



EUROPEAN EEMLAND CONFERENCE
VERSATILE COUNTRYSIDE

EUROPEAN MULTIFUNCTIONAL FARMERS NETWORK

22 - 24 OCTOBER 2008

Workshop Report

European Multifunctional Farmers Network

**Creating an European network of pioneers in
multifunctional agriculture**



WAGENINGEN UR

For quality of life

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Wageningen, Applied Plant Research (PPO)
Lelystad, Animal Sciences Group (ASG)

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Abstract

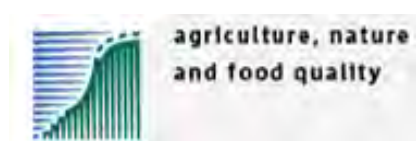
This report describes the results of the Workshop European Multifunctional Farmers Network (EMFN) which was held on October 23, 2008 on the multifunctional farm “De Zonnehoeve” of Piet van IJendoorn, at Zeewolde, the Netherlands. This workshop was part of the European Eemland Conference ‘Versatile Countryside’ which was held 22 – 24 October 2008 (see <http://www.eeconference.eu/>).

This report introduces the history and background of the European Multifunctional Farmers Network, and describes the program of the workshop and the results of the different sessions within the workshop. In addition, it provides the outcome of a pilot with international rural development students working with international multifunctional farmers, using the Interactive Strategic Management Method.

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- Taskforce Multifunctionele Landbouw



Preface

European Multifunctional Farmers Network (EMFN) is a network of innovative multifunctional farmers who by putting emphasis on sustainability couple primary production with an open connection to society, city, region, knowledge and new market parties.

On the 23rd of October multifunctional farmers from Portugal, the Netherlands, Estonia, Hungary, Armenia, Georgia, Moldavia and Azerbaijan came together to establish the European Multifunctional Farmers Network. The aim of the meeting was to get acquainted with each others activities, formulate the aim and goals of the network.

This report presents an overview about the history of the European Multifunctional Farmers Network, furthermore describes the program and outcome of the workshop hold during the EEConference. The list of participants, communication materials of the workshop and the outcome of educational activities of the Plattelands Academy which were connected the EMFN network are finalized in the appendix

Workshop Organisation

Bram Prins	Former president of European Dairy Farmers, since 2006 President of Global Dairy Farmers and farmer in the Netherlands
Dora Lakner	Researcher of LEI -Wageningen UR, Agro Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship
Daniël de Jong	Researcher of ASG -Wageningen UR, Waardewerken
Francisca Caron–Flinterman	Researcher of ASG - Wageningen UR, Waardewerken
Maarten Fischer	Programme manager Taskforce Multifunctionele Landbouw
Frans van Alebeek	Researcher Applied Plant Research - Wageningen UR



Table of contents

Abstract	3
Acknowledgements	3
Preface	5
History of EMFN	7
Workshop program	8
Introduction of Founding Farmers	8
Impressions of the Farm excursion on “De Zonnehoeve”	10
Different workshop results (according to program)	11
Evaluation of the workshop results by Waardewerken participants	18
International, rural development students working with international multifunctional farmers	22
Appendix	23
List of participants	23
Useful information sources:	24
Communication	25
Report of the students	27
Alfredo Cunhal Sendim - Portugal	27
Gergely Madársz - Hungary	30
Bram Prins – The Netherlands	32
Johan Martens – The Netherlands	35
Hillar Pulk - Estonia	39
Jose Arantes – Portugal	41

History of EMFN

Multifunctional farming is a force within sustainable countryside business. It is a bridge between agriculture and society, making connections between urban and rural areas, between citizens and farmers. At the same time it creates new businesses and connections between rural partners. With a European network we can put the multifunctional movement on the European agenda. This network will create a backbone of knowledge exchange on multifunctional farming. It has great potential to advance the multifunctional movement in Europe and its regions.

In September 2007 on the Eemlandhoeve in the Netherlands there was a meeting of three pioneers in the multi functional farming sector: farmer Jan Huijgen and Bram Prins from the Netherlands and Hillar Pulk from Estonia. These entrepreneurs share a dream: to boost multifunctional farming as a lasting force for sustainable countryside businesses and as a bridge between agriculture and society. In order to take steps to reach this dream the idea was proposed to connect pioneers from different European countries by setting up a network with 5 to 10 European multifunctional farmers in October 2008 at the EEC conference. The main goal: to learn from each other, to stimulate entrepreneurship in multifunctional farming and make an agenda for reaching the true potential of multifunctional farming in Europe.

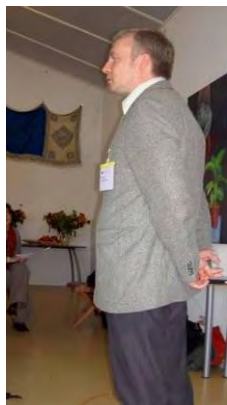
During 2007 three trip has been made to inventories multifunctional farming and find the right persons for the nut of the network from Portugal, Germany and Estonia. These study tours resulted in the movie Versatile Farmers (how our four farmers validate multifunctionality as a rural standard in Europe) and busted regional innovation in all the countries.

Workshop program

Introduction of Founding Farmers

The founding fathers of the EMFN introduced themselves and their multifunctional farms with a short slide show and description of their farm.

Hillar Pulk (Estonia)



Hillar Pulk from Estonia provided a slide show with beautiful photo series of the farm activities. All kinds of animals besides dairy cows and beef cattle, bison. Every summer, 10 trainees (University students) participate in his farm activities. He provides optimal living conditions for animals and city people, experiencing and enjoying farm life and countryside. He also organizes seminars, party's, a saloon and restaurant, entertainment programmes (e.g. dancing, cowboys), playgrounds for children with animals. He serves fresh vegetables from the garden and steak enjoyment programmes.

Alfredo Cunhal Sendim (Portugal).



Alfredo Cunhal Sendim from Portugal works in a collaboration of family farms in the Montado agroforestry-pasture production system (eco-efficiency). The focus is on natural cork production, extensive cattle farming (organic), rebalancing the Montado ecosystem (water, soil, air), less dependent on external inputs, people, regional cooperation and development. They work towards diversification (more complexity, crops, animals, more activities, spreading risks), differentiation (breeds, varieties, marketing, organic, biodynamic) and verticalization (processing farm products). Different foods and for each also consideration for energy, environment and local activities & education programmes. Management of so many multifunctional activities is the most difficult aspect.

Bram Prins (The Netherlands)



Bram Prins from The Netherlands runs a family dairy farm, with milk from 260 cows, energy via biogas for 1750 households, consultancy in stimulating entrepreneurship in the rural area and in this way services to the needs of society. Balance between labour productivity, labour time & labour pleasure. PPP within and outside the farm. Entrepreneur, enterprise & environment. Bram introduces the European Versatile Countryside concept. (see EVS scheme on page 9). Milking with added value, energy production in the region, consultancies with research. Specialisation and automatization. Biogas, regional biomass, regional closed cycles. Regional transition. Regional Knowledge Center. Regional Networks, cooperation and alliances, connecting in an European Network. Projects.

Jan Huijgen (The Netherlands)



Jan Huijgen is a philosopher and a multifunctional farmer. In 2007 he was the winner of the Sicco Mansholt prize for his dedication to and results in the multifunctional countryside. He started the *Eemlandhoeve* in 1993 as a multifunctional farm with beef cattle, accompanied by a centre for farm education and natural surroundings of the farm buildings. In 1998 the farm became a central place in the region with the start of the regional association of farmers and citizens *Ark & Eemlandschap*, opened by the Regional Depute. The Eemlandhoeve multifunctional farm concept has also developed a next step: the third generation of rural development.

Impressions of the Farm excursion on “De Zonnehoeve”

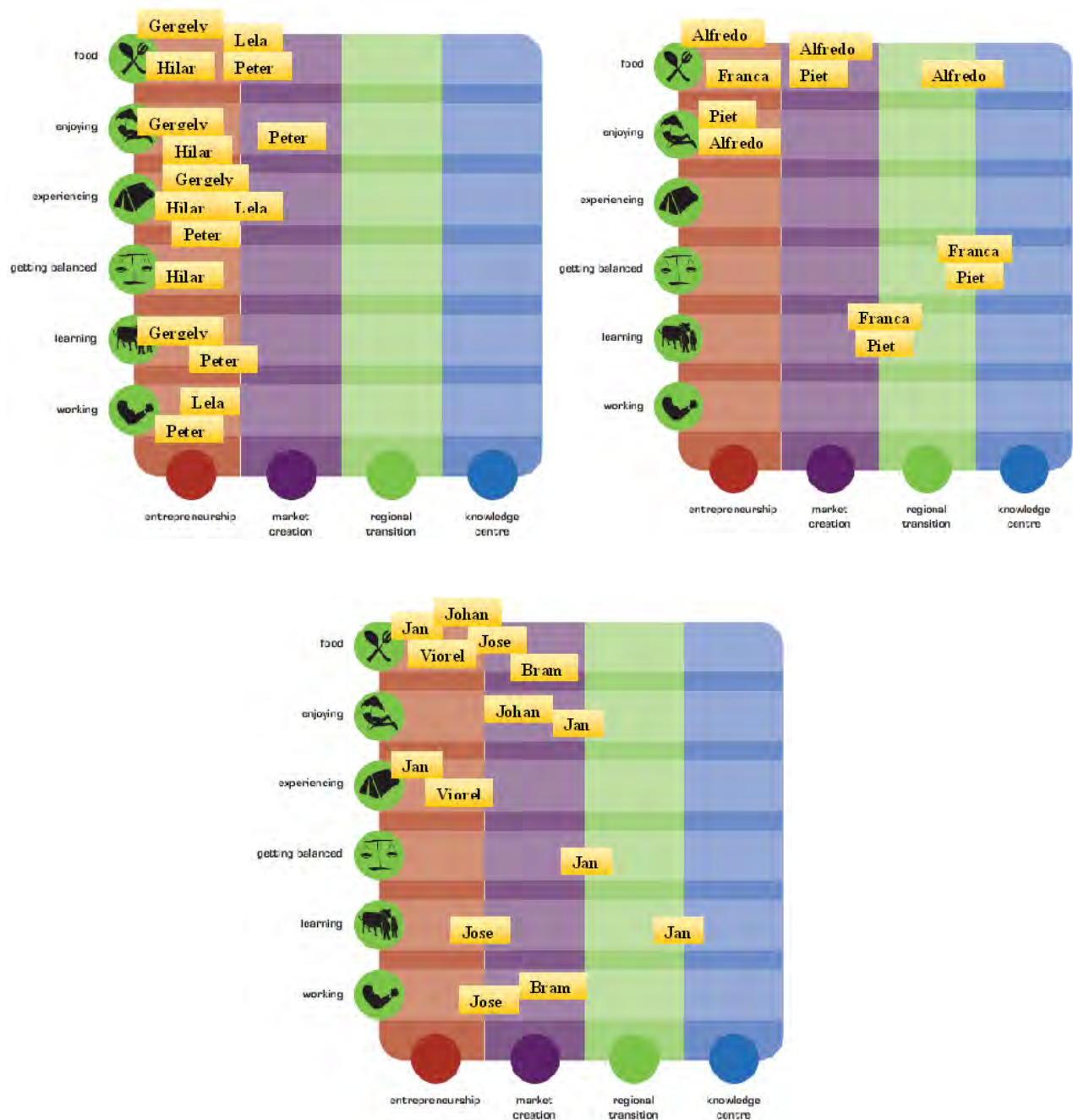
Piet van IJzendoorn



Different workshop results (according to program)

Subgroup discussions

The aim of the subgroup discussion were to get acquainted with each others entrepreneurship, multifunctional activities, but furthermore positionate themselves according to their activities in the matrix of the Versatile Countryside concept. By this presentations and analyze the entrepreneurs got an overview about each others stage of developments.



Success factors & obstacles (group: Francisca Caron–Flinterman)

- acquiring small pieces of land, consolidation, ownership fragmentation,
- too little financial resources, no access
- management skills (many different activities)
- regional infrastructure
- + communication with your surroundings
- + network (for new market)
- + minimal scale for economic profit
- + restrict yourself to your market and know it
- + grow slowly, step by step, get to learn the new market
- + ability to see opportunities, entrepreneurship, creativity, flexibility, balanced by technical skills (specialisation)

Success factor & obstacles (group: Dora Lakner)

- + Re-establishing market links
- + Involvement of knowledge
- + Ecology
- + Management of the company, sharing tasks
- + Market creation-> Lobby
- + Networking, sharing experiences
- + Governmental support

Success factors & obstacles (group: Daniël de Jong)

- Market creation is difficult for specific products
- Getting permits when doing new things/activities
- Finding your own segment in the market
- It always hard to do things that you like
- Government focuses on supporting big farms
- Getting yourself know
- Bureaucracy in governments
- + Focus on limited numbers of activities
- + Unique local production



Afternoon programme,

Goals & aims for the EMFN (group: Francisca Caron–Flinterman)

- Learning from each other within the network:
 - o Experiences
 - o Inspiration, build up courage
 - o Ideas, concepts, goals and aims
- Study projects and training:
 - o Market creation (regional)
 - o New concepts and products
 - o Building regional networks
 - o New concepts for cooperation
 - o New trends and opportunities
 - o Entrepreneur and management skills
- Formulate questions in the network, and then ask research to answer them
- Public relations: promoting concepts, the benefits and services of MF to society
- Setting issues on the political agenda: how to get rid of (legal) obstacles,
- Create new collaborations, partnerships and alliances
- how to disseminate lessons learned
- specific projects to overcome limited access to financial resources, lobbying local, regional and European
- platform for consumers and ngo's
- platform for retailers
- platform for meeting policy makers (Waardewerken!)

Goals & aims for the EMFN (group: Dora Lakner)

- Learning from each other within the network:
 - o Ideas, concepts, goals and aims
 - o Experiences
 - o Good practices
 - o training
- Study projects:
 - o Market creation (development of new products and concepts)
 - o Managing linkages and networks
 - o Developing collaborations
 - o Ways to be desired (in the region)
- Research projects
 - o How do people want to spend money on recreation, food, etcetera.
- Creation of a knowledge centre with research and students around the questions from the network
- Promoting the concept of MF
- Lobbying and convincing EU politics that MF is the future
- Creating a platform for communication with policy makers
- Creating a platform for communication with consumers, NGO's and markets.

Goals & aims for the EMFN (group: Daniël de Jong)

- Learn communication skills Spread the information among the members (information is basically knowledge)
- To learn to know the possibilities,
 - o New activities, what can I use on my farm
 - o Visit farms from abroad
 - o Use internet
- Study projects
 - o Connect knowledge landscape
 - o Animal behaviour
 - o Human animal contact
- Main aim is to let people know about the philosophy of multifunctional farming
- Inform our clients about other multifunctional farm and do marketing work for each other
- Promotion
 - o Common website focussed on consumers and citizens
 - o International multifunctional farm guide
- Get new ideas as a group
 - o Marketing models for products/activities
- Search for partners when needed
- Try to convince the EU to give special subsidy for the multifunctional farming
- To see the world wide perspective
- To get financial support
 - o Brussels knows multifunctional farming
 - o Brussels will take it up into policy documents and funding systems (GAP)



Plenary session

Results from 3 groups

Group Dora Lakner:

1. Learning (network members, consumers),
2. Cooperation (regions, outside EU, members of network),
3. Acknowledgement (promoting the network, political),
4. Motivation (energy),
5. Practise: strategies & action plans (strengthen different farms and regions).

Group Daniël de Jong:

1. Learning (get to know each other, inspiration, new ideas),
2. Communications (to others, e.g. consumers, other MF farms, partners [ngo's, universities]),
3. Get new ideas (local, national, international, e.g. market concepts, exchange of products,
4. Voice towards EU/Bruxels),
5. Connection to the knowledge institutes around MF

Group Francisca Caron–Flinterman:

1. Exchange between members,
 2. training,
 3. find new markets,
 4. develop cooperation's,
 5. create a platform to deal with our environments (region, consumers, ngo's, politics, knowledge centres).
- Try to connect these goals with the 4 pillars of the EVC scheme (see poster). The network should support all 4 pillars.

Combining the 3 groups' results

1. On the individual level:
 - a. learning, (10)
 - b. implementing, (1)
 - c. development new concepts and products, (3)
 - d. motivation (5),
 - e. inspiration (2)
 - f. find new clients (3)
 - g. strategies (4)
2. Collective level:
 - a. Cooperation (8)
 - b. Involvement of other partners
 - c. Lobbying (acknowledgement) (7)
 - d. Strategies & action plans
 - e. Training (3)
 - f. Platform (incl. communication) (2)
 - g. Marketing, PR (1)
 - h. Connection to knowledge network, bottom up (3)

Discussion:

There is a kind of "natural" development frame for a starting network like this one. The first priority is to learn to know each other. This will provide inspiration, experiences, new idea's and concepts to the members of the network. Therefore, learning from each other is important in the start-up of the network, and will become less important later. Then, common interests and questions will become the next focus of the network.

Questions that cannot be answered from the direct exchange between members will lead to a demand for training and workshops on specific topics and skills. Some of the topics mentioned are market creation, new concepts and products, networking and collaborations. The network will also formulate questions that will require research projects with scientists and students.

In addition, the network wants to help to overcome obstacles (political, legal, financial). This requires the build up of networks and to create a platform that can facilitate the dialogue with policy makers (regional, EU), consumers and other parties. This involves public relations, lobbying, setting the agenda. For this purpose, the members of the network will develop a common vision on the goals, strategies and future of Multifunctional Farming in Europe.

Subsequently, the participants tried to place the outcome of this discussion within the framework of the European Versatile Countryside: network -> projects -> financiers -> campus.

The focus was on which **projects** the network would want to support:

- + Developing new products and concepts
- + Understanding farm animals (knowledge creation)
- + Study about multifunctional farmers strategies
- + Citizen sensibilisation towards MF and all services countryside can offer, promotion (2x)
- + Website to communicate between members, exchange ideas and information
- + Exchange visits between members (4x) knowledge sharing
- + Network development, formalisation of the network, desk, etc. 2x
- + Policy network, lobbying EU, creating a working group, documentation for new legislation
- + Platform for lobbying, research
- + Research different care systems
- + Create regional cooperation (horizontal and vertical) in society
- + Trainings in MF, workshops, conferences (4x), communicating results
 - o Within network
 - o Transferring to other farmers
 - o Inviting policy makers
- + Producing green energy in the region
- + Demonstration farms (best practices) 2x
- + Brussels, EU dialogue

Top 5 priority projects:

1. Network development	7
2. research, knowledge creation...	4
3. training & excursions internal & external	9
4. conferences & workshops	6
5. product development	
6. marketing	3
7. lobbying & strategies	9

Ad 3. together with students, ngo's, etc. Learn from companies.

Ad 7. different platforms (regional, EU). Partners: ngo's, research,

Ad 1. learn from existing networks (WW, etc.), regular meetings internal

Potential funding parties for these projects would be: Companies, Institutions (Ministries of Agric.), EU (Leader+), ngo's, etcetera.

Structure and organisation of the EMFN

Finally, the last part of the workshop was spend on a brief discussion about the possible organisation of the EMFN. Bram Prins led this discussion by presenting the experiences from the Network for Global Dairy Farmers. In that network, there is a board, and from the board a management team of a director and a management assistant is appointed. Bram suggests that such an organogram could also work for the EMFN. Bram also suggests that AgroCenter (NL) possibly might facilitate the network with a management assistant. In its initial stage, the network would comprise some 10 members, and could expand over time. It would need a website for internal network communications, but also to promote the network and MF to the world. One of the activities could be to organize an EMFN Conference.

There is some discussion as to:

- Do we elect a board?
- Can someone from the board at the same time be member of the management team?
- Do we want a network of 100% farmers, or do we allow others (associative members, advisors, scientists, companies) also to become members?

Maarten Fisher (of the Dutch Taskforce Multifunctionele Landbouw) offers his advice to have a network of 100% farmers, they choose a board, and pay a secretary.

During the workshop, no final conclusions were reached on the structure and organisation of the EMFN.

To continue the start-up of EMFN different foreseen members of EMFN asked to meet each other again on the farm of Herrmannsdorfer Landwerkstätten near München (see the movie 'Versatile Farmers').

After the meeting the idea rises up to combine this with a visit to Biofach in Nürnberg (19. - 22. February 2009) This in co-operation with the Avalon Network (see www.avalon.nl).

Results of the workshop were presented by Bram Prins & Johan Martens in the afternoon in the plenary session in the Bunschoten Conference.

Evaluation of the workshop results by Waardewerken participants

Because the Dutch 'Waardewerken' network contributed to the organization of the EMFN workshop, it was considered useful to interview the 4 Waardewerken participants on how they look back at the results of the Workshop.

In December 2008, the 4 Waardewerken participants were interviewed by phone. Questions asked were:

- How do you look back at the EMFN workshop, and what were the main results that came out of the workshop?
- Is the EMFN network useful to you personally?
- What will be the most important objectives of the EMFN according to you?
- What activities should be organized and undertaken by the EMFN in the near future?
- Have you had contact with other participants since the workshop (by mail or phone)?
- How should the EMFN network be communicating (with members and with the outside world)?
- Who should be members of the network (multifunctional farmers only, or also open to advisors, researchers, policy makers, etcetera)?
- How much time would you be willing to spend in participating in the network?

Short summaries of these interviews are given below.

Franca Swinkels (Zorgboerderij Klaterspeel)

<http://www.zorgboeren.nl/zorgboerderij/?boerid=312>



"The workshop was very interesting, because of the examples of different farmers with all kinds of activities in different countries. I am much interested in the behavior of animals and people, and it is inspiring to see other examples with the same interests such as Hillar Pulk from Estonia.

The most important result from such a network is to learn from each other's examples, activities and ideas. To start up the EMFN, it is important that there are follow-up meetings, contacts and information by mail, a website with news, etcetera. At the end of the Workshop, a next meeting was proposed for February 2009 in Germany. That is a good thing. Meetings, where you meet each other in person, are important to make the network going. They should be held once or twice per year. Since the workshop, I have not had any (mail) contact with Workshop participants from other countries, but that is partly due to personal circumstances and a very busy period.

It is a pity that the participants in the Workshop are from Eastern European countries only, we also need multifunctional farmers from the Western European countries to make it a true European Network. The EMFN should be a network of multifunctional farmers primarily, but not exclusively. We also need scientists and others to advise and support the network, and to help us establishing contact with other groups. Farmers alone in the network might lead to tunnel visions.

I think that the EMFN can certainly be interesting and useful for the Waardewerken network, once it has proven its existence and shown some results."

Peter Weenink (Kaasboerderij Weenink en Boerengolf)

<http://www.kaasboerderijweenink.nl/> and <http://www.boerengolf.nl/english/>



“It was interesting to meet farmers from other countries. However, I would have been more pleased if more participants from different countries would have been present. The EMFN is important to exchange new ideas and visions of multifunctional farming. Because I am active in promoting and exporting the concept of Farmers’ golf abroad, I already see quite a lot of such examples myself. But the EMFN could help me to make new contacts.

The EMFN still has to proof its usefulness, let’s see how it will develop. If there is a need for such a network and the exchange of ideas, than it will grow and develop into a real network.

The EMFN should help to promote good examples and concepts of multifunctional farming to a wide audience. Internet can be helpful, but for the members it is important to see other examples with your own eyes during visits. So, meetings are very important, but the travels that will be required may be an obstacle (in terms of money and time involved).

The EMFN should be a network of farmers. It will also attract an entourage of scientists, advisors, etcetera. And we need them to get things organized. But we should keep in mind that it is our network, for farmers primarily.

I am a pioneer in multifunctional farming, I am mainly education other farmers. However, I cannot spend too much time in such activities, new multifunctional famers will have to prove their perseverance to make their farm into a success. I am interested in the EMFN if it pays of with useful things for my own activities. It must be rewarding. I cannot spend more time on it than one or two meetings per year. There simply is too many opportunities around, I cannot attend all there is.

I have not had contact with other participants since the Workshop. However, I was informed by Dora Lakner that a next meeting is being planned for February 2009, during the BioFach meeting in Germany. With a subsequent visit to the Herrmannsdorfer Landwerkstätten. I don’t think that I will attend such a meeting, since I am not interested in the BioFach, and I have visited Herrmannsdorf before. So perhaps I have to wait until the next meeting, later on.”

Piet van IJzendoorn (De Zonnehoeve)

<http://www.zonnehoeve.net/>



“To see that there are many and very much different examples of multifunctional farms, so much development, was very inspiring! Not just the different activities, but also different motivations, cultural aspects and social drive. Participants were very open and friendly and demonstrate a strong support for multifunctional farming.

The EMFN is important because it can show to policy makers and the general public that there is a strong movement for a new kind of agriculture. If we can show that many farmers in many countries are involved, than governments and other authorities will be become aware of this movement and will give more support to out goals.

Farmers, and especially multifunctional farmers, are always (too) busy and often each on their own. We need an organization that will organize our contacts with and influence in the European Union, national governments, farmers organizations, etcetera. The EMFN should do the lobbying for us, show examples and organize meetings for us. We as individual farmers lack time, funds and manpower for these things.

Learning from each other, getting new ideas is fun. The network should be a network of farmers, supported by scientists 'that have their hart in the right place'. We don't need people who are in it for a job only, without any real involvement in multifunctional farming. The way that the Waardewerken network is supported by Wageningen UR is a good example of how such a network could function properly. If it would be a network of farmers only, they would not have the time and means to make it work.

It would be nice if the EMFN network would organize a meeting once per year. Travelling may become a problem if it is far and expensive. We would need some leaders that meet on a more regular base in order to run the network and organize the activities. A website and some kind of newsletter or mailing list for news would be very helpful. You have to keep people involved in order to keep the network alive."

Johan Martens (De Hemelrijksche Hoeve)

<http://www.hemelrijkschehoeve.nl/>



"The workshop was very interesting, especially the involvement of farmers from different countries. It is very nice to learn new ideas, concepts and activities in multifunctional farming. Examples from other countries and new approaches, for example as from Alfredo Cunhal Sendim, Portugal, are very inspiring. That is one of the primary objectives for the EMFN. The other objective is to influence policy makers within the European Union, in order to improve legislation, subsidies and other support for multifunctional farming.

The EMFN network should develop a vision on multifunctional farming in Europe, and communicate that vision to governments, consumers organizations, etcetera. It should become a platform for meetings and discussions. This will help (directly and indirectly) to improve legislation and to raise funds for multifunctional farming.

The EMFN network should be primarily be a network of multifunctional farmers, and that should also be its public imago. However, the network certainly also needs support from scientists and advisors. Farmers alone would not be enough to get a movement going. The Waardewerken network is a good example of how farmers and scientists can cooperate in a very fruitful way.

The EMFN needs a executive board for contacts and to organize the communications, discussions, activities, meetings, etcetera. A lot of communication can be organized by mail, electronic newsletters, etcetera. We would need a minimum of one meeting per year, but at the same time meeting more frequent seems not feasible.

Our Waardewerken network will certainly profit from an European network. However, we will certainly remain a national network for the Netherlands, that is our primary goal and success. We will provide our ideas, products etcetera to the EMFN as examples of successful multifunctional farming."

Conclusions form the Waardewerken evaluation

From the previous interviews, a number of conclusions stand out clearly:

- Meetings between multifunctional farmers from different countries is very much inspiring and an important motivation for members of the EMFN;
- Meetings with members of the EMFN network should take place once a year; more frequent meetings are probably not feasible;
- Learning from each other is an important objective for the members of the EMFN, but setting the political agenda for multifunctional farming in the EU is just as important;
- Communications (through a website, newsletter, email) is important to bind the members within the EMFN network, but also to provide a platform for contact with policy makers, consumers organizations, farmers groups and scientists;
- The EMFN network should be a network of farmers primarily but not exclusively; it needs the support, funds and manpower of well motivated scientists and advisors to get the network going;
- The way in which farmers and Wageningen UR participate and cooperate in the Waardewerken network is considered as a good example of how the EMFN might function;
- The EMFN is regarded as a highly potent instrument to get multifunctional farming on the political and public agenda in Europe; participants are positive and optimistic about it.

International, rural development students working with international multifunctional farmers



Within the Plattelands Acedemy project Dora Lakner (LEI) developed a pilot program for getting research, practise and education closer to each other.

International students of the CAH Dronten Rural Development Course during their studies got acquainted with the method Interactive Strategic Management developed by AgroCenter Wageningen UR. The students after the workshop made interviews with the multifunctional entrepreneurs helping them making strategic choices with taking into account the ambitions, skills and vision of the entrepreneurs, the financial performance of the enterprise and external environment.

Outcome of the students is attached to the Appendix.

Appendix

List of participants

Participant of the Workshop European Multifunctional Farmers Network EEConference 23rd October 2008			
Country	Name	Organization	E-mail address
The Netherlands	Dora Lakner	LEI – Wageningen UR	dora.lakner@wur.nl
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Useful information sources:

<http://www.eeconference.eu/> Official site of the European Eemland Conference. Results of the conference will be published on this site too.

www.lei.wur.nl LEI Wageningen UR, one of the organizers of the EMFN workshop

<http://www.asg.wur.nl/UK/> Animal Science Group of Wageningen UR, one of the organizers of the EMFN workshop

www.ppo.wur.nl Applied Plant Research (PPO), one of the organizers of the EMFN workshop

http://www.minlnv.nl/portal/page?_pageid=116,1640354&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL website of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, one of the financiers of the workshop

<http://www.multifunctionelelandbouw.nl/> website of the Dutch Taskforce for Multifunctional Agriculture, one of the financiers of the workshop (in Dutch)

www.waardewerken.nl Website of the Waardewerken Network (in Dutch), one of the financiers of the workshop

www.globaldairyfarmers.com Global Dairy Farmers, possible example for the organization of an Global network

<http://www.agrocenter.wur.nl> website of AgroCenter WUR, a network of researchers within Wageningen UR (LEI, PPO and ASG-Animal Husbandry)

<http://www.eemlandhoeve.nl/> website of Jan Huijgen, one of the founder fathers of the EMFN

<http://www.piisonifarm.ee> website of Hillar Pulk, one of the founder fathers of the EMFN

<http://www.herdadedofreixodomeio.com/index.asp?lang=> website of Alfredo Cunhal Sendim, one of the founder fathers of the EMFN

<http://www.herrmannsdorfer.de/content.php?mid=01&sid=01> website of the Herrmannsdorf community, proposed as a possible meeting place for the next meeting of the EMFN

Communication

For the efficient communication of the network the project team prepared to flyers in order to inform the entrepreneur, researchers and governmental parties in the coming establishment of the network and the program of the workshop during the EEConference. The communication materials were send out by email and were available during the conference. The two flyer are shown below.



EUROPEAN EEMLAND CONFERENCE

VERSATILE COUNTRYSIDE

EUROPEAN MULTIFUNCTIONAL FARMERS NETWORK

22 - 24 OCTOBER 2008

EMFN

A European network of innovative multifunctional farmers in which primary production is coupled with an open connection to society, city, region, knowledge and new market parties. Several entrepreneurs from European countries will take part, together with a group of innovative multifunctional farmers from the Netherlands.

GOAL EMFN

The EMFN hopes to stimulate and professionalize the European multifunctional farmers by pushing the multifunctional movement in Europe to a higher level and giving it a more prominent place on the European agenda.

EMFN & EEC

The European Multifunctional Farmers Network will be established at the European Eemland Conference (EEC). During this conference the network will be developed. There will be interaction with other networks in the field of regional transition, market creation, and knowledge.
For more information about EEC: www.countrysideconferences.eu.

PROGRAMME EMFN

- General opening of the EEC
- Movie 'Versatile Countryside' – A portrait of four multifunctional farmers in Europe, referring to the new way of agricultural entrepreneurship in the countryside
- Farm presentations
- Visits to Dutch multifunctional farms
- Creation of a EMFN network agenda
- Formation of a European exchange programme to create a 'Versatile European Countryside' in collaboration with other networks.
- Creation and presentation of a common agenda for a 'Versatile European Countryside' to the Euro commissioner and the Dutch minister of agriculture

DATE & LOCATION

Wednesday October 22 – Friday October 24, De Eemlandhoeve, Bunschoten, The Netherlands

CONTACT

EMFN : Dora Lakner - dora.lakner@wur.nl
EEC: Sandra Bos - eec@countrysideconferences.eu



 De Eemlandhoeve

 waardewerken

 WAGENINGEN UR
For quality of life

www.countrysideconferences.eu

European Multifunctional Farmers Network

European Multifunctional Farmers Network (EMFN) is a network of innovative multifunctional farmers who by putting emphasis on sustainability couple primary production with an open connection to society, city, region, knowledge and new market parties.



Multifunctional Farming

Multifunctional farming is a force within sustainable countryside business. It is a bridge between agriculture and society, making connections between urban and rural areas, between citizens and farmers. At the same time it creates new businesses and connections between rural partners.

The Network – 4 Founding Farmers

4 entrepreneurs in different corner of Europe share a common dream: to boost multifunctional farming as a lasting force for sustainable countryside businesses and as a bridge between agriculture and society:

- Jan Huijgen – The Netherlands
- Alfredo Cunhal Sendim – Portugal
- Hillar Pulk – Estonia
- Bram Prins – The Netherlands



Goals of the Network

- Create a backbone of knowledge exchange on multifunctional farming.
- Restore the connection between citizens and farmers multifunctional and traditional agriculture.
- The EMFN hopes to stimulate and professionalize the European multifunctional farmers.
- Pushing the multifunctional movement in Europe to a higher level and placing more emphasize on the European agenda.



More information:
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Report of the students

Alfredo Cunhal Sendim – Portugal

Introduction

Alfredo Cunhal Sendim comes from Montado Portugal. He believes in living in harmony with nature because a human being is a small part of nature! We should recognize the importance of our eco-system. He believes that for such a paradigm-change , we have to begin by changing our self .

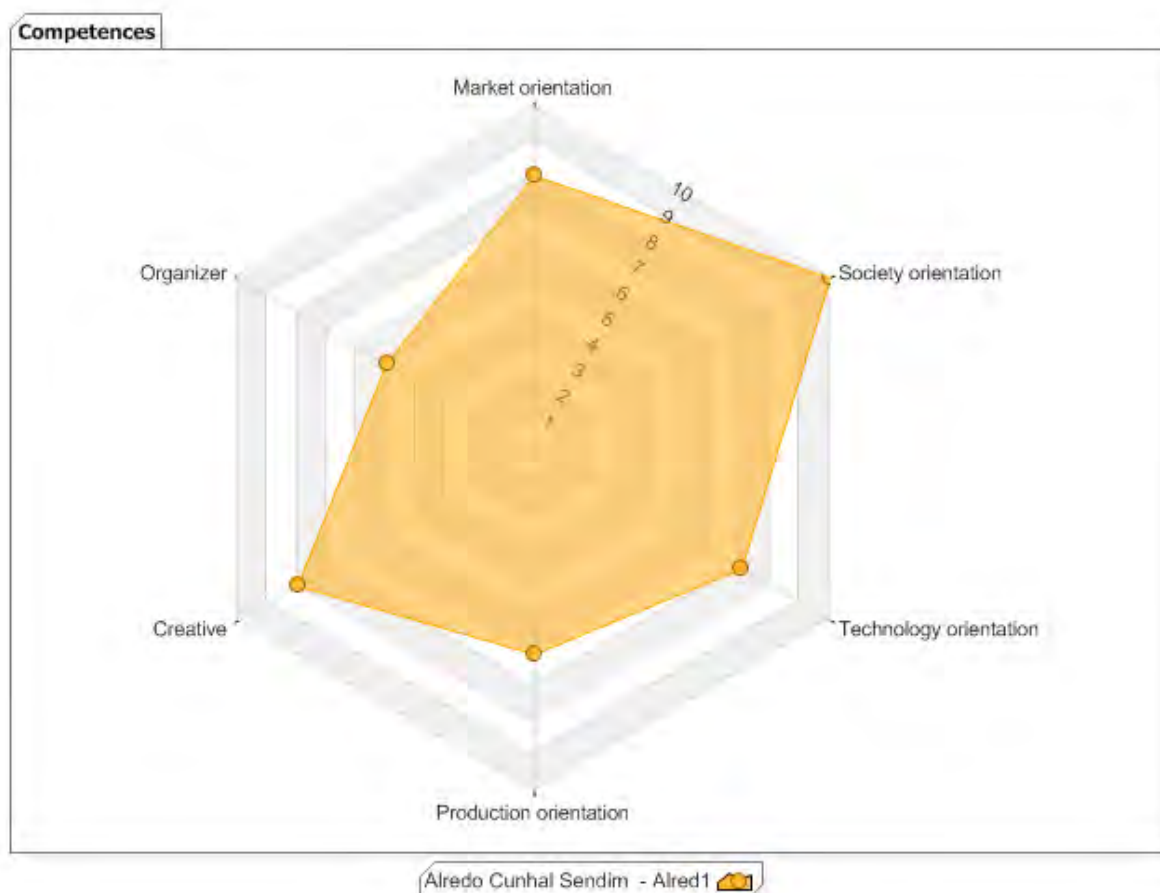
Entrepreneur Himself in the pivot

His grandfather was a farmer during when the communist party was in power the land was very poor ,the land was nationalized and a lot of land was giving for farmers.(10 farmers was given 20000 ha)The land was so big for the peoples the country stop producing within five years.

He really believes in nature and he hopes the community should fallow this way. He enjoys being in nature and being part of nature. The process of establishing the enterprise took a long time and needed a lot of hard work. He saw there is no future with the current agriculture production that's why he tried to find the balance between nature and farming.



Competences



His SMT to report he is showed he is more strong society orientation and he's main focus is more on his company and individual independent function. He would like to share his idea with young people to pick up this new movement.

During the interview we understood his concept of balancing nature and farming to achieve more energy efficiency that preserves nature and works in perfect harmony. This new focus of farming we believe can contribute to sustainable rural development and agriculture through the development of versatile country sides. This enterprise is more focused on managing resources, knowledge and skills to achieve a more versatile countryside. In our opinion he has the potential to create an eco adventure experience: where people can go and learn about nature how they can take care of it and live with it in balance.

Company characteristics

The enterprise has 6500ha of land. He does not use all of the land for agricultural production. The enterprise main focus is mainly to develop the employees: the company sold all its tractors and trucks to its employees and it outsources the equipment from the employees. The enterprise is in a complex agro eco system called montado. The enterprise also produces a special black pig meat that is unique to this enterprise. The montado agro eco system has three levels which are trees, which produce the cork, which is the main source of income for the enterprise. The second level is the bushes which help to provide cover for the young plants to grow. The third level is the pasture that the animals feed on. All these three levels are kept in a complete cycle because the effect of not keeping this cycle is desertification.

He believes that profit should be divided into three main parts: people who work, development of enterprise, and other projects for people's development. The enterprise has

75 permanent labours. The labour force is divided into three main parts: producing, transformation and selling.

Your strategy

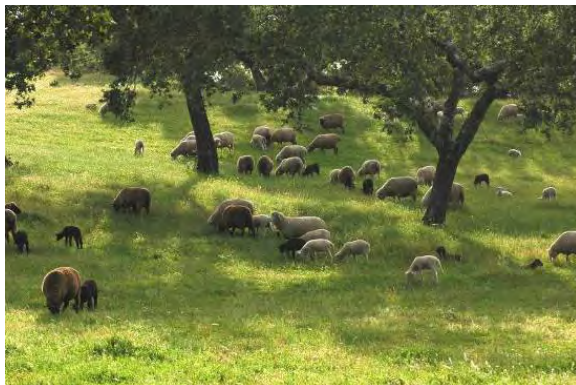
He believes that he cannot live forever and the young generation should take up the responsibility of managing nature. He has divided the company into different parts with different managers for example:

- Finance
- Horticulture development
- Forestry
- Meat production

The main challenges are how much the current development trend relies so much on fuel. He explains to say this fuel might run out in the coming years.

The enterprise wants to concentrate on developing the market in the local region and in his opinion of the alfredo it is a waste of energy when a local company exports produce while the local regional economy is not able to get the product. The enterprise wants to create opportunity for the urban inhabitants to spend their time on his farm and on the country side.

The land that is owned by the enterprise is big and it has good forests to incorporate camping as an experience.



Gergely Madársz - Hungary

Entrepreneur Himself in the pivot

Name: Gergely Madarász

Drive: His family started farming 10 years ago. They realized that the classical farming is not sustainable.

Qualities: The whole family have connection with the agriculture. Every member of the family are agricultural engineer. Gergely used to be a show jumping rider. He has excellent knowledge about horses. He has good contacts with entrepreneurs, and with agricultural market.

If he had an other profession what would he do, why?

He would like to be a professional show jumping rider, as he was before.

Personal history of the entrepreneurship: Gergely helped to build and develop the farm to his family. The real entrepreneur is the old Madarász (Gergely's father)

Gergely and his brother planning to take the lead of the entrepreneurship after a few years.



Company characteristics

Meadow 200 ha

Arable land 50 ha

Farm site: 17 ha Farm houses stables/ future guesthouse, fishing lakes.

Horses: 20

Pigs (mangalica): 200

Cattle 80

Chicken: 150 (free range chickens, and hans)

The present situation on the farm:

Nowadays the multifunctional farm is ready in 60%. The building will be finished in two years.

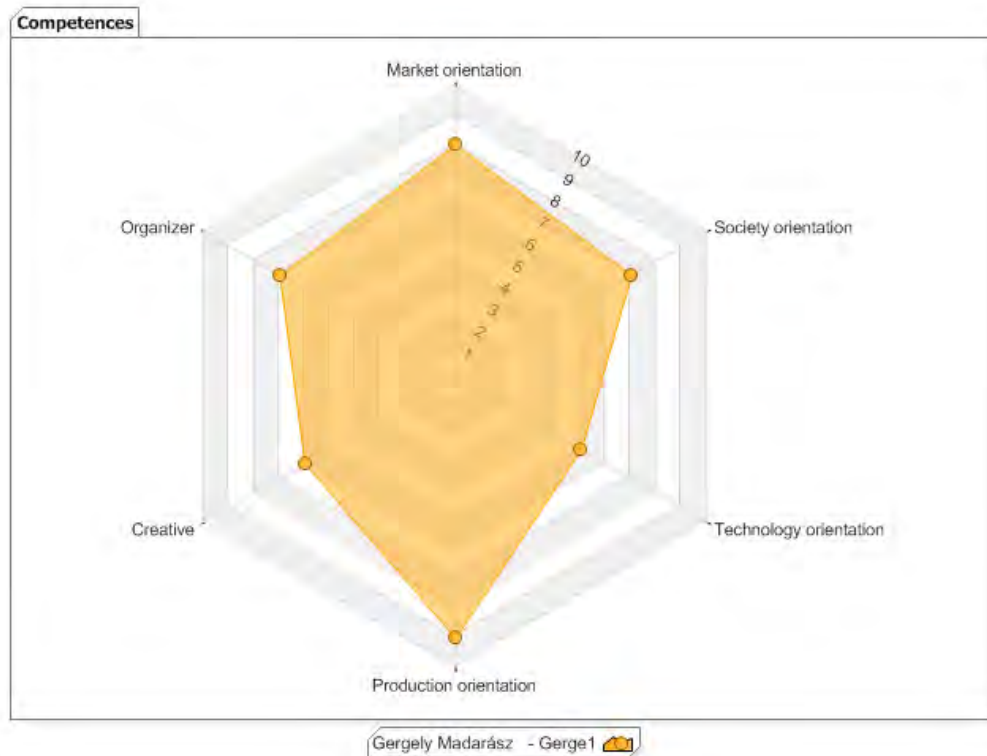
At the moment they giving horse riding lessons, producing and selling home made meet products, free range eggs.

Profit: it is not really profitable yet. The business is not running 100%, the hotel and the fishing lakes building will be finished in two years.

People: The Madarász family is the owner of the farm. The entrepreneur is the old Madarász, the brothers have their own job in other company/ministry but they assist to develop the farm.

The brothers are planning to take the lead of the entrepreneurship after a few years. Present workers: there are three full-time workers, three part-time workers and summer time, they employ seasonal workers. Later on when they open the hotel there will be more workers.

Competences



They are oriented to production and market orientation.

They specialized to a traditional Hungarian pig (mangalica). They are not oriented to technology because they have extensive animal breeding. The main thing what they use is the knowledge, how should they breed the horses, pigs and cattle.

The farmers should be consequent, self-control about his activity. Open and flexible about new things and technologies.

Bram Prins – The Netherlands

Entrepreneur Himself in the pivot



Name: Bram Prins

Drive: To make a combination of the three P (Profit, People, Planet)

Qualities: Entrepreneur, coach of 14 veterinarians, president of European Dairy Farmers, Consultancy

If I had another profession what would I do, why?

For our interviewee, religion is important. He is a Christian and wants to give some information about the Bible for the people.

Personal history of the entrepreneurship:

At the moment he is working in the Consultancy-part of the SME. His sons are in the age of 30 and 29 years old and did an excellent schooling on agriculture and management schools. To disturb them not in their development as future entrepreneurs, he decided together that the oldest one, he started with consultancy work.

As former President of European Dairy Farmers he is familiar with the situation over 14 countries of Europe. Together with a network of 14 institutes in Europe EDF is producing annually a Full Cost Price Comparison from over 200 farms. These results are annually discussed on the EDF congress. In November 2002 he has finished his President time of 12 years from EDF.

Global Dairy Farmers:

After the period as President of European Dairy Farmers he decided to start with a new group of dairy farmers from all over the world. After some experiences acting globally, he has started now with a group of dairy farmers from important milk regions in the world.

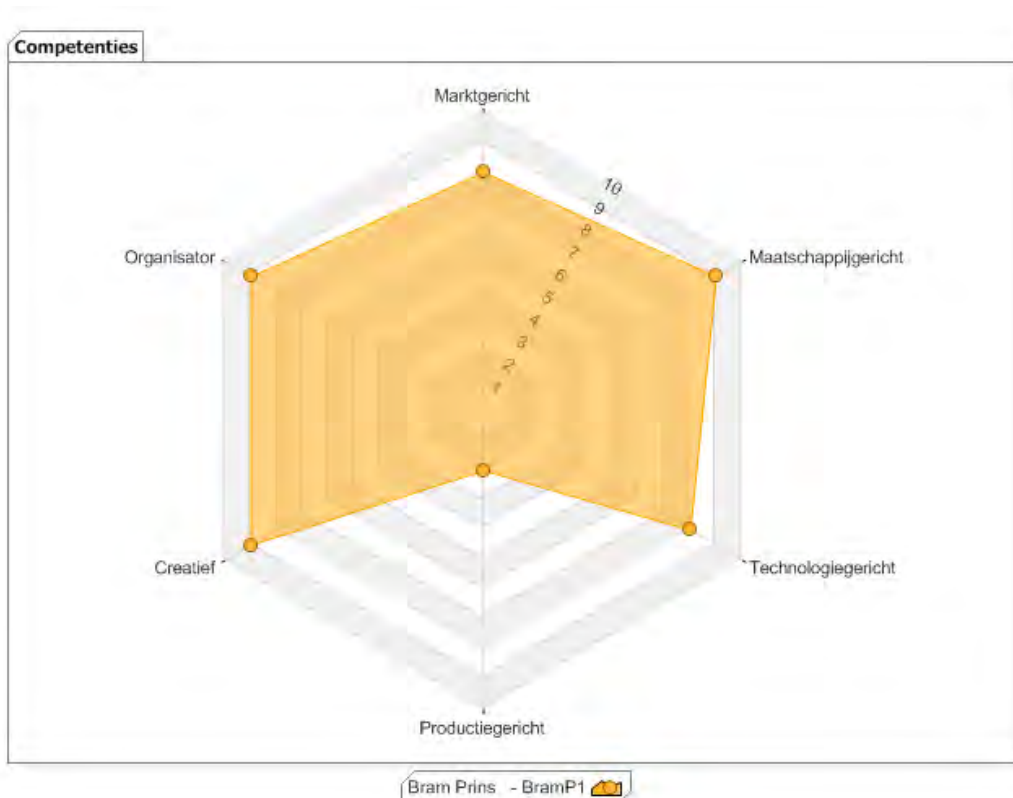
In 2007 he is starting with a second group of Multi Functional Farms.

This initiative is managed by the AgroCenter and an institute from the Southern Hemisphere (Australia).

Competences

Outcome of the SMT:

In the competencies he is very strong on Society Orientation, Creativity, Organization, Technology and Market orientation. His threat is the production orientation.



Remarks and analyze of the students.

In his opinion the most important thing is the social life, the family. They spend a lot of time together with his wife and with the three sons.

Outcome of the interview.

They have every month the meeting together, for four hours to talk about the strategies, ideas, solutions.

Company characteristics

Outcome of the SMT:

In most of the skills he is very strong, but the Wait and see side is very low. We asked why. His answer was that he only concentrates on the new ideas and he is trying to implement these ideas into his farm. He is against that he see first how the rest of the entrepreneurs start, create a new thing and to sit and watch whether it is working or not.

The lowest strategy was the choice of location. For Mr. Bram Prins the one of the most important thing is to stay in his area, with the family together, and to not move to another area or country.

He got a very high point in his strategies are: Modernising, Diversification, Social responsible production, Sourcing and merchandising and other structure.

Structure of the entrepreneurship (hectares, plants, animals etc)

1. Dairy farms: Dairy production on 2 locations:

Together 280 cow dairy herd in the northern part of The Netherlands.

On 160 – 200 ha they are producing a quote of 2.330.000 kg of milk in two herds.

Milking and feeding is done by robots

2. Energy farm: Producing energy from biogas capacity 530 kWh electricity per hour. (4.0Mw)

What is our own judgment about the performances of the entrepreneur

He is trying to find a balance between the Profit, People and Planet using the regional transition

His strategy

Developing and sharing new strategies with the farmers and possible through the whole food chain. By reacting earlier as the average they are developing a pro-active attitude and quick answers on political measures and the strong changing demands of their clients, the consumers.

Where does the farmers set up himself the coming years in the development of yourself as entrepreneur and your company?

In the future he try to create enjoying, the getting balanced within the region.

What are for the entrepreneur the most important questions and challenges or problems at the effective realization of your strategy.

To create market and the regional transitions connected with the knowledge centre's.

Who help can for him in realize them with?

He has an assistant, who helping him 15 hours each week.

Johan Martens – The Netherlands



Introduction

Mr. Johan Martens is a multifunctional entrepreneur. Already in the first part of our interview we had as first impression that he is a really positive thinking person.

We can define as a motto: "Everybody has a lot of talents however the secret of a successful entrepreneurship is to find that specific ability which can help us to blossom in our business." To find the balance in his work is one of the most important issues and to discover the path which leads to this virtue is to have pleasure in your work.

Entrepreneur Himself in the pivot

Name: Johan Martens

Drive: (why are you doing what you do?)

The day by day activities are based on three major pillars of his multifunctional entrepreneurship which are the followings:

- Dairy farming
- Healthcare
- Nature preservation

The strong motivation comes from the willingness to inspire and support each other in gather chances. This is the fact which leads to one of the key competencies of the rural development, the society orientation.

Qualities (what do you find nice, in what are you good in?)

As it was mentioned before helping our fellow – being plays a huge role in our farmer's activities and also gives pleasure for him. Managing the dairy farm was not enough instrument to have a complete satisfaction so the multifunctional farming was a way to place the society, nature and animal care into harmony with each other. This represents the balance in the playing field matrix.

If I had other profession what would I do, why?

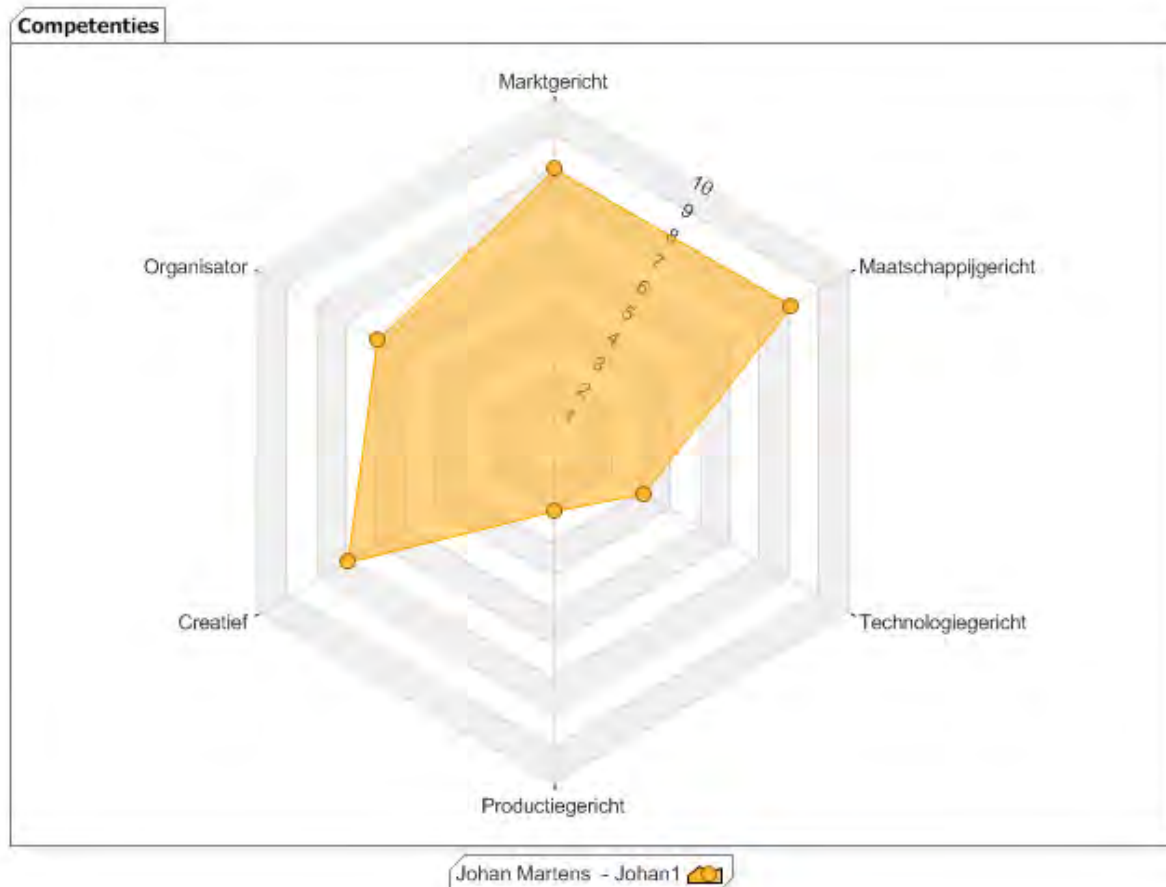
In the case of other alternatives he would have chosen to be farm advisor, consultant.

Taking in account the willingness to help other members of society, giving advice and helping farmers to have a vision about their possibilities and to develop tools and concepts which can be applied in practice, his profession would be the consultant.

Personal history of the entrepreneurship

The farm has a 70 years history, is situated in the south of the Netherlands. It was overtaken from his parents in 1989 as a dairy farm. The transformation of the farm started in 1999 because one part of it became national park. Nowadays, Mr. Martens only rent this part of that land for grazing cattle. After a short time the income decreased, fact which motivated him to extend his farm in a multifunctional way.

Competences



Most important competencies:

- Society orientation – Healthcare, local people are employed. Four times per year he organizes some open days to bring people closer to nature. Mr. Johan Martens get reward from the society.
- Market orientation - One of the aims his to get more costumers and to use the specialization for increasing the income.
- Good organizer - Try to find the balance between different activities and as the result shows he managed to work it out.
- Creativity - Always finds the challenges to develop his entrepreneurship. Innovation and creativity are also strong points of our entrepreneur. He picks up ideas from the needs of the society and tries to make them work. The secret ingredient for realizing this is to dare to start.

Some competencies which were not developed at a higher level are:

- Technology orientation – He is not technology orientated because: “ The skills are in head, not in hand”. The healthcare and nature conservation are services, not technology based and for Mr. Johan Martens is more cheaper to hire people than to apply for higher technology.
- Production – The production is not situated at higher level because he is more focused on healthcare and nature conservation than milk production.

Remarks and analyze of the students.

We were amazed by his positive way of thinking and in our opinion this is one of the main characteristics which leads him to gain his goals.

Outcome of the interview.

We are satisfied by the outcome of our interview, taking in account that all our questions were answered detailed, understandable and strict to the point.

Questions remarks, suggestions

Remarks: The multifunctional entrepreneurship very well realized.

Suggestions: In the “playing field matrix” it would be successful idea trying to position himself on the regional transition and maybe in the future on knowledge.

Company characteristics

Outcome of the SMT

Structure of the entrepreneurship (hectares, plants, animals etc)

The entrepreneurship has three pillars as: dairy and healthcare farm, nature preservation.

The farm is situated on 25 ha and 15 ha is rented from the national park.

The sustainability is reached economically, naturally and in social way.

What is your own judgment about the performances of your company?

Profit: Increasing profit

People: He tries to involve the local people in the farm activities (7 paid employee and 10 voluntaries)

Plant: Producing organic vegetables.

Questions remarks, suggestions

We appreciate the willingness to show the society orientation by involving the local people in the farm activities

Your strategy

The three main goals of our farmer are:

1. to realize income;
2. to fit in the landscape;
3. to give pleasure for people.

Outcome of SMT

Where does the farmers set up himself the coming years in the development of himself as entrepreneur and his company?

Mr. Johan Martens tries to develop his business with looking for challenges and circumstances which lead to successful entrepreneurship.

What are for the entrepreneur the most important questions and challenges or problems at the effective realization of your strategy.

The biggest problem is to get real price from the costumers for organizing the regular excursion.

Important is that the government should keep the farmers on the countryside, to give money for education, healthcare and to transfer financial resources for rural areas.

Who help can for him in realize them with?

First of all the government and local authorities play a big role in realizing the objectives.

Questions remarks, suggestions

Translate the web-site and brochures mainly in English, but also in other foreign languages.

Thinking about the strong social orientation our suggestion is to extend the field of interest focusing on this characteristic.

Use also other kind of advertising tools to gain further clients and make the business more popular.

Dairy farm
Food – market orientation



Nature preservation
Experience – market creation, regional transition



Healthcare
Market creation, regional transition



Getting balanced
Regional transition



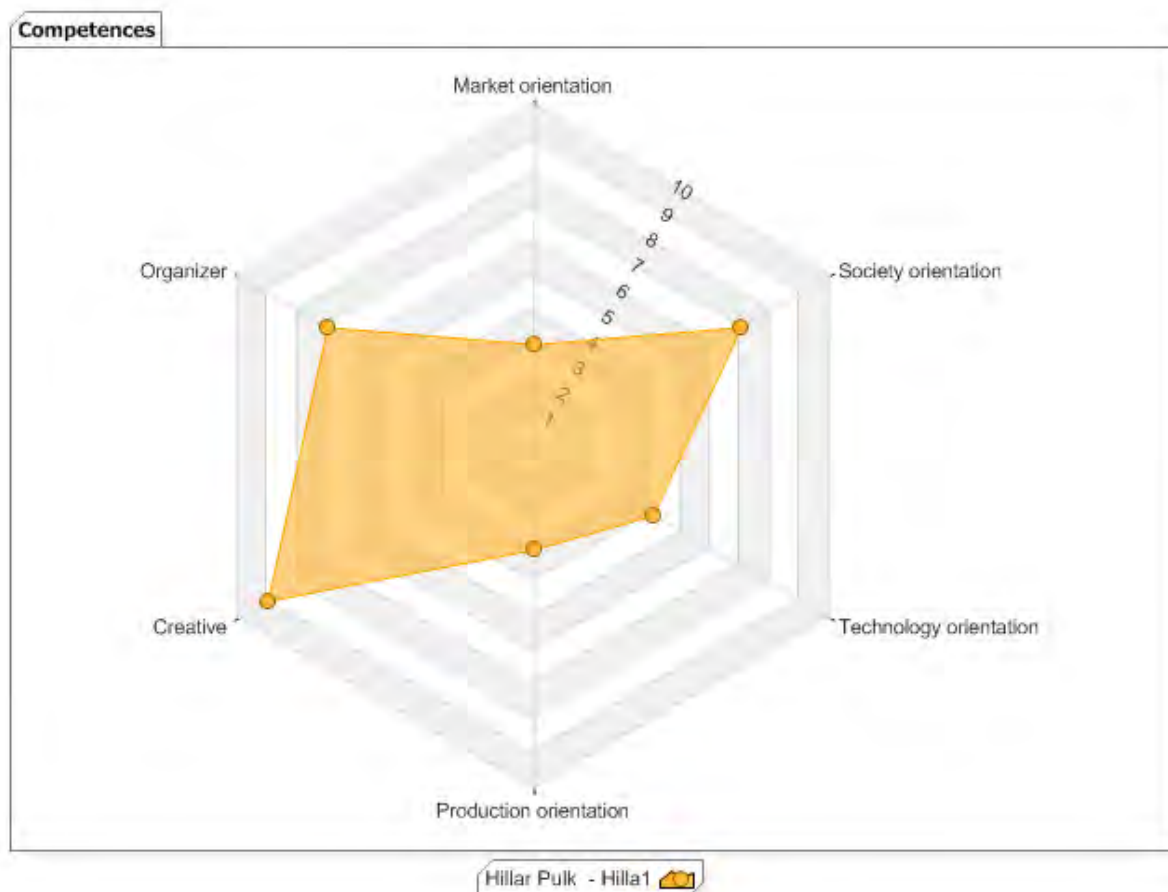
Hillar Pulk - Estonia

Introduction

One of the founders of the European Multifunctional Farmers Network is Hillar Pulk from Estonia. Pulk has had a lifelong passion for animals and always dreamed of owning his own farm. In 1991, he reached his goal after serving the agricultural industry for four years as a veterinarian. Pulk strives to share his connection with animals and nature with visitors on his farm. Creative, energetic, enthusiastic, and entertaining best describe Mr. Pulk. The unique style of the saloon where bison and people share the same table is an example of his creativity. The atmosphere within his farm fills “office workers” up with energy. Mr. Pulk and his employees all share enthusiasm for the farm and its animals. Finally, the farm and saloon is oriented to entertaining all types of guests on the farm. Mr. Pulk loves his farm and can not dream of doing anything else.



Competences



After reviewing the results of the Strategic Management Tool and speaking with Mr. Pulk, we have a greater understanding of his competencies. He is automatically focusing on the social aspects of his business by providing unique ideas and activities for his guests. Because he centers his attention on the social aspects, he needs to give more attention to the financial part of the farm. We think that the enterprise is now large enough to hire someone to act as a financial manager. We also advise that he should advertise his

multifunctional farm. With these small changes, Mr. Pulk will find his farm can become more profitable.

The entrepreneurs activities

The farm has 300 dairy cows, cattle, bison, pigs, goats, sheep, geese and chickens. Animals are raised in a traditional way and roam free together, like in the Garden of Eden. The building has a conference room, accommodation, restaurant and a bar where customers are together with the bison. Guests can also sleep in “teepees”. The theme of the farm is that of the American West, and visitors enjoy this lifestyle in all aspects of their stay.



In the future Mr. Pulk wants more guests on his farm. People are visiting the farm and are spreading the word of the great feeling they have after their visit. We suggest he advertise more to the public. More advertisement will allow him to share his passion with more people and receive higher profits.

The greatest setback for Mr. Pulk is organizing his finances. He enjoys sharing his farm with others and is not focused on the economical aspect of the enterprise. We suggest that he hire an advisor or a financial planner that will help him realize the benefits of his entrepreneurship. He enjoys having larger groups on his farm, but he is concerned that each individual does not get enough personal attention. To solve this problem, we suggest that he continue to ensure that every employee has knowledge of all of the farm's activities. Mr. Pulk has taken many steps to make his multifunctional farm successful, and we feel that a few minor changes will help him to have continued success.

Jose Arantes – Portugal

"TO BE AN ARTIST IS SOMETHING WHAT IS INSIDE OF YOU AND NEVER LEAVE YOU."



The name of farmer is Jose Arantes, he is from Portugal. He is “young” in the agricultural business. Before he was working as an artist, he likes to work with people and we know that, he likes to work also with children. When we were talking to him it was great moment, because he has a big charisma and he is great personality.

The main reason, why he decided to change his life is this, that he had already a farm, but at that time was his cousin taking care of farm, so mostly he used it for holiday , but he didn't think to going to the farm, but after he did his first agricultural course in organic farming and he just fell in love with that and he is very enjoying this life. So now is farming his new way of living, so it is for him very interesting. He is growing nearly every kind of vegetable. And also for him to have small way of selling creates communication with public and it's satisfying.



So for him this is the way of making a brand and this is one of strategy of him. So that strategy is growing step by step. He has passion for the nature, working for the nature is just fantastic for him. He is tip of farmer, who like to make a product which he knows - quality products ,it is nice for him to know what he is offering for the people and after people can know what they can expecting from him. He wants to give them something good, not just give them something what can bring him profit.

For the our question, what else he can do, when he is not a farmer he answer just simple: *"To be an artist is something what is inside of you and never leave you."* He can imagine him self in some kind of organization, which is helping to people, to give them something new and of course to work with the children. He want to put together agricultural with the theatre. At this time he is working on the plan to start his activities on the farm – start to make a theatre. Children just like to play outside, so they can grow a vegetable and they can see all process from seed to tomato, they are enjoying games and they are trying to find the way to save a nature, to be part of nature.



He has next to him some “body” who is emotionally connecting to him – his wife. For him it was very important step, because they have together the same aims and it easy to share the same things, but to have an employees is for him different, because sometimes they don't have the same opinion and sometimes people don't care about job, because they can get another. His future is to have somebody with the same joy and the same aims which he has and is happening, because in this time he has people, who are enjoying his farm and his feelings for farm.



People are becoming enthusiastic with his ideas and for those who share the same feelings with him don't see this idea as a job. He is sharing a profit with the people who are working with him. He is trying to get people to involve to his farm for sharing different ideas and for him that's called “multifunctional”. They are working together like a community. He is using 2 ha in this moment for a growing his

product, but he would like to get other parts of farm. The land where he is living is one part of three parts which are together. The name of whole land is "*Sociedade Agricola S.Filipe*". The name of his part is "*Hortd Do Zé*".

His strategy for the future is to have new clients and the market for his products. He can offer more products but he didn't have enough clients. He is joining other people who had already market to co-operate with them. With other farmers from his region they decided to make a organic fairs in the cities around the farms. New step for him is to grow in products, because now he has a more demand than he can offer. At this moment he has new clients and next step for him is to grow up.

Another strategy is offering services for people who have their own garden and they would to have their own biological products. He is creating a group who are visiting these people and trying to teach them how to grow products organically.

His opinion about a food is: "*I believe food has energy, when you put some love and some care into what you do this go to the person who will eat this food*".

European Multifunctional Farmers Network

Multifunctional farming is a force within sustainable countryside business. It is a bridge between agriculture and society, making connections between urban and rural areas, between citizens and farmers. At the same time it creates new businesses and connections between rural partners. With a European network we can put the multifunctional movement on the European agenda. This network will create a backbone of knowledge exchange on multifunctional farming. It has great potential to advance the multifunctional movement in Europe and its regions.

This is a workshop report which describes the results of the first meeting of the European Multifunctional Farmers Network (EMFN) which was held on October 23, 2008 on the multifunctional farm “De Zonnehoeve” of Piet van IJzendoorn, at Zeewolde, the Netherlands. This workshop was part of the European Eemland Conference ‘Versatile Countryside’ which was held 22 – 24 October 2008.