

**EURAGRI work-shop**

31 May 2017, 10.30 – 17.00

Kowi, 98 rue du Trône, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

Diversity – a strategic key issue for future European agro, food and bio-economy research.

Towards more diversification targets in Europe

Generally after post World War II the strategic approach for European agro/food/forestry/fisheries production has been based on economy of scale. This has concerned production as well as distribution and consumption phases. These trends have been supported by national and international policies and research activities.

However, with changing conditions in the global competitive markets for commodity products - including animal and dairy produce - this production approach as the only solution has gradually been more and more questioned in Europe. There are several reasons for this.

New calls for local and regional production and consumption

The classical European pattern of national specialization depending on environmental, historical and cultural reasons for the production systems has been eroded due to large scale strategies among dominant economic actors in the sector. However, local needs, identity, cultural factors and transparency of product origins and characteristics (including health and other risk perception factors) have driven the establishments of not only recent local “farmers markets” in urban contexts, but also supermarket chains to adopt segments of their portfolio to include more regionally/locally produced items. Thus consumer demand for diversity of choice and some control over purchase options has already had an impact. This demand is often driven by consumers (often of urban origins) with the willingness to pay for such specialties and “fashion” tendencies driven e.g. by popular TV programs and the media. The trend is flanked by increasing environmental, animal welfare and health concerns (i.e. food safety issues such as pesticide and antibiotics residues in food produced outside of national and even more local controls). It reflects a renewed interest in a stronger degree of diversification connected not least to high quality and high value produce based on authenticity, sustainability and traceability.

Importance to renew the European production landscape

This form of “new” production and consumption (niche) produce can be based on traditional production forms that were since long developed in all parts of Europe in adaption to the differences in biological and geo-climatic conditions in this part of the world. However, in order to serve the demand for regional specificities and enhanced “authenticity” there is an increased need

to link urban areas with their close by hinterlands in new organizational forms and innovative new types of business models. Also an increased connection between food production and tourism (e.g. as already is developed in as varied places as Tuscany and in Scandinavia) is on the plate. But diversification strategies need to go beyond the purely territorial approach by trying to connect to other high value sectors such as health (i.e. medical conditions or age related foods), materials (i.e. plastics, isolation materials) and energy (bio based energy solution, wind or solar – all land-use related in one way or the other) serving their specific and diverse needs. This calls for new structural alliances and new forms of prioritization of land use. It can be seen as new expressions of the emerging bio-economy, of improved tendencies towards circular economy and interest for new forms of structural connections between various sectors as food-water-energy. Furthermore the production conditions in certain parts of Europe have already been altered due to climate change. Wine and horticulture production in certain regions of southern Europe has become more and more difficult and risky. Here diverse production approaches have to be found to spread risk in case of harvest failure.

European potentials

Europe has a number of potential advantages on which to base a new strategical approach. Europe with its many regions has a common long history of economic, cultural and ecological diversity that has shaped diverse interwoven infrastructures and net-works of different actors within the sector(s) and beyond.

But how can these advantages be put into practice to benefit larger fractions of the future bio-based economy? How should a strategic policy be designed and implemented to mobilize the necessary innovation capacities? What are the common features and similarities within Europe to build on? And last but not least what are the fields and directions of research to accompany such an approach?

These are the questions we would like to address with you in this workshop according to the following program:

Agenda for the day:

10.30-11.00 **Arrival and coffee**

11.00 -11.20 **Welcome by Pascal Bergeret, President of EURAGRI**
Introduction to workshop by Uno Svedin, EURAGRI member of board

11.20-12.00 **Diversity as a strategical challenge**
What does it entail for European research strategy?

In this session we would like to focus on the multiple dimensions of the very complex context, the European agro/food/forestry/fishing sectors (also in relation to CAP) to secure a holistic research approach allowing a clearer strategizing and framing.

Introduction: Anne-Francoise Schmid, Écoles des Mines, Paris

Moderator: Uno Svedin, Stockholm University

12.15-14.45 **How is diversity applied in practice and what innovation tendencies emerge?**

In this session we intend to discuss the different strategies in different countries. There exists disparity in conditions within countries but also shared development problems and potentials. How do these influence transformation and adaptation? What are the respective frameworks in which governments, private sector actors, pressure groups and citizens could accept processes of change?

Introduction: Simone Sterly, Institute of Rural Development Research, Frankfurt

Allisson Locanto, INRA Versailles Grignon

Yuna Chiffolleau, INRA Montpellier

Moderator: Gianluca Brunori, University of Pisa

13.00-14.00 interrupted by **Lunch**

15.00-15.45 **What is the potential for an increased EU diversity oriented strategy?**

In this session we would like to examine the potentially severely changing international conditions (climate change, population growth, diminishing fossil fuels) and their possible impact on security in general and food security in particular. Would deliberate diversification make a difference?

Introduction: André Torre, INRA AgroParisTech

Moderator: Pascal Bergeret

16.00-16.30 **Discussion and reflections from the day and summary**