers, to improve the traceability of flour, and to ensure a fair salary to anybody involved in the process.

Monitoring technological development, a willingness to seize experience wherever it can be found, and integration into a network, are all indispensable factors to facilitate this partnership.

Collective challenges to be met to develop the sector, creativity, and innovation

To ensure support for emergence, for transformation, for innovation, and to favour a state of mind which generates creativity is a vital collective effort in this period of economic recession.

To achieve a Creative economy⁵, there are a few indicators to guide entrepreneurs:

inter-disciplinary hybridisation (cross-fertilise, observe practices used in other disciplines, etc.);

Collective strategic intelligence (be alert, keep your eyes open to experiments being conducted across the world, etc.)

The collaborative principle (bring together different skills, etc.)

This translates into a course of action in keeping with the following principles:

- Advance step by step, using a small step approach. Don't take any big leaps which might lead you to break your neck.
- Know where you want to go = capital. To know what you want to do, and what you don't.
- Define your objectives. Stay true to your first objective.
- Gather ideas, and generate new ones by looking at what is being done elsewhere.
- Use, harness university networks, educational institutions, research centres and advisory bodies which enable you to answer the question, bring in expertise.
- Don't ignore others. Where are partners to be found? How can their support be enlisted? What has already been done by others? Some things are protected by others, don't encroach on them.
- Select ideas. Study the feasibility of a project. Quickly identify the sources of capital and estimate profitability. Put some figures down on paper and see if it's viable.
- Bring together economic partners.
- Set yourself a strategy to reach your customers, for launching and for publicising.

There's a misunderstanding as to the question of innovation: technological innovation doesn't merely consist of high technology, nor of big companies, nor of product innovation. It isn't complex, nor the preserve of an elite.



⁵ <http://www.creativewallonia.be/>



4.3. Inter-enterprise collaboration

A / Eco-hamlet de Durnal



It concerns a private plot designated for the sustainable construction of family homes using common infrastructures. The eco-construction cluster gave considerable support to the initiation and development of the project. The seven dwellings are either low-energy, or passive. The home of Monsieur Binamet, the initiator of the project, is even energy-positive owing to its photovoltaic panels.

Identity card:

- Project initiated by a couple who looked for families to involve in the project.
- Start around 2010. End 2013, 6 buildings have virtually been finished (a final terraced house still has to be built).
- Site: Rue Saint-François, at Durnal, commune of Yvoir.
- Contact: Mr Binamé, via the eco-construction cluster (Mr Binamé is one of the founding members of the eco-construction cluster).

Main activities

In 2010, the Binamé couple bought a plot in Durnal to invest in a sustainable development which resulted in a habitat for 7 families: co-ownership of land, access, vegetable plots, orchard, play area for children. The houses, oriented towards the south, are grouped 2 by 2, but with separate party walls.

The houses are low-energy or completely passive, with wooden frames with decorative brickwork or cladding (which also provides protection from rain). The wooden frames provide a good resistance to fire: the wood burns without producing flames, which gives in-depth protection to materials and prolongs their durability.

Characteristics of Mr Binamé's home: very good insulation, south-facing windows, and air-tightness → entailing controlled mechanical ventilation (cross-flow heat-exchanger: warm air being evacuated heats cold air coming in). Wall insulation consisting of 35 cm of cellulose + insulating space filled with wood shavings. Floor insulation: 60 cm of argex granules + earthen floor slabs + straw + quicklime. Heat pump and hot water coil in the walls for supplemental heating (power 4kW) + heat pump for domestic hot water. Interior finishes in clay, manufactured in Saint Aubin (Florennes): regulates humidity levels, retains heat, reduces odours. Water consumption management: dry toilets, rainwater cistern supplies the household. Old-fashioned garden wall, in dry stone. Future organic roof-covering on the garden shed. Photovoltaic panels = zero-energy house (production covers consumption).

Success factors

- High level of involvement of the founding couple (time, expertise, networking).
- Support from the eco-construction cluster in the selection of materials, specialised trades and above all, good co-ordination between them.

Conclusions

In union, there is strength: a completely private initiative was brought to a complex completion through the use of highly innovative techniques and materials. In order to achieve this, the support of an association such as the eco-construction cluster was a determining factor. This sector is undergoing rapid change and the norms are not really available.

Miscellaneous observations

An interesting eco-material: hempcrete: Régulates humidity, increases mass → permits the trapping of heat. A neighbouring house is built out of wood and hempcrete. The hemp comes from France as demand in Wallonia is insufficient.



B / The Chimsco SA enterprise



The company, specialised in wooden constructions, comprises four divisions: roof-frames, wooden wall-frames (passive or low-energy houses), carports, and garden constructions. Member of the eco-construction cluster, it underwent rapid development sustained by a demand for wood-frame houses and the great flexibility of its product range.

“I became a campaigner to get us known” (X. Michaux)

“The cluster, it’s a win-win between enterprises. You sometimes discover, in the course of visits to enterprises, interesting techniques, etc.”

Identity Card

- Project leader: Xavier Michaux and his father.
- Dates: created in 2002
- Location: Rue du Parc Industriel 22, 5590 Achêne
- Budget : Annual turnover of 40m € (40 people)
- Contacts : Xavier Michaux, director (info@chimsco.be)
- Logo

Main activities:

60% of the wood is of Belgian origin (especially spruce and oak), but getting supplies isn’t always easy: the new techniques being adopted, particularly for wooden frames currently undergoing an economic boom (planed timber, completely stable timber: drying and sawing), are not sufficiently taken into account by saw-mills in Wallonia (investment problems). The garden shed activity is supplied by imports from Estonia (the PALMAKO company).

The favourable development of the Chimsco enterprise is the result of several factors:

- the energy of its general manager the search for personal contacts (example of the partnership with Estonia);
- strong partnerships with other professionals: architects, carpenters, etc.
- networking (BEP, eco-construction Cluster);

- a human management style and a positive atmosphere: employee turnover is very low and staff commitment is very high, allowing a constant growth.

To expand or establish partnerships in French territory is complicated as the “passive house” designation in France incorporates errors and differences of interpretation as compared with Belgian practices.

Recruitment isn't an easy undertaking: the aptitude for working in a leading-edge sector (quality and innovation requirements) is difficult to find as it requires as much know-how-to-be as know-how, and especially, mere knowledge.

Success factors

Relationships with other professionals in the sector, the quality of work, are a priority, along with a highly efficient human resource management: team spirit, flexible skill-sets, accountability, quality of workplace conditions. Innovation in materials and techniques while retaining a strong sense of loyalty to the traditional values of the construction sector.

Conclusions

The current collaboration between Chimsco and the PALMAKO company has aroused a strong interest of Konstantin Mihhejev of the Estonian rural network, and further contacts are foreseen.

The cluster approach to the promotion of wood (professional networking, research for innovative products, technical training, etc.) corresponds to the challenges and solutions being implemented in the Landes. Exchange visits could be arranged with the Pays Adour Landes Océanes (Christophe Arrondeau).

Links

<http://www.chimsco.be/>

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/chimsco.aspx>

C / Agence Wallonne des Télécommunications



The AWT is an “Organisme d'Intérêt Public” (OIP, “public interest body”) created by the Walloon government to ensure the development and dissemination of information and communication technologies (ICT) and their use in Wallonia. The portal awb.be is the ICT platform for Wallonia. The AWT supports SMEs by providing support in accessing ICTs and using them (distance working, training, e-commerce, etc.)

Identity Card

- Dates: creation of the AWT in 1999, management contract in 2004.
- Location: Avenue Prince de Liège, 133 at 5100 Jambes
- Contacts: Renaud Delhay (renaud.delhay@awt.be)



Main activities

ICT platform for Wallonia: organise a general framework for the development of ICTs and their use in Wallonia (to structure and coordinate the ICT sector).

The SME 2.0 Club is a service launched by the AWT to network Walloon stakeholders in e-business. It consists of an informal network of enterprises and self-employed users of ICTs whose aim is to facilitate the dissemination of good practices in the field and the exchange of experiences. The Club meets about every six weeks, to

discuss a variety of topics and generally those chosen by its members. Activities: exchanges of experience, first-hand accounts; conferences and workshops on different topics.

Presentations of newly-offered products and services (by request); enterprise visits.

Links:

awt.be/pme20

awt.be/ecommerce

<http://cloud.reseau-pwdr.be/public.php?service=files&t=626357edb8b46afb5d0e1b4ab8e41f5c>

www.twitter.com/awtbe

D / Topino



Member of the SME 2.0 club of the AWT, Topino is a recognised co-operative which operates as a short-chain web purchasing platform in response to a number of observations:

- *Growing interest: sales direct from the farm/from markets → joint procurement groups → operators → large-scale distribution ;*
- *A large number of local operators;*
- *Logistical costs which erode the budgets of all concerned without bringing any added-value;*
- *A town-country relationship to be built.*

Identity Card

- Project leader: Jean-Philippe Lens
- Dates: Started in 2009
- Location: active throughout Wallonia, headquarters at Rue Félicien Rops 6 (La Plante), at 5000 Namur.
- Contacts: Jean-Philippe Lens (jp.lens@topino.net)

Main activities

From February 2009: directory for producers and professionals on a web platform. Clients: 450 fair-trade products from the North and South (healthy, local, transparent, direct). The producer sets the selling prices. A 30% commission is retained across the entire logistical chain using an identical allocation key for all the operators.

From February 2012: launch of a short-chain operator activity (organisation of consignments by supplier grouping and consignment-and-sale systems).

New activity launched in 2013: short-chain distribution facilitator. In the face of constant growth in the number of bodies and associations working to promote short-chain distribution, Topino is positioning itself as stakeholder by developing communication and management tools for these distribution chains: availability of a web tool (commercial offers, orders, invoicing and payment) for any local operator, and the centralisation of food and non-food ranges.

Success factors

Availability to producers of ancillary functions, time-savings, allowing them to focus on production.

Use of ICTs to strengthen contacts between producers and consumers, along with support organisations.

Network of rural and urban operators.

Conclusions

Collaborators from the commune administrations or the ADL taking part in workshops have indicated that they see in Topino a concrete tool for developing their own short-chain distribution systems.

Links

<http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/topino-cest-quoi.aspx>

E / The Eco-construction cluster and the Sana Konstruo d'Enghien grouping

A cluster consists of a network of enterprises operating in the same sector and adhering to a common charter. The EC cluster strives for the promotion of eco-construction and local development, notably through the establishment of "groupings".

A grouping also strives for networking, but by giving precedence to proximity, without the use of cumbersome or time-consuming structures.

"Each stakeholder is an independent grape, but the quality of the whole bunch depends on the way in which the grapes connect" "It's the human aspects which win in the end" (Roumy Detournay)



Identity Card

Location:

For the Eco-construction cluster: Walloon Region, headquarters at Namur, Centre Technologique - Université de Namur, Rue du Séminaire 22

For the Sana Konstruo grouping: Vallée de la Haute Senne (Enghien Région)

Contacts :

For the Hervé-Jacques Poskin cluster, co-ordinator (info@ecoconstruction.be)

For the Sana Konstruo grouping: Roumy Detournay, entrepreneur in eco-construction, Rue Potterée 9 at 7880 Flobecq (info@terrehabitat.be)



Main activities

The **Sana Konstruo** grouping is especially useful for the exchange of knowledge as much as for commercial prospection. It promotes interactions for exchange. The conviviality of encounters is important.

From the point of view of functioning, the SK grouping is

- composed of 2 young entrepreneurs, a lot of engineers, 1 seasoned entrepreneur
- co-ordinated/managed by a co-ordinator, secretary and treasurer
- funded by a very small subscription fee to cover costs (e.g. fairs)
- member of the eco-construction cluster
- a body whose mission is formally enshrined in a charter.

The grouping brings about synergies, and therefore time-savings, notably through the provision of shared tools, the provision of shared means of communication (website, participation in certain fairs, etc.), pooled work on certain product launches, the search for useful information, etc.

Success factors

Grouping = De Facto Association (to minimise the administrative aspects).

The ideal size for a grouping varies from between 8 and 15 enterprises to maintain a good interaction.

There is no eco-construction seal of quality, but the acceptance procedure to the cluster could be considered analogous to a kind of approved standard. This procedure goes through the stages of sponsorship, questionnaire (on shared values) and is validated following an assessment period.

The social sector was the basis for the cluster, to meet training requirements. EFT (Entreprises de Formation par le Travail, “workplace training enterprises”).

Shared values are a powerful motivator for collaboration and mutual assistance.

Links

- <http://clusters.wallonie.be/ecoconstruction-en/http://www.terrehabitat.be>
- <http://www.terrehabitat.be>
- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/sana-konstruo-grappe-%C3%A9co-construction-de-la-haute-senne.aspx>
- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/cluster-eco-construction-collaboration-interentreprises.aspx>

F / Enterprise club



The Bureau économique de la Province de Namur has created SME clubs to promote and organise meetings between entrepreneurs, in a convivial setting outside a strictly professional context. These clubs aim to develop networks, to facilitate exchanges on good practices, and to cement business relationships.

Identity Card

- Project leader: BEP (Bureau économique de la Province de Namur)
- Location: Province de Namur (120 entrepreneur project leaders)
- Contacts: Corine Roland (crl@bep.be), Avenue Sergent Vrithoff, 2 5000 Namur

Main activities

The club allows enterprises to strengthen their position and to consolidate. It can become a genuine representative for enterprises in a region:

- Search for added-value
- Management of common problems
- Group representation
- Power to initiate and make proposals

Existing clubs:

- GREPAN (Naninne commercial park club)
- IDEALYS (Crealy science park club)
- GEZMA (Mariembourg commercial park club)
- CINEY enterprise club
- G.E.G. (Gembloux enterprise grouping)
- CEFER (Fernelmont enterprise grouping)
- Guilde des Gesvois Entreprenants (commune of Gesves)
- C2P (club des 2 provinces) active in 10 communes overlapping the provinces of Namur and Luxembourg
- CESAM (Sambreville enterprise club)
- GEROCH (Rochefort enterprise club)

Success factors

Proximity is conviviality. Clubs are often associated with specific areas, often commercial parks, but can also cover a rural area (commune de Gesves), or a wider region (C2P in quite a large territory overlapping two provinces, but with common rural characteristics).

Conclusions

It is important to foster, promote and support the establishment or development of entrepreneurial clubs in rural contexts.

An enterprise club is appropriate for a particular sector as, for example, in the case of tourism in the mould of the trans-frontier project "La Meuse et Vous", launched by the BEP in 2013 to support touristic enterprises in the Meuse Valley by means of a series of initiatives aimed at creating and structuring a trans-frontier tourist destination. It is above all a question of providing common tools, but the project can serve as starting-point for a club.

Links

- www.bep-enterprises.be
- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/clubs-dentreprises-des-partenaires-pour-lavenir.aspx>

G / Co-working

A co-working space has recently been created in Namur. This isn't the shared workspace formula in which certain infrastructures are pooled, but an entirely shared structure in which entrepreneurs maximise their interactions.

Identity Card

- Project leader: private enterprise supported by institutional partners (City of Namur, BEP, Créative Wallonia, University of Namur etc.)
- Date: started in 2012.
- Location: 48 rue de Fer (4th floor) at 5000 Namur
- Budget: 99€/month for one day a week; 249 €/month for daily occupation.
- Contacts: Jean-Yves Huwart, co-ordinator (jy.huwart@global-enterprise.biz)

Main activities

Provision of workplace infrastructures (workspaces, furniture, equipment, services, notably IT, meeting-rooms, amenities, etc.) as well as a co-ordination structure to facilitate interactions, collaborations and synergies. Most of the users of the co-working workspaces have established, at the very least, one shared activity with one of the site partners.

Access to space is personal and can take the form of one or several days per week. There are also formulas providing access to several days spread over a long period. Generally, users do not have a dedicated space and arrange themselves according to their requirements and the available space. The work-areas which are permanently occupied by the same enterprise or worker are limited as such an amenity tends to reduce the advantages of the CW.

Thus, a CW facility in Paris has just eliminated 34% of the fixed work-spaces it formerly provided.



Success factors

The location (proximity to local transport, and also to large organisations).

The modularity of work-spaces provided and the multiplication of social areas.

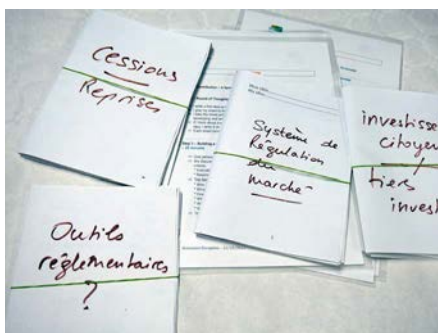
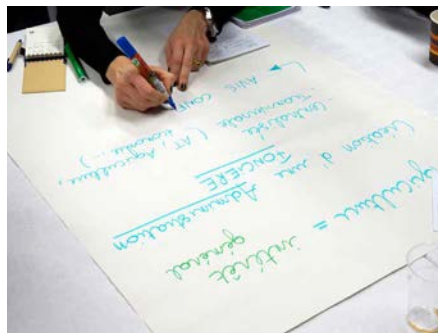
Co-ordination of the complex to facilitate interactions, and finally the development of shared jobs. The opening of attitudes towards the use of new ICTs, and a less formalised way of working.

Conclusions

Co-working facilities are adapted to rural zones. The European network for Co-working spaces has proposed this as a topic for consideration. A similar facility is under development in the Jura.

Links

- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/espace-de-coworking-namur.aspx>
- <http://coworkingnamur.be/>



4.4. Access to land in agriculture

A / A round table on “The land issue in Wallonia”

“The agricultural producer is tomorrow’s star”
“The land system has to be structurally changed”

Summary



While the land issue is the subject of a great deal of debate, the Network, with the help of the participants to the workshop, examined some of the more specific problems: could the solution lie in citizens’ investment? How can disposals/transfers of agricultural land be supported and facilitated? What regulatory tools for land governance can be used to confer permanence to agricultural activity? What system of market regulation should be established? Faced with these vital questions, the participants conferred and attempted to trace courses of action and strategies which could potentially provide an answer to these questions.

Results of the workshop: responses to questions

A series of vital questions connected with the agricultural land issue were put to the participants.

Question 1 : To resort to citizens’ investment?

Citizens’ investment should continue to develop and be supported. It is important therefore to become more acquainted with tools for citizens’ and public sector investment tools to facilitate access to land, such as Crédal, Terre-en-vue, etc.

Several courses of action came to mind:

1. Activate the four “ways in”:
 - inform the citizen about the agricultural concern, along with the use of capital. Offer alternatives rather than preach. Citizens are also responsible!
 - public and commune-owned land: communes also have to become aware of their responsibilities: facilitate the establishment of young and small-scale agricultural producers.
 - land for donation
 - grants of land use
2. Public sector measures:
 - Involve owners and citizens
 - Public sector measures: provide the agricultural producer with pre-emption rights, tax benefits on investment (deduction, link to savings, other)
 - Change the grants on investment and establishment to target access to land
3. Develop lease-buy schemes along with agricultural test areas⁶ as we can see in France
4. Creation of an agricultural fund for access to land: agricultural producers make a contribution which could finance a public or citizens’ fund

Question 2 : How can disposals/transfers of agricultural land be supported and facilitated?

⁶ Agricultural test areas: plot(s) made available to young agricultural producers to allow them to test their activity before starting out as self-employed. For further information, consult the following link to the Réseau Rural Français: <http://www.reseaurural.fr/files/contenus/1933/espacetestf.pdf>.

There was a request to define the courses of action and solutions which would meet the expectations of the “target public”: the **bidders** (young agricultural producer in a family context who wishes to become established, already-established young agricultural producer, young agricultural producer outside the family context) and the **offerors** (those wishing to make disposals at the end of their careers who don’t necessarily have any buyers and are interested to sell their agricultural property **and** land-owners).

Mechanisms for action can be defined at three levels:

- Leasing – law on farm leasing – how to bring about change in this so that it meets the expectations of stakeholders in line with the objective described? Several variables (duration, price, and the environment) might be considered. Why not add incentives in support of young agricultural producers?
- Purchase: implementation of a “purchase-sale” land policy to facilitate transfers and public sector intervention to promote establishment (purchases at below-market prices?) and to prevent purchases by large investors
- Networking of young agricultural producers with sellers

Question 3 : What regulatory tools for land governance can be used to confer durability on agricultural activity?

Support for agriculture and for production from our agricultural land is a public issue.

The instrument which has been proposed is the creation of “a single and centralised land administration”.

This would avoid the issuing of multiple and contradictory instructions which could obstruct progress.

It would be transversal to allow consideration of other issues such as land management, agriculture, the economy, etc.

This administration would be part of the public services since it would aim to serve the public interest.



Its mission: to provide assent on all decisions relating to land (expropriation, re-parcelling, regional land-use planning, new roadways, legislation of land leases, etc.) on the basis of:

- expert advice
- previously-established objective criteria to facilitate the work of the administration
- collaboration with the sector
- prescriptive power to propose norms to political decision-makers
- ...

Question 4 : What system of market regulation should be established?

Several complementary mechanisms have been proposed:

1. The establishment of a “Walloon land bank”
This requires a structural modification of the current land market
Its management should be mixed, the product of an autonomous public/private collaboration. It requires the creation of a management committee made up of experts.
2. Action at the level of the plan for the sector: to freeze land allocation and the use of agricultural land at a fixed level of, for example, 43% of the useful agricultural area (UAA). This percentage would remain fixed and would be maintained by making any necessary changes to land zoning.
The aim of this bank is to preserve landholdings of good quality and to make them available to agricultural producers according to socio-economic and environmental criteria which emerge from

project assessments.

3. Establishment of a fund (financial, landholdings) with the contribution of publicly-owned lands belonging to the State, from public finances and citizens' capital. Direct participation of citizens and consumers who would like to be involved in specific projects.
4. To establish reference prices on the basis of:
 - The agricultural region – use of land – already-established crops (added-value)
 - Assessment of the value of agricultural production
 - Assessment of return / (turnover per hectare) profitability of the landAnd the linkage between the lease price of land and the return.
In the event of non-compliance with the price: a land tax (penalty system) proportional to the excess over the reference price.

Conclusions

The land issue is vast and the questions it raises would require further debate. However, interesting points have come out of these exchanges: the need for a clarification of the expectations of the stakeholders concerned by the question of access to land, the importance of concerted action involving not only public bodies but also the citizen and all stakeholders involved, the need for a re-structuring of land management systems by re-thinking them in a collaborative manner, the idea of creating a public/private agricultural investment fund notably based on citizens' capital, the establishment of a price reference system etc. Certain courses of action are already partly to be found in the recent Code wallon de l'Agriculture (Walloon agricultural code). The consideration of this subject is already making good progress and gives reason for thinking that solutions will materialise.



B / Point Vert

By Kathleen Vanhandenhoven & Jean-François Pêcheur of the GAL Pays des Condruses and Isabelle Mélon of the CréaJob enterprise incubator

For some years, short-chain distribution systems have come into favour and through them, market gardening activities. However, the establishment of market gardening operations is often fraught with difficulties, and all the more so if one isn't from an agricultural background (access to training, access to land, client base, techniques, isolation, etc.). In response to these needs, the GAL Pays des Condruses initiated, in collaboration with CréaJob, a "market gardening test area", which means a pooling of market gardening infrastructures to support project developers within the framework of an enterprise incubator. The aim: to allow the establishment of market gardeners in a system of short-chain distribution networks while supporting access to land.

"Networking is super-important »



Identity Card of the project

- **Project leader:** GAL Pays des Condruses
- **Project duration:** Since 2010
- **Location:** The test plots are located in Strée in the commune of Modave, Liège Province.
- **Project value:**
 - Co-ordination : 0,5 ETP (full-time equivalence) (LEADER + Eco soc fed/Fédération wallonne des Agences-Conseil en économie sociale)
 - Investments:
 - LEADER: 12,000 €
 - Plan Marshall 2.VERT: 14,500 €
 - Eco soc fed: 29,000 €
 - Biodibap: 10,000 €
 - Soil treatment/clearance
 - Donated services from the Centre des Technologies Agronomiques (CTA) and Devenirs association trainees

Contacts

GAL Pays des Condruses – Jean-François Pêcheur – +32 85 27 49 77 - jeanfrancois.pecheur@galcondruses.be
CréaJob – Isabelle Mélon - +32 84 46 83 80 – isabelle.melon@creajob.be

For further information:

- Documentary by the rtbf : http://www.rtf.be/video/detail_des-espaces-test-pour-les-maraichers?id=1831168
- GAL Pays des Condruses website: <http://www.galcondruses.be/>
- CréaJob website: <http://www.creajob.be> (agro-tourism sector)
- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/point-vert-favrosier-la-r%C3%A9ussite-dun-projet-de-marra%C3%AEchage.aspx>

Main activities

Today, the young market gardener operating “outside the family context” who wishes to establish a market gardening activity encounters a series of obstacles on the technical, moral, and financial levels. Amongst these, we note the lack of existing training, access to land (land prices, land availability, the precariousness of land tenancy agreements, etc.), access to credit, the absence of follow-ups after establishment, the necessity of creating a client base alone and of ensuring logistics and transport (time, expense, equipment, etc.). What arises from this is a geographical and mental isolation (heavy, time-consuming work, lack of support from other market gardeners, etc.) which can lead to abandonment.

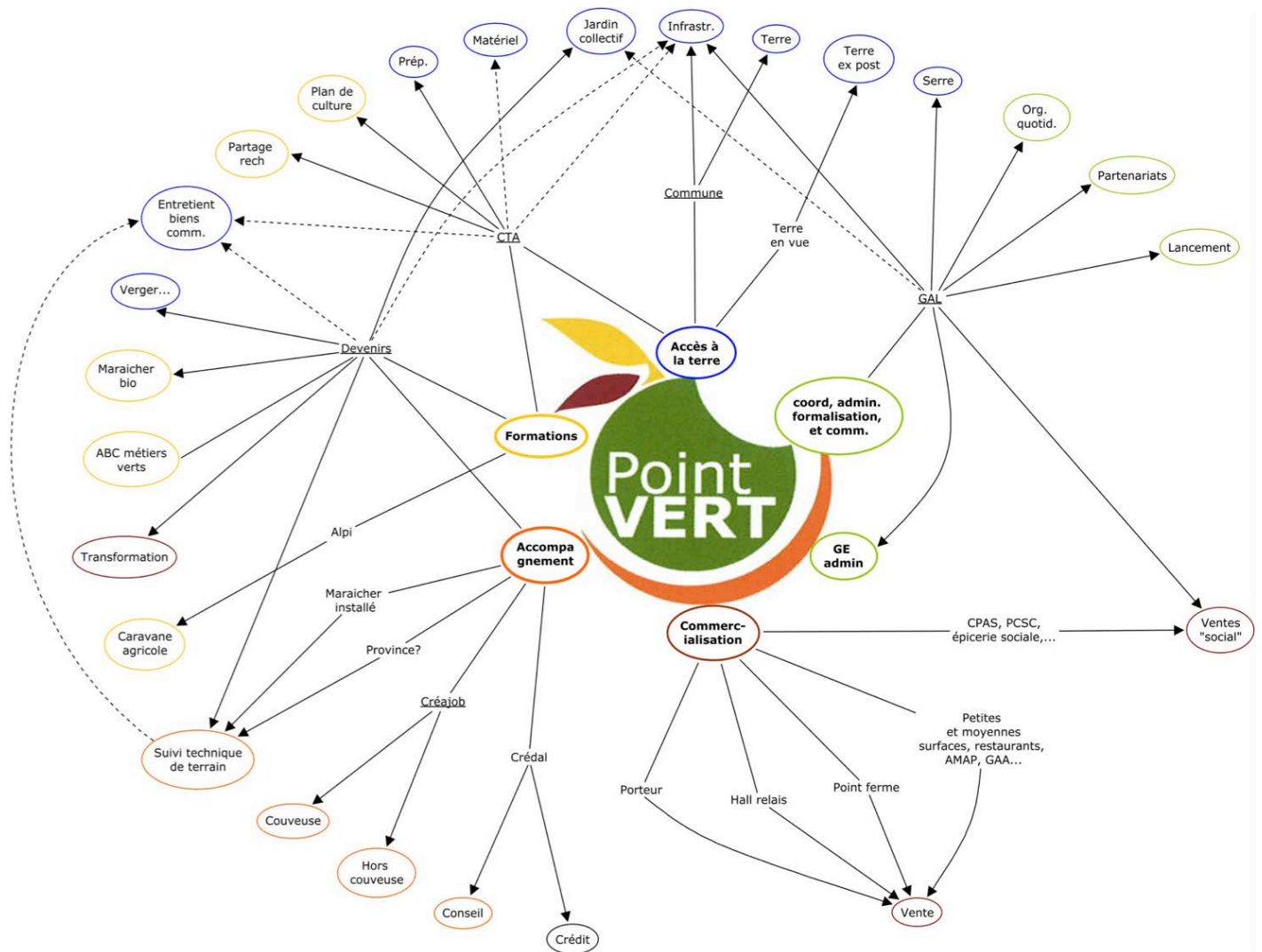
The aim of Point Vert is to help the market gardener to launch an independent and viable production by providing an efficient support system which limits, to the maximum extent, the risks and difficulties of establishing new production, and of accessibility to land.

The target public generally includes all those who would like to launch a market gardening operation. In more concrete terms, it is mainly concerned with young unemployed who have undergone the training course provided by the ASBL Devenirs, a professional training body. Up till now, the entirety of the candidates have been market gardeners “outside the family context”, who therefore have no access to land, to equipment, to grants, etc. The average age fluctuates between 30 and 45 years. Their project is to set up a market gardening operation on a small area of land. They therefore have to undertake direct organic sales in order to generate a sufficiently high margin. Over the 2013 season, the Point Vert infrastructures received 3 market gardeners: 2 in enterprise incubator, and 1 in complementary self-employment.

The GAL Pays des Condruses is supported in its initiative by several direct and indirect partners:

- The commune of Modave which donated a 6 hectare plot
- The Centre des technologies agronomiques (CTA) in Stree for technical support
- The ASBL Devenirs, an occupational integration body which trains future market gardeners
- The ASBL Créa-Job, an enterprise incubator recognised as a SAACE (self-employment support organisation) by Wallonia
- Training organisations (EFT, OISP, CRABE, Fermes écoles, Caravane Agricole) for the training of the initiators of potential projects (it is often necessary to meet a large number of applicants to achieve a few concrete implementations in the incubator)
- Point Ferme and the Hall Relais to facilitate the marketing of the produce
- The land co-operative Terre-en-vue to facilitate access to land by market gardeners who launch their activity





In practice, a 6 hectare plot of land is made available to (future) market gardeners by the commune of Modave. This plot is made up of 6 allotments of ½ hectare, 2 tunnels covering 240m², a rainwater basin with a capacity of 400m³, of an irrigation system for the allotments, a storage area, vegetable-cleaning equipment, a rotary tiller, and small items of equipment necessary for market gardening. In addition, the market gardeners at Point Vert are certified organic producers.

In the case of an unemployed person, the market gardener taking part will be supported, notably by the enterprise incubator CréaJob, which will be responsible for providing personalised support to project initiators before, during, and after they have become established as market gardeners. The GAL makes use of CréaJob as the provision of support is specific, and because this incubator has a specific branch specialised in market gardening.



Project	Help in the preparation and development of the project
Incubator	<p>Test of the professional activity 'life-size' (production, purchases, sales, etc.) using the legal accomodation, along with VAT no., provided by CréaJob.</p> <p>The project initiator tests his activity within the framework of a professional training contract furnished by the Forem (Walloon agency for professional training and employment) for a period of 18 months. The candidate retains his unemployment benefits and receives an extra 1€ per hour worked. After this period, the candidate has to decide whether or not to launch the activity.</p> <p>The advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No social security contributions to be paid - Right to reclaim all generated profits at the end of the project - No penalty in the event of failure - Free and constant administrative, financial and commercial support - Compliant with the FASFC (Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain), and the NEO (National Employment Office) - Access to an itinerant merchant's licence <p>For the last 36 months, approximately every 2 months, a person comes out of the incubator.</p> <p>If the candidate is not registered as unemployed, CréaJob also supports the project initiator, but the candidate doesn't enjoy the benefits of the incubator.</p>
Finance	Research and help in the preparation of the application for finance.
Training	Marketing, sales, IT, administrative and financial management, etc. Training is important as a trained market gardener has a greater chance of success when launching the activity!
Information	Technical training, FASFC, ISA (agricultural sector investment) grants, micro-credits, creation of co-operatives, etc.
Networking	<p>Introductions of complementary projects and skills; networking, associations, partnerships, search for usable land, etc.</p> <p>Networking is a necessary condition for the success of a market garden project!</p>

If not registered as unemployed, the market gardener doesn't enjoy the benefit of coverage by the incubator, but is eligible for support from Point Vert and its other partners. The GAL additionally has an important role in helping the market gardener develop markets by using, in particular, other existing projects (Point Ferme, Hall relais, etc.) and by introducing them to markets, joint procurement groups, GASAP (social joint procurement group in support of small-scale agriculture), organic grocery stores, and small independently-owned stores. It also gets involved in the planning and maintenance of the common spaces of the site with other market gardeners. Technical support is provided by the ASBL Devenirs and the CTA.

"Without Point Vert, it wouldn't have been possible".

Success factors

The Point Vert project lies in the intermediate phase between training and establishment. In launching themselves, young market gardeners will possess all the necessary elements for the success of their projects:

- Time to develop their sales progressively,
- A place to experiment with crops and production techniques,
- A technical support structure and an outsider's view on their activities,
- A place for exchanges between market gardeners,
- Pooled production tools with other market gardeners,
- The freedom to work completely autonomously as if they were self-employed.



Those who achieve the greatest success in their project have acquired technical skills and a fairly good grounding in their trade (crop protocols, crop treatments, rotations, profitable and productive techniques, etc.). They also have some commercial skills and a minimum of skills in administrative and financial management. They don't have any significant personal financial problems (otherwise, there would be a risk of confusing private and professional treasuries). The geographical proximity between candidates' homes and the plots put at their disposal is also an important success factor.

Finally, the experiment conducted by the GAL has allowed them to identify the necessity of being more interventionist in the management of the land and in market gardening practices. In particular, several points for improvement have been noted :

- The crop protocol is an important stage in a market gardening project. The CTA and the ASBL Devenirs will follow the candidates and validate their crop protocols while ensuring that each proposes original and innovative ideas.
- The planks and demarcation lines will be calculated so as to allow the use of a rotary tiller.
- It is necessary to provide access for the machines in the event of an intervention.
- The trainer for ASBL Devenirs will inspect the allotments every week to draw up a plan of activities.
- The sharing of tools and infrastructures requires internal rules in order to prevent the many problems which could occur in terms of the co-existence of different market gardeners.
- The GAL has to continue the development of marketing and short-chain distribution networks to allow future market gardeners to focus exclusively on their production. Next year, a system of direct sales from the field will be established.

Conclusions

The success of a market gardening project rests on three criteria: the project initiator has to have technical and administrative training, has to be supported, helped, and coached through the public and/or private initiatives available, and the project has to be networked with others to create opportunities for finding partners and reaching consumers. For this type of project, networking is indispensable. Training and support remain real necessities for this sector. In the current context, it is important to continue supporting these agricultural producers, stakeholders in the development of a sustainable rural agriculture. This is what the Point Vert project is attempting to do in looking for additional plots from communes and landowners, and by joining forces with partners such as the Terre-en-vue land co-operative. By expanding its market coverage and intensifying its promotion of the project, the Point Vert team hope, finally, that similar projects will take shape in other parts of Wallonia.



C / The Louis Larock farm

Farm visit guided by Louis Larock, owner, and Peter Van Mol, market gardener

The Larock family farm is located at Rotheux, on the outskirts of the city of Liège, having been in existence for more than 80 years. After completing his university studies, Louis Larock, innovative agricultural producer, took over his parents' farm, and re-developed it by launching social and agricultural activities: production of meat, milk, cheese, butter, yoghurt and vegetables according to bio-dynamic principles. Today, as in the case of many farms in Wallonia, the Larock farm faces a succession problem. With this in view, several people are collaborating on the question and are organising themselves collectively to bring about a future in which the citizens' land co-operative Terre-en-vue will buy and progressively place the entirety of the landholding (27 hectares) at the disposal of the project.

"Agriculture is a concern for us all!"

"Philosophically, land does not belong to us"

"Land isn't a commodity. A commodity is something you make."

"There's a need to reach back to the soil"

"The farmer lives poor but dies rich"

"Land is a retirement nest-egg for agricultural producers"

Identity Card

- Project leader: Louis Larock
- Project duration: management of the farm taken over by Louis Larock in 1986
- Location: 12, rue Duchêne, B-4120 Rotheux-Rimière (Neupré)
- Contact: larockdynamique@collectifs.net
- Louis Larock: +32 43 72 04 75
- Peter Van Mol: +32 42 69 03 70
- Website: <http://www.fermelarock.be>



Main activities

The Larock farm has been a biodynamic farm since 1986, the date on which Louis Larock took over the family farm. He describes it as a living organism of which each part has a function in maintaining equilibrium.

Thus, the activities of the farm are varied and play a role in its smooth functioning:

- Accommodation of around ten people, adults and children;
- Biodynamic production: dairy and beef cows, pigs, market gardening, cheese-making, mixed orchard, bee-hives, and small fruit;
- training in biodynamic agriculture: theoretical and practical, this training has been running for 3 years, 2 days/week, for groups of around ten people;
- Public visits: schools, handicapped people, people facing professional commitment problems, school trainees, groups of young people, anthropologists, volunteers who wish to experience life on a farm, etc.;
- Festivals held in every season, the most renowned being the festival of Saint John;
- Sales of farm products: dairy produce, seasonal vegetables, apples, pears and small fruit, jams, meat and pork products, honey, syrup, etc.

The particular feature of the Larock farm is that a large number of residential people, volunteers, or visitors (joint procurement groups, customers, walkers, etc.) contribute every day to making it alive and dynamic. These people voluntarily take part in the work on the farm, buy its produce, and relax there. The farm also receives intermittent visits from pupils in local schools, people who wish to be trained, or simply to "reach back to the soil". It isn't an educational farm but an "open" farm.

Amongst them, Peter Van Mol, who has been a collaborator on the farm for several years, recently returned to the Larock farm to develop a market gardening activity as a full-time self-employed person. He also organises training courses in bio-dynamics and continues to give courses from time to time in professional agricultural organisations. Peter has been in an enterprise incubator since June 2013 and therefore benefits from support in terms of accounting and management, etc. After six months in the incubator, progress has been very good. He will enjoy this status until his activity is stable and sufficiently profitable.

While the land on which Peter exercises and manages his activity belong to Louis Larock, collaboration between the two “associates” is based on exchange and mutual agreement. For example, Peter cultivates part of the land without charge, uses the farm’s compost, etc., and in exchange Louis, who includes his landholdings in his fiscal declaration, receives subsidies and benefits from Peter’s work within the farm.

Today close to retirement, Louis Larock is thinking about the succession of his farm. The Larock Farm’s land extends over 27 hectares (of which Louis is owner of 5,5 hectares). At the current time and by virtue of the high cost of agricultural land, it is impossible for a single owner to buy this landholding without incurring significant long-term debt. However, a solution has emerged with the intervention of the Terre-en-vue co-operative.

The Terre-en-vue land co-operative (www.terre-en-vue.be) has been in existence since April 2012. Louis Larock has been present from the time the project was conceived. An event sparked off the collaboration: a plot of 800 m² divided between Louis’ brothers and sisters was due to be sold rapidly at the request of the family. The farm’s occupants could not buy the plot independently, so they had the idea of contacting Terre-en-vue.

It was therefore a natural outcome that a local citizens’ group was launched in Rotheux in August 2013. The aim: to raise awareness amongst the farm’s customers of the land issue as well as to generate local involvement and re-establish ties with the inhabitants, and to embed the farms in a community of people. The campaign was successful and several people acquired shares in the land to support the initiative. Today, the farm is committed to maintaining the ties with the population and to raising awareness of its project: village square market, article in the local gazette, joint procurement group, etc.

When he ceases his activities, Louis Larock hopes that Terre-en-vue will buy all his land-holdings as he believes that *“even if the land was affordably priced, it isn’t normal that with each succeeding generation, money is poured into the soil. Land has a special status, which has to be respected.”*

A parallel project is also under way: a collective purchase by the occupants of the farm. Sharing the same values, their aim is to be able to manage the farm collaboratively, allowing each to take responsibility for one area of activity. Experiments with positive results exist in Germany and in France, but it remains an ambitious project which requires careful preparation, along with some further discussion in order to reach agreement.

But in concrete terms, how does the purchase of land by the terre-en-Vue co-operative work?



The financing works on two complementary levels: the local, to revitalise the economic fabric around the farm, and also on a bigger scale, by bringing together parts which are not dedicated to any project in particular, and which allow the possession of a certain amount of capital to be used in the event of sudden sales. It is also for this reason that Terre-en-vue has a regional structure, enabling it to spread the overheads, the costs of research, communication, information, etc.

Terre-en-vue is above all a citizens’ movement, and the aim is to operate 100% on the basis of own funds (co-operators’ parts) and to avoid the risk of indebtedness. In order to avoid any shortage of liquidity, each co-operator who wishes to leave the co-

operative has to find a replacement. This requires the co-operator to have recourse to the local group or to the co-operative. Still, to take advantage of every opportunity, collaborations with Crédal, a co-operator of Terre-en-vue, or the Triodos bank, are currently under way.



The question of dividend distributions has come up. Being a social company, Terre-en-vue doesn't distribute dividends as there are no profits. After purchasing landholdings, the prices of leases are set according to the reference rate. If we wanted to make dividend distributions to co-operators, it would be necessary to increase lease rentals, which would have an

impact on produce prices and thus on the consumer – in other words, on the co-operator. The aim of Terre-en-vue is not to look for profitable land projects. Each co-operator invests above all in an agricultural or social project whose objective is to revitalise the local economy, to enhance the durability of agriculture and to ensure healthy food for future generations. Which finally yields positive benefits to all concerned.

By purchasing land from agricultural producers, doesn't Terre-en-vue impair their pension savings? The question has been debated and settled: Terre-en-vue helps first and foremost those who cannot invest in land at all.

Success factors

- The creation of a collective and citizens' interaction around a farm requires links with the population in the locality and surrounding areas. Once the links have been established, it becomes possible to propose and to develop collective projects.
- The search for exemplary cases of collective experiences in other countries such as Germany or France certainly enabled the Larock farm to develop a collective initiative.
- The proximity of the farm to the village centre and to the city of Liège also facilitates the establishment of links compared with farms located in remote geographical areas and therefore less accessible to citizens.
- The collaboration works particularly because the entirety of those involved in the farm share the same values and pursue the same philosophical goals (biodynamics, sharing of resources, community property, etc.)

Conclusions

While the land issue is burningly topical and preoccupying to politicians, professional organisations, investors, etc., we note that it is first and foremost a societal problem, which affects all of us. Agricultural landholdings have become commodities and have lost their primary function: to be an instrument of agricultural production for the farmer for the benefit of everyone. This is the reason why collective citizens' movements such as Terre-en-Vue, who allow a farm to be put to the service of the community by reinforcing ties with the population, have an important role to play. And that has been well understood by the Larock farm, which is going further by considering the collective ownership of the farm.

Links to online presentations :

- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/la-ferme-larock.aspx>
- <http://www.reseau-pwdr.be/pr%C3%A9sentation/acc%C3%A8s-%C3%A0-la-terre-en-europe-quelles-possibilit%C3%A9s-quelles-barri%C3%A8res.aspx>



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 - Porc bio de Gaume



www.gaumefermiere.com

Réalisation : Réseau wallon de Développement Rural - Novembre 2013



Chanvre wallon



Actuellement, les productions de chanvre belge valorisent les trois principaux sous-produits de la culture:

Filasse

Naturelle, légère et très solide, la fibre de chanvre trouve des applications dans bien des domaines.



Chènevis

Riche en acides gras essentiels et en protéines, la graine de chanvre possède des propriétés tout à fait exceptionnelles tant d'un point de vue alimentaire que cosmétique.



Chènevotte

Matériau léger, absorbant l'eau, stockant le CO2 et entièrement recyclable, la chènevotte se compose de morceaux de paille de chanvre fibrés ou défibrés. Elle s'utilise dans la construction, comme paillage dans les parcs et jardins ainsi que dans les litières pour animaux.



Matériaux de construction

Les laines de chanvre et panneaux semi-rigides s'utilisent en construction comme la laine de verre.

Textiles

Vêtements, chaussures, sacs, ... peuvent contenir de 40 à 100 % de fibre de Chanvre.

Plasturgie

Les fibres de chanvre sont utilisées dans les plastiques pour les renforcer et les alléger. On en retrouve dans plusieurs marques de voiture.

Papeterie

Les papiers de cigarette et certains papiers spéciaux sont usinés avec de la fibre de chanvre.

Alimentation humaine

Les magasins bio et de proximité proposent généralement une gamme de produits à base de chanvre : graine grillée, graine décortiquée, huile de chanvre, chocolat, couscous,...

Alimentation animale

Les graines de chanvre s'utilisent dans l'alimentation pour oiseaux et comme appât pour la pêche. Les tourteaux de graines de chanvre (sous-produits des huileries) sont riches en protéines et peuvent être valorisés dans l'alimentation des animaux d'élevage.

Cosmétique

L'huile de chanvre, riche en acides gras essentiels permet de lutter contre le vieillissement de la peau. Elle répare et renforce les tissus capillaires et cutanés. On l'utilise sous forme d'huile, de crème, de baume pour les lèvres, de savon ou encore dans les shampoings.

Construction

La chènevotte est utilisée, en construction, en association avec un liant (principalement de la chaux) pour la réalisation de béton, blocs ou enduits. Les matériaux chaux-chanvre sont des isolants thermiques et acoustiques ainsi que des régulateurs d'humidité. L'utilisation de chaux-chanvre dans les habitations améliore le confort avec un impact environnemental beaucoup plus faible que les matériaux traditionnels.

Paillage et Litière

Peut servir comme paillage aux jardins et protège les terres des mauvaises herbes, de la sécheresse et du froid. La litière de chanvre offre aux animaux hygiène et confort.

Réalisation : Réseau wallon de Développement Rural - Novembre 2013



Le Pôle d'Excellence Rural

« Développer la filière liège en Marenne et Marensin », un outil favorisant les démarches collaboratives

Si le secteur du Liège a été très florissant entre le XIXème et la première partie du XXème siècle, à partir des années 1950, ce secteur a fortement décliné. A ce jour, 5 entreprises demeurent en activité en aquitaine, dont 4 sur le territoire du Pays Adour Landes Océanes.

En 2005, ces entreprises ont créé l'association « le Liège Gascon ». Elles ont relancé des levées de liège et amorcé des actions de communication. Malgré cette mobilisation, la pérennisation cette dynamique s'est posée.

L'association du Liège Gascon a pu s'inscrire dans une dynamique plus large et être en synergie avec des questions locales : développement économique, emploi, formation mais aussi environnement et marketing territorial mais aussi avec d'autres partenaires territoriaux.

Ce travail en réseau a trouvé son prolongement dans la labélisation Pôle d'Excellence Rurale, confortant ainsi le travail collaboratif de ces entreprises.

Le PER poursuit 3 objectifs : économique, environnemental et patrimonial et a permis d'élaborer une stratégie de développement répondant à l'ensemble des problèmes posés à la filière locale : développement de la ressource, modernisation de l'appareil productif, recherche de nouveaux débouchés et valorisation de la filière, mise en cohérence avec la stratégie de développement local.

12 Opérations ont été retenues :

- Veille économique et sociale territoriale
- Recherche/Développement
- Mise en place d'un itinéraire de promenade du chêne liège
- Réalisation d'un support de communication grand public
- Organisation d'un colloque sur l'avenir de la filière liège en France
- Plantation de chêne liège
- Mise en place d'une formation continue à la levée de liège
- Mécanisation de l'exploitation
- Campagne d'information des propriétaires forestiers
- Campagne de sensibilisation des entrepreneurs de travaux forestiers
- Chêne liège et milieu urbain
- Coopération

Coût total du projet : 450 000 euros.

Réalisation : Réseau wallon de Développement Rural - Novembre 2013



GAL
Pays Adour Landes Océanes



Réseau d'investisseurs-citoyens pour une économie locale solidaire

QU'EST-CE QU'UN CLUB CIGALES ?

Un club CIGALES (Club d'Investisseurs pour une Gestion Alternative et Locale de l'Épargne Solidaire) est une structure de capital risque solidaire mobilisant l'épargne de ses membres au service de la création et du développement de petites entreprises locales et collectives (SARL, SCOP, SCIC, SA, association, ...).

Le Club est constitué de 5 à 20 personnes qui mettent une partie de leur épargne en commun. Il se réunit plusieurs fois par an pour recevoir les créateurs, décider de leur placement et affecter cette épargne collective au capital des entreprises.

C'est un lieu d'échanges et d'auto-formation sur les questions économiques et de développement local, où investisseurs et porteurs de projet font l'expérience d'une économie socialement responsable et solidaire.

Le club a une durée de vie de 5 ans, prorogable une fois. Au terme de sa vie, il procède à la liquidation de son portefeuille, au prorata des apports des cigaliers.

Les CIGALES sont au carrefour de l'épargne de proximité, de l'épargne éthique et de l'épargne solidaire.

<http://www.cigales.asso.fr>

Réalisation : Réseau wallon de Développement Rural - Novembre 2013



Ensemble pour un accès à la terre

Enrayer la disparition des terres agricoles, alléger le parcours des agriculteurs qui cherchent à s'installer, et développer l'agriculture biologique et paysanne. Voici les engagements qui mobilisent Terre de Liens à travers 21 régions de France.

Leur initiative s'appuie sur une dynamique associative et citoyenne atypique : l'épargne et les dons du public permettent d'acquérir du foncier agricole et de recréer du lien entre paysans et citoyens pour préserver les fermes à travers les générations. Ces lieux sont ensuite proposés en location à des agriculteurs pour des productions favorisant la biodiversité et le respect des sols.

Au-delà, Terre de Liens informe l'opinion publique et noue des partenariats avec les décideurs locaux pour impulser de nouvelles dynamiques dans les territoires. L'objectif : impliquer le plus grand nombre dans l'avenir de nos campagnes, et donner l'occasion d'exercer notre responsabilité collective.

Terre de Liens en 2013, chiffres-clés

Les structures

- 1 association nationale
- 1 Foncière, entreprise d'investissement solidaire
- 1 Fondation reconnue d'utilité publique
- 19 associations territoriales couvrant la France métropolitaine

Les fermes

- 89 fermes acquises par Terre de Liens et gérées au quotidien
- 10 fermes en cours d'acquisition
- 30 fermes à l'étude pour acquisition
- 2.000 hectares soustraits à la spéculation et dédiés à une agriculture paysanne et bio
- De nombreuses activités agricoles : maraîchage, arboriculture, élevage ovin, bovin et porcin, production laitière et fromagère, apiculture, cultures céréalières, paysans boulangers, plantes aromatiques et médicinales, viticulture, petits fruits et transformation, brasseur, poulaillers, etc...

Les gens

- 300 administrateurs(-rices) bénévoles à travers le territoire
- 50 salarié(e)s répartis sur le territoire
- 150 fermiers et fermières installés sur des fermes Terre de Liens
- 500 candidat(e)s à l'installation agricole conseillés chaque année
- 8.000 actionnaires solidaires
- 2.500 adhérent(e)s
- 2.200 donateurs(-rices)

Les capitaux

- 30 millions d'euros de capital pour la Foncière Terre de Liens
- 1 million d'euros de capital pour la Fondation Terre de Liens

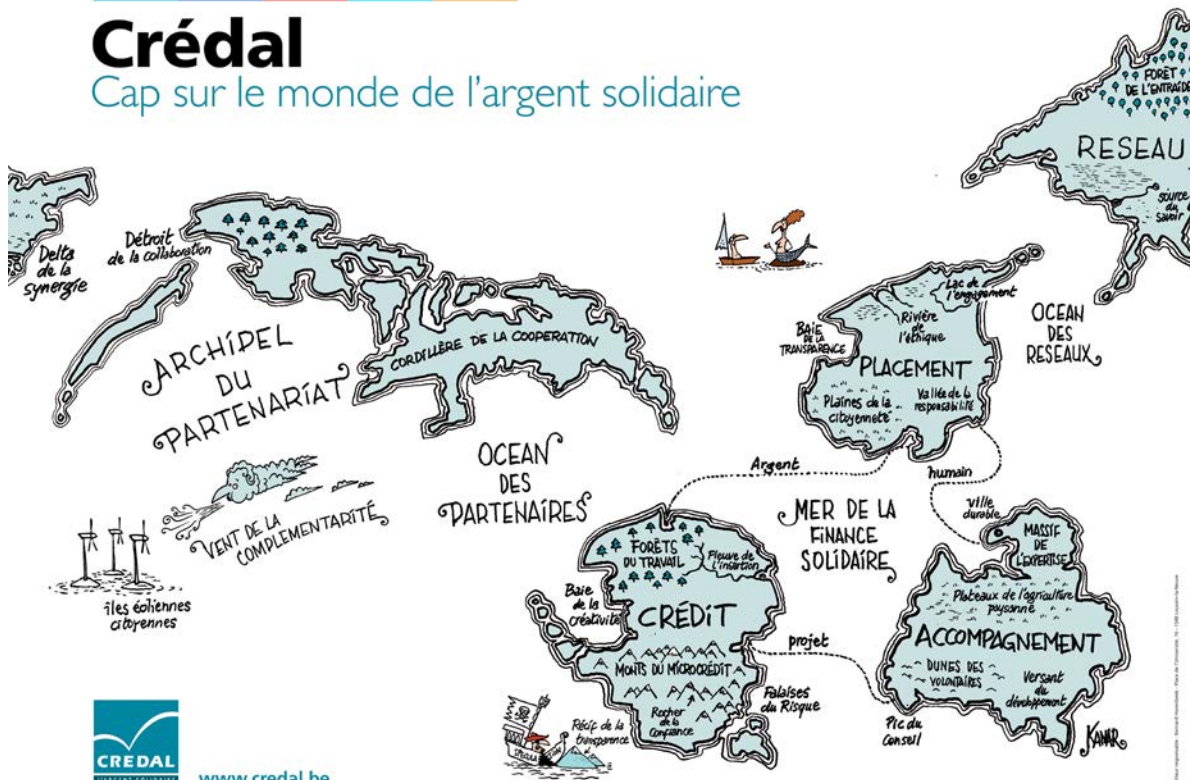
www.terredeliens.org

Réalisation : Réseau wallon de Développement Rural - Novembre 2013



Crédal

Cap sur le monde de l'argent solidaire



www.credal.be

Le groupement d'employeurs **Job'Ardent**

**48 entreprises des provinces
de Liège et Namur**

**9 travailleurs :
6 infographistes, 2 secrétaires
et 1 responsable qualité**



Depuis 2000, la loi belge permet aux entreprises de se regrouper pour engager ensemble un collaborateur qu'ils se partagent selon un agenda fixé d'avance. Chaque employé est engagé à temps plein, c'est la condition fixée par la loi.

Depuis 2008, Job'Ardent fait office de pionnier et est l'un des trois groupements qui existent en Belgique.

En France, les groupements d'employeurs ont permis de créer 35.000 emplois.

Par ailleurs, le groupement d'employeurs doit avoir le format juridique d'un GIE : groupement d'intérêt économique.

www.cciconnect.be

Réalisation : Réseau wallon de Développement Rural - Avril 2013




Le partenariat

Nos pains sont le résultat d'un échange de savoir et de savoir-faire entre producteurs, meuniers et boulangers locaux. Chacun exerce ses talents à son échelle et nos échanges nous permettent de progresser pour construire une filière autonome et équitable.

Les Céréales

Les qualités nutritionnelles et organoleptiques sont à la base de nos démarches. Nous choisissons des variétés adaptées aux pratiques de l'agriculture biologique. Anciennes ou nouvelles, ces variétés sont cultivées de façon à en tirer la meilleure expression de votre terroir.

L'essaimage

Plutôt que d'industrialiser nos processus, nous avons choisi de transmettre notre savoir-faire en formant des personnes qui partagent nos valeurs. A terme, un réseau de franchises « Maison Legrand » vous permettra de trouver nos pains à quelques pas de chez vous en leur garantissant la qualité qui fait la notoriété de notre enseigne.

Changement de paradigme

Nous ne cherchons pas à nourrir le monde mais nous voulons vous proposer le meilleur de ce que nous pouvons faire chez nous. Notre échelle est locale et nous pouvons dessiner ensemble le chemin qui sépare votre pain de la parcelle sur laquelle il a grandi.

Depuis 1831...

Depuis six générations et de père en fils, la boulangerie Legrand a transmis son savoir-faire, l'amour et le respect des traditions ancestrales dans la fabrication du pain biologique. La boulangerie Legrand se caractérise par un concept de qualité garanti par le savoir-faire acquis dans le domaine de la boulangerie bio, ainsi qu'un souci permanent de professionnalisme.



Rue Emile Cuvelier 18 - 5000 Namur
Tél.: +32 (0)81/22.23.27
www.boulangerie-legrand.be



Que fait Terre-en-vue ?

L'association accompagne les agriculteurs et citoyens dans leurs projets d'agriculture durable. Elle crée et anime un réseau citoyen. Elle développe et partage une expertise et un plaidoyer sur l'accès à la terre.



La coopérative acquiert des fermes au moyen de l'épargne citoyenne et les confie à des agriculteurs qui adhère à la philosophie du mouvement.

La fondation reçoit des fermes ou des donations financières qu'elle met à disposition du mouvement.



www.terre-en-vue.be



Que vise Terre-en-vue ?

- **Faciliter l'accès à la terre** pour encourager les agriculteurs/trices qui produisent une alimentation saine
- **Protéger les terres agricoles** de la spéculation et de l'agriculture non durable
- **Préserver la fonction alimentaire** des terres agricoles
- **Améliorer la qualité de l'environnement**, la fertilité des sols et la biodiversité
- **Renforcer les liens** entre les agriculteurs/trices, les citoyens/nes et la terre
- **Développer une économie agricole locale** basée sur le circuit court
- **Valoriser le métier** d'agriculteur



www.terre-en-vue.be



Créer son entreprise seul dans son coin? C'est du passé!

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