The Ivorian Pineapple

Social action within the international pineapple commodity network

Sabine Willems

PROPOSITIONS

1. Within the context of the current debate on the negative impact of globalization on small-scale farmers, the Ivorian example demonstrates that it is possible, with a strong organizational framework, for small-holders to compete in the 'Big League' *(this thesis)*.

2. Actors operate in a social life of multiple realities. However, for an individual actor, there is no sense of reality other than the reality he/she senses (*this thesis*).

3. The lack of a well-defined theoretical framework (*in global value chain analysis)* limits both the generalizations that can be derived from diverse case studies and comparisons of different value chains (G. Gereffi *et al.*, 2001, Introduction: Globalization, Value Chains and Development, *IDS Bulletin)*.

4. It would be foolish for us to imagine that we're anything other than creatures of our discipline, and creatures of our time (J. Law, *Organizing Modernity*, 1994).

5. Globalization, as it has been advocated, often seems to replace the old dictatorships of national elites with new dictatorships of international finance (J. Stiglitz, 2002, *Globalization and its Discontents*).

6. The Doha trade round was launched after the attacks of September 11th as proof that a prosperous and united world could rise above terrorism. With the failure of (yet another) Doha round, political leaders have merely proven anew that such ideological dreams are outweighed by economic self-interest.

Propositions accompanying the doctoral dissertation

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By Sabine Willems
Wageningen, 20 October 2006

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SOCIAL ACTION WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL PINEAPPLE COMMODITY NETWORK

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THE IVORIAN PINEAPPLE

SOCIAL ACTION WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL PINEAPPLE COMMODITY NETWORK

Sabine Willems

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It is hard to find the right words to express the feelings I experienced when I completed this thesis. Although I am very relieved that a long period of hard work has come to an end, I also regret the end of this challenging period.

The idea of starting a Ph.D. dates back from 1998. The experiences gained from working in the export sector of fresh produce in Tanzania and the Palestinian Territories as well as my move to Ivory Coast (another major agricultural exporting country) made me decide to further research a topic which had always intrigued me; namely, the personal stories behind the exotic products that we consume. The two year period that I spent in Ivory Coast, with my husband Peter, allowed me enough time to dig into the 'world' of the Ivorian pineapple; a rather unknown sector to me at that time. My quest turned out to be an enjoyable journey that has given me much insight into the different aspects of the international fresh produce domain.

I am grateful to a large number of people who made it possible for me to realize this thesis. They are too many to mention all, but I would like to refer to some of them in particular. First, I wish to mention my promoter Professor Norman Long for his theoretical guidance and advice, and in particular his patience during my extended timeframe working on the Ph.D.. I also wish to thank my co-promoter Dr. Alberto Arce, who has closely supervised me and served as my sparring partner to refine the ideas in this thesis. I am grateful to Alberto for his hospitality, ideas, theories and guidance. I was always welcome to pass by, even on weekends, for discussions which often continued until late in the evening and which would sometimes get quite heated. Not only have we spend time together on theoretical issues, we have also enjoyed preparing and consuming 'global meals'.

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the employees of Veritas, the different export organizations in Ivory Coast and several pineapple importers in Europe for their time and information. I have spent a lot of time with producers in the field to discuss various topics. I hope that they agree that this thesis reflects their thoughts, opinions and situations. It has been an intensive job to try to make sense out of the huge bulk of information that I have gathered from these different actors during this period.

Over the past 16 years, I have travelled and worked in different countries and regions, including Australia, the Middle East, South America, Africa and Eastern Europe. I have learned a lot from the cultures and countries which I have explored. Travelling and working (which sometimes must have driven my promoter and co-promoter nuts) have been the main reasons for the time it has taken to finalize this thesis. Although it has not always been easy to combine working, travelling and writing a doctoral thesis, I am pleased that I have done it in this way. Working in international supply chain projects has allowed me to keep up-to-date with the dynamic developments in the fresh agricultural sector, which has been conducive in building up my understanding of the issues at stake.

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I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father Victor.
So far he seems, so close he is.

SUMMARY

Today, a significant part of the agricultural commodities that we find at markets in the West are cultivated in developing countries. Many of these products are shipped around the world, passing through a complex network of actors involved in production, distribution and marketing activities. Who are the actors involved in these processes? What shapes their realities? And, in turn, how do they respond to and act upon factors related to the part they play within increasing globalized commodity networks? These questions have led me to analyse the social context in which local actors in the fresh produce sector operate.

The focus of this thesis is on what I refer to as the 'field of social action' of actors involved in global commodity networks. This field of social action may be defined as the 'social space' in which actors operate and which consequently constitutes the basis for their actions, practices, relationships, struggles and local knowledge. This study aims to explore the contemporary life of actors who act local, within their own 'reality', though as part of the global pineapple domain. The research focuses on the fresh pineapple sector in Ivory Coast. The central objective of this thesis is to analyse how local actors in the Ivorian pineapple sector respond to globalization trends and developments according to their own 'reality' (i.e. their life-worlds and local knowledge) and how they internalize these trends and developments in their actions, practices and relationships.

The qualitative field study which forms the basis of this thesis was conducted in the humid tropical south of Ivory Coast, from early 1998 to late 1999. The empirical data derived from this field study was further updated on the basis of more recent sources, and additional information was acquired during a brief visit to Ivory Coast in 2003. Extensive interviews held with actors in the commodity network – producers, landlords, export organizations, traders, local vendors, the sector-wide producers' and exporters' organization OCAB, the quality control agent Veritas, European importers and others – together with meetings and training sessions for producers that I attended, and observations in the field have resulted in the portrait of the fresh pineapple sector as presented in this thesis.

In terms of theoretical orientation, an actor-oriented perspective has been used to capture the specific situations and circumstances in which different local actors manoeuvre. The personal stories and experiences presented in this study seek to enhance our understanding of how different actors engage with and shape global commodity networks at the local level (in Ivory Coast). This helps us to understand the

way these actors experience global processes and seek to create room for manoeuvre within an increasingly demanding global pineapple sector.

A number of key elements of the globalization of agriculture have, in my opinion, shaped today's field of social action for actors operating within the fresh produce sector. These key elements include the expansion of production territories and de-territorializing of products, technological developments, such as in the transportation and communication sectors and the increasing demand for production capacity. Furthermore, in particular in recent times, we may identify a trend towards fully coordinated supply chain activities and the related consolidation of companies, driven by cost reduction benefits (economies of scale) and a desire for control over all activities in the supply chain (mainly from a food safety and quality perspective), as well as increased market orientation and consumer awareness. This study analyses how the Ivorian pineapple sector has dealt with these key elements in the globalization of agriculture.

The thesis describes how, during the early colonial period, French colonizers introduced the pineapple to Ivory Coast as a commercial enterprise for the home market. The introduction of pineapple was paralled by the emergency of a large-scale plantation economy of various other commodities. This development consequently generated a flow of labour; migrants from other parts of Ivory Coast and from neighbouring countries were attracted to the southern region of Ivory Coast in search of employment. The arrival of these newcomers, and a subsequent pressure on land, transformed village organization, with a new pattern of social relations emerging from power struggles for local control over land.

Since colonial times, the Ivorian pineapple sector has been organized through a sector-encompassing institutional framework. This administrative, production and distribution system led to a dominance of the Ivorian fresh pineapple in European markets, peaking at a 95% market share in the mid 1980s. Until the early 1990s, the Ivorian pineapple sector did not face serious competition within Europe. However, this situation changed when transnational corporations such as Dole and Del Monte penetrated the market, resulting in a severe loss of market share. Over the past 15 years, the Ivorian pineapple sector has initiated a number of activities to re-win their position in European markets, under the guidance of the overall producer and export organization, OCAB. This study presents the actions and struggles of the various actors involved in these efforts, in order to keep competing in the 'Big League'. It furthermore shows how the role of OCAB and other actors has changed over time, and how OCAB has evolved into a powerful mechanism for the coordination and control of activities in the Ivorian pineapple sector.

In this powerful institutional framework, the large number of small-scale producers who dominate the Ivorian pineapple sector, cultivate pineapples for far-away markets in the '*Pays des Blanches*'. Despite the lack of a direct link with consumers, these producers have generated ideas about the behaviour and preferences of these consumers, which has led to particular ways of acting and established practices in the pineapple fields. The study demonstrates that such practices are often based upon their observation of local consumer behaviour. A number of such interpretations, which may be held to be attributes of local actors' versions of the 'truth' about far-away pineapple markets, are described in this thesis; analyses of the actions and practices of producers therefore provides an understanding of their life-worlds and local knowledge.

The study uses global commodity networks associated with the production, distribution and consumption of Ivorian pineapples as a window for analysing the discourses of the global fresh produce domain. These discourses constitute an important 'mode of ordering' within the commodity network, representing trends and developments that lead to changes in the organizational framework and the network of the fresh fruit itself. Within the context of the Ivorian pineapple sector, the way in which such ordering takes place depends not simply on a number of key actors, but on the totality of actors' actions and realities within the pineapple network. The struggles, negotiations and discourses of these actors, as well as their interrelationships, dependencies and power positions, determine the eventual outcome of such ordering. Such processes and relations between actors are inherently dynamic in nature, and follow trends and developments which trigger important changes and reposition people, organizations and commodities. This process of constant re-ordering assumes the characteristic of an uncertain process which will never remain the same forever.

It is through the analysis of local actors' actions, responses and related realities that insights have been obtained that will prove to be valuable for understanding the field of social action of local actors involved in the Ivorian pineapple network. It is therefore hoped that this study will add an important dimension to our critical understanding and appraisal of more 'rational' perspectives on globalization of agriculture. The insights gained through this study has provided important understanding of the ways in which ordering processes in globalized commodity networks take place, and how actions and practices of actors within such networks are socially constructed.

SAMENVATTING

(Dutch summary)

Vandaag de dag wordt een groot deel van de landbouwproducten die we in westerse markten vinden verbouwd in ontwikkelingslanden. Deze producten gaan de hele wereld over, waarbij complexe netwerken van mensen (actoren) betrokken zijn die voor de productie, distributie en marketing zorgen. Wie zijn de actoren die betrokken zijn bij deze processen? Wat vormt hun realiteit? En hoe reageren zij en ondernemen zij actie in antwoord op veranderende factoren gerelateerd aan dat alsmaar groter wordende internationale netwerk rondom producten waarvan zij deel uitmaken? Teneinde deze vragen te beantwoorden heb ik in dit proefschrift getracht de sociale context te analyseren waarin lokale actoren in de internationale landbouwsector operen.

De focus van dit onderzoek is het 'sociale actieveld' van actoren betrokken bij internationale landbouwnetwerken. Dit sociale actieveld kan gedefinieerd worden als de 'sociale ruimte', waarin actoren opereren en die de basis vormt voor hun acties, handelwijzen, relaties, worstelingen en lokale kennis. De studie is daarbij gericht op het allerdaagse leven van actoren die lokaal opereren maar die onderdeel zijn van de internationale ananassector. Het onderzoek richt zich daarbij op de verse ananassector in Ivoorkust. De centrale doelstelling van dit proefschrift is te analyseren hoe lokale actoren in de Ivoriaanse ananassector reageren op internationale markttrends en -ontwikkelingen, binnen hun eigen 'realiteit' (hun belevingswereld en lokale kennis) en hoe zij deze trends en ontwikkelingen incorporeren in hun acties, handelwijzen en relaties.

Het kwalitatieve veldonderzoek in het zuiden van Ivoorkust dat de basis vormt van dit proefschrift vond plaats van begin 1998 tot eind 1999. Het empirisch materiaal resulterend uit dit veldonderzoek is bijgewerkt aan de hand van recente bronnen en een vervolgbezoek aan Ivoorkust in 2003. Uitvoerige gesprekken met actoren binnen het ananasnetwerk – producenten, landeigenaren, exportorganisaties, handelaren, lokale verkopers, de sectororganisatie voor producenten en exporteurs OCAB, de kwaliteitscontroleorganisatie Veritas, Europese importeurs en anderen – alsook bijeenkomsten met producenten en observaties in het veld hebben bijgedragen aan het portret van de Ivoriaanse verse ananassector zoals geschetst in dit proefschrift.

Op het theoretische vlak is de 'actor-oriëntatie' methode gebruikt om de specifieke situaties en omstandigheden waarin de verschillende actoren zich bevinden en bewegen te interpreteren. De persoonlijke verhalen en ervaringen van verschillende actoren zoals gepresenteerd in dit proefschrift geven inzicht in hun betrokkenheid bij internationale landbouwnetwerken, alsmede de manier waarop zij hieraan op het lokale niveau (in

Ivoorkust) vorm geven. Dit helpt ons te begrijpen hoe deze actoren internationale processen ervaren en hoe zij bewegingsruimte creëren in de alsmaar meereisende internationale ananassector.

Een aantal belangrijke aspecten van de globalisering van de landbouwsector heeft mijns inziens het hedendaagse sociale actieveld van actoren in de verssector beïnvloed. Tot zulke aspecten behoren de uitbreiding van territoriale productiegebieden en de deterritorialisering van producten, technologische ontwikkelingen in met name de transport- en communicatiesector en de toenemende vraag naar productiecapaciteit. Een actuele trend is verder de volledig gecontroleerde landbouwketen en de fusering van bedrijven, gedreven door kostenreductie (volume) en een streven naar controle over activiteiten en processen in de keten (vanuit het oogpunt van voedselveiligheid en voedselkwaliteit), alsmede door een groeiende marktoriëntatie en consumentenbewustzijn. Dit onderzoek bestudeert hoe actoren in de Ivoriaanse ananassector omgaan met deze aspecten van de globalisering van de landbouwsector.

Het proefschrift beschrijft hoe gedurende de vroege koloniale tijd de Franse kolonisten de ananas in Ivoorkust introduceerden als een commercieel product voor de thuismarkt. De komst van de ananas verliep parallel aan de ontwikkeling van grootschalige plantage-economie van verschillende andere producten. Deze ontwikkeling bracht een arbeidsstroom op gang. Migranten uit andere delen van Ivoorkust en uit omliggende landen, op zoek naar werk, trokken naar de zuidelijke gebieden van Ivoorkust. Met de komst van deze nieuwkomers veranderde de traditionele dorpsstructuur. De vraag naar land nam toe. Nieuwe sociale relaties ontstonden uit de veranderde machtsverhoudingen en daarmee samenhangende lokale controle over land.

Sinds koloniale tijden wordt de Ivoriaanse ananassector beheerd door een sectorbrede organisatie. Dit gecentraliseerde administratie-, productie- en distributiesysteem heeft geresulteerd in een dominantie van de Ivoriaanse verse ananas op de Europese markt, tot een marktaandeel van 95% in het midden van de jaren '80. Tot het begin van de jaren '90 ondervond de Ivoriaanse ananassector weinig last van concurrentie op de Europese markt. Deze situatie veranderde echter toen transnationale bedrijven zoals Dole en Del Monte de Europese markt binnendrongen, met als gevolg een aanzienlijk verlies van marktaandeel voor Ivoorkust. Onder leiding van de sectororganisatie OCAB heeft de Ivoriaanse ananassector gedurende de afgelopen 15 jaren een aantal activiteiten ondernomen om hun positie op de Europese markt terug te winnen. Deze studie beschrijft de acties en de worstelingen van de vele betrokken actoren in hun pogingen om mee te blijven dingen in de '*Big League*'. De studie geeft verder aan hoe de rol van OCAB en andere actoren over de jaren is veranderd en hoe OCAB is

uitgegroeid tot een machtig mechanisme voor de coördinatie van de Ivoriaanse ananassector.

Deze krachtige institutionele organisatie wordt gedomineerd door een groot aantal kleine producenten dat ananassen verbouwt voor markten ver weg in '*Pays des Blanches*'. Ondanks de afwezigheid van directe contacten met consumenten hebben deze producenten ideeën gegenereerd over het gedrag en de voorkeuren van deze consumenten. Deze ideeën hebben geleid tot specifieke handelwijzen en praktijken in de ananasvelden. De studie demonstreert dat zulke handelwijzen vaak gebaseerd zijn op observaties van lokaal consumentengedrag. Een aantal voorbeelden van dergelijke interpretaties, die toe te schrijven zijn aan specifieke versies van de 'werkelijkheid' van verre ananasmarkten zoals 'beleefd' door lokale actoren, is beschreven in dit proefschrift. De analyse van de acties en handelwijzen van lokale producenten geeft dus inzicht in de belevingswereld en de lokale kennis van deze producenten.

De studie gebruikt het productie-, distributie- en consumptienetwerk van de Ivoriaanse ananas als een referentiekader voor het sociale actieveld van de internationale verssector. De interacties binnen dit sociale actieveld vormen een belangrijke ordeningsmodus binnen het netwerk, en vertegenwoordigen de trends en ontwikkelingen die leiden tot veranderingen in de organisatie van het vers fruit netwerk. In de context van de Ivoriaanse ananas wordt deze ordening niet slechts bepaald door een klein aantal belangrijke actoren maar is de totaliteit van de acties en de realiteiten van alle betrokken actoren bepalend. De worstelingen, negotiaties en interacties tussen actoren, en hun onderlinge relaties, afhankelijkheden en machtsposities bepalen het uiteindelijke resultaat van een dergelijke ordeningsproces. Zulke processen en relaties zijn inherent dynamisch en volgen trends en ontwikkelingen die belangrijke veranderingen en herpositioneringen van mensen, organisaties en producten teweeg brengen. Dit proces van voortdurende herordening is onderhevig aan vele onzekerheden en variaties en is daarom onvoorspelbaar.

Door middel van een analyse van de acties, reacties en actorspecifieke realiteiten is belangrijk inzicht verkregen in het sociale actieveld van actoren in de Ivoriaanse ananassector. De hoop is hierbij dat deze studie een nieuwe dimensie toevoegt aan de kritische kijk op de meer rationele benadering van globalisering. De inzichten voortkomend uit dit onderzoek hebben geleid tot een beter begrip van de manier waarop ordeningsprocessen in internationale productnetwerken plaatsvinden en hoe de acties en handelwijzen van actoren binnen zulke netwerken sociaal geconstrueerd zijn.

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ACRONYMS

ASEIMPAC	Association Européenne des Importateurs d'Ananas de Côte d'Ivoire
BRC	British Retail Consortium
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
COLEACP	Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee
CIAB	Comité Interprofessionel d'Ananas et Bananes
CIFEL	Centre Techniques Interprofessionnel des Fruits et Légumes
CIRAD	Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement
CNRA	Centre National la Recherche Agronomique
COBAFRUIT	Coopérative Bananière et Fruitière de la Côte d'Ivoire
COFRUCI	Coopération Fruitière de Côte d'Ivoire
COFRUITEL	Coopérative de producteurs pour la commercialisation des fruits et légumes de la Côte d'Ivoire
CRAB	Comité Régional d'Ananas et Bananes
EU	European Union
EUREP	Euro-Retailer Produce working group
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FASBACI	Fédération des Associations Bananières de Côte d'Ivoire
FCFA	Franc Communauté Financière Africaine
FLO	Fair trade Label Organization
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MRL	Maximum Residue Level
OCAB	Organisation Centrale des Producteurs - Exportateurs d'Ananas et de Bananes
ONAPES	Organisation Nationale des Producteurs Exportateur de Fruit et Légumes du Sénégal
PDCI	Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire
PIP	Pesticide Initiative Program
SA	Social Accountability
SAFCO	Société Africain de Conservation
SALCI	Société des Ananas de la Côte d'Ivoire
SCB	Société de Culture Bananière

SEPAS	Sénégalaise d'Exportation de Produits Agricoles et de Services
SICOFREL	Société Ivoirienne pour la Commercialisation des Fruits et Légumes
SITRAM	Société Ivoirienne de Transport Maritime
SITROCAB	Société Ivoirienne pour le Transport Maritime Réfrigéré de l'OCAB
SMPA	Société de Manutention des Productions Agricoles
SODEFEL	Société pour le Développement des Fruit et des Légumes
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
SQF	Safe Quality Food
TNC	Transnational Corporations
TP	Terminal Portable
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization of the United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization of the United Nations

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the research theme

Wandering through the fresh fruit and vegetable sections of supermarkets and grocery stores, it is hard to imagine all the exotic places from where these fresh products originate. Many of these products are cultivated by farmers in far-away countries and are shipped across the world to end up in the supermarket or grocery store where we do our shopping. Whilst we enjoy their taste, we are unaware of the activities, thoughts and stories of the many actors involved in cultivating, transporting and marketing of these products. We, as consumers, are also often not aware of the many intricate systems in place to manage and control the supply of these products and to guarantee their quality and safety. Particularly interesting in this respect are perishable products, such as fruit, vegetables and flowers, which have to be kept fresh in order to retain a high quality once placed on the shelves of our shops. This raises a number of questions: *Who are the actors involved in these processes? What shapes their realities?*[1] *And, in turn, how do they respond to and act upon factors related to the part they play within increasing globalized commodity networks?*[2]

These questions form the central research theme of this thesis. They first arose during a field study in Tanzania, in 1994, where I worked with a group of local women who cultivate flowers on the slopes of Mount Meru, near Arusha. The women enjoyed growing flowers in their small rural village and were proud of their harvest. They carried the flowers in buckets on their heads to a Dutch farmer who owned a large-scale flower farm five kilometers from their village, and who transported and sold flowers at the flower auction in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands. The group of women approached this farmer for assistance in the sale of their flowers and for advice on cultivation practices and post-harvest handling. Regularly passing the farmer's flower plantation, the women had decided that he must have a lot of experience and was very successful, since his plantation was expanding every year. On his part, the grower was

[1] 'Reality' in this respect reflects the 'local knowledge' and 'life-worlds' of actors. These concepts are further elaborated in Chapter 2, Section 2.7.

[2] The definition and concept of 'commodity networks' within the context of globalization is further discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.

willing to help the women; indeed apart from facilitating transport and sales, he sometimes visited their flower fields and provided training on his own plantation.

The Dutch flower farmer assisted the women on a voluntary basis, thus his help could be considered charitable rather than being commercially oriented. Nevertheless, the farmer had a hard time explaining why the women's flowers fetched low prices or were even destroyed at the auction. He faced difficulties in explaining market principles such as quality and price relationships or scarcity and demand, all of which influenced the value of their flowers.

Based upon these experiences and while working with these women I realized that although they were primary actors in the global flower commodity network, they had no idea of the functioning of this network, including the demands and influence of global markets, its intermediaries and the final consumers. Fortunately, the opportunity came up to introduce the women's group to the network: I won a prize in a competition of the Dutch airline company KLM, under the name "Bridging the World", which made it possible for me to invite the group of women to visit the Dutch flower auction in Aalsmeer in 1995. For the first time, these women would experience the 'reality' of the clock auction.

After an excursion through the auction, where the women experienced being flower auctioneers themselves and experimented with the computers, they started to understand the principles and functioning of the auction. Until then, they had not realized the importance of the quality of the flowers and the consequences of not meeting specific quality standards: adding quality value to the flowers – no spots on the leaves, straight stems, etc. – meant a better price for their harvest. Also, previously the women had been unable to grasp the intricacies of market principles and the related practices of the auction. They finally understood what the Dutch flower grower, who exported their flowers to the Dutch auction, meant when he told them that their flowers were destroyed because they were sold under the minimum auction price. Direct experience of the auction helped them to understand the minimum price principle, which implied that flowers valued below a certain price – often as a result of bad quality or due to market saturation – were destroyed in order to protect prices at a certain level. Until then, the women had not (fully) believed the Dutch flower farmer and had suspected him of cheating.

The visit provided the women with a much better understanding of the larger (global) flower business, including the fact that their flowers were competing with flowers from producers all over the world. They realized that their local knowledge in producing flowers for this global market had been inadequate, but that they could take measures

to increase market performance of their flowers simply by ensuring a better and more consistent produce quality (as expected by the marketers and consumers). Their endeavours were further stimulated thanks to the charity project of a Dutch seed company, which enabled the women to return home with enough improved flower seeds to last for the next four years, and an assurance from the seed company to pay annual visits for technical assistance during this period. Besides all of this, the status of the women in the village increased because of their trip to Europe, a journey that most of the village inhabitants, including their husbands, could only dream of, and which provided them with more leverage on the local level for their enhanced engagement in the flower farming business.[3]

This experience encouraged me to continue to research the social setting of small-scale producers engaged in the cultivation of perishable products for the international market and the commodity networks of which they are a part. I found it particularly intriguing to assess how such producers would, within their respective realities and life-worlds, engage in activities and take actions and measures to survive in an increasingly globalized market environment. I realized, in this respect, that much can be learnt from analysing peoples' involvement, strategies, struggles, actions, practices and relations, on the basis of their personal stories, in order to understand their connection to and perception of the global agricultural market.

Since this experience in Tanzania, I have undertaken further research on commodity production and networks, first in the Gaza Strip (Palestinian Territory) and later in Ivory Coast. In 1996, I went to the Gaza Strip to study the social organization of strawberry and flower producers who export their products from the Gaza Strip through Israel to the European market. This research gave me insight into the struggle by and between actors in conflict areas in trying to market their high added-value products on the international market. In this case, an added complication was the fact that these producers would regularly be cut-off from the international market through the closure of 'check-points' between the Palestinian and Israeli territories. From this research, I concluded that the three main obstacles constraining production and marketing by these small-scale producers were: firstly, control and power mechanisms; secondly, knowledge, information and communication impediments; and thirdly, logistical problems (Willems, 1997).

Early in 1998, I went to Ivory Coast to study the pineapple sector. This sector in Ivory Coast is particularly interesting due to its long-term history (dating from the early 1900s). Ivory Coast is known for its remarkable achievements in the agricultural sector.

[3] This story was analysed in: Arce, 1997.

Following Independence in 1960, the country's first president, Houphouët-Boigny, was one of the few African leaders to promote agriculture and give industrial development a low priority, at least initially. Houphouët's government offered farmers good prices and stimulated agricultural production. The incentives of the government attracted migrants from neighbouring countries to start farming in Ivory Coast. By 1979, Ivory Coast had become the world's leading exporter of cocoa and coconuts and Africa's leading exporter of coffee, pineapples and palm oil. Its annual growth rate in real terms of over 7% between 1950 and 1975 is unique on the African continent (den Tuinder, 1978:3). The world recession of the early 1980s, however, sent shockwaves to the Ivorian economy. As a result of the collapse of cocoa and coffee on world markets in the early 1980s, Ivory Coast became one of the world's largest debtors on a per capital basis (Loxley and Campbell, 1989). Yet, despite these economic problems, the Ivorian pineapple sector had a 95% market share of European markets by 1986 (OCAB, 2003:7). However, due to international competition, this market share declined to 50% at the beginning of the 1990s (OCAB, 2003:7).

In view of Ivory Coast's long-standing history of active agricultural promotion, the case of the Ivorian pineapple sector provides ample material for a case study from which interesting lessons and conclusions can be drawn. Not neglecting insights gained from the earlier mentioned cases of Tanzania and the Palestinian Territories, the Ivorian pineapple sector is therefore the central case study presented in this thesis.

1.2 The research focus

The focus of this thesis concerns the 'field of social action' of actors involved in the commodity network of fresh pineapples from Ivory Coast. This 'field of social action' may be defined as *the 'social space' in which actors operate and which consequently constitutes the basis for their actions, practices, relationships, struggles and local knowledge.* This study, therefore, aims to explore the contemporary life of local actors who act local, within their own 'reality', although they are also part of the global pineapple commodity network. Chapter 2 further conceptualises this central research theme.

This thesis focuses mainly on the experiences and knowledge gained from my qualitative field study of the fresh pineapple sector in Ivory Coast, with a specific emphasis on the production of pineapples for export to European markets. The Ivorian pineapple sector is particularly interesting in view of the fact that export of pineapples from Ivory Coast has shown a tremendous growth during the 1980s. This growth is particularly astounding since the sector is dominated by small-scale producers. Despite the fact that most of these producers are not directly connected to the European market,

the sector's institutional framework of cooperatives, producers' associations, exporters' organizations and a sector-wide pineapple organization (of which some where established as early as the 1940s), allow these small-scale producers to compete in the highly competitive international markets. Although, the Ivorian pineapple sector has experienced serious competition over the past 15 years, the sector has managed to remain an important supplier of pineapples in the European fresh produce markets. The challenge to unveil the complexity of actors who are involved in this sector, the processes of development and change, and the response to and actions undertaken related to changing circumstances in the globalized market have triggered me to focus my research on this sector.

1.3 Methodology

The qualitative field research, which forms the central case study of this thesis, was conducted in the humid tropical south of Ivory Coast over a two year period, from early 1998 to late 1999. The empirical data presented in this thesis relates to this period, although some data has been updated on the basis of a more recent visit to Ivory Coast in 2003.

The starting point for my research was to visit the 'Organisation Centrale des Producteurs - Exportateurs d'Ananas et de Bananes (OCAB)', the overall export organization for Ivorian bananas and pineapples. OCAB assisted my research and allowed me to join a certain Mr. Yocoli, their pineapple extension agent, on a number of trips to the pineapple region to the East of the river Comoé. Together, we visited producers and walked through their pineapple fields, while discussing cultivation and marketing practices with them. I was also invited to join training sessions for producers at different producer export organizations.

On the basis of these visits, I obtained a good overview of the sector, including its general organization, and the location of plantations, packing houses and export organizations. I learned that pineapples are cultivated in three main areas, namely: Comoé-East Region, Abidjan Region and Agboville-Tiassalé Region (see Figure 1.1). However, the largest concentration of pineapple producers is in Comoé-East Region. The soil in these humid tropical areas is very fertile, and the logistical, port and communication infrastructure is well established. For the same reason, many other export commodities, including bananas, rubber, palm oil, coconut, papaya, and flowers, are cultivated in the same localities.

After my initial visits accompanied by Mr. Yocoli, I revisited the three pineapple producing regions on a regular basis. Armed with a checklist of topics (see annex I), I

walked into the pineapple fields, mostly unannounced, and talked with the supervisors of plantations and their labourers that I met. As issues arose, the checklist was adapted. Topics on the checklist were organized according to the different handling stages within the commodity network, focussing subsequently on production, post-harvest and packaging activities, transportation to packing houses and the harbour in Abidjan (the financial capital of Ivory Coast), quality control activities, handling at the harbour, sea transport and marketing in Europe. The focus of my questions fell into three categories: (i) actions and practices of the interviewees, such as specific cultivation practices; (ii) their knowledge of the activities of other actors[4] in the pineapple network; and (iii) their experience of and relations with other actors.

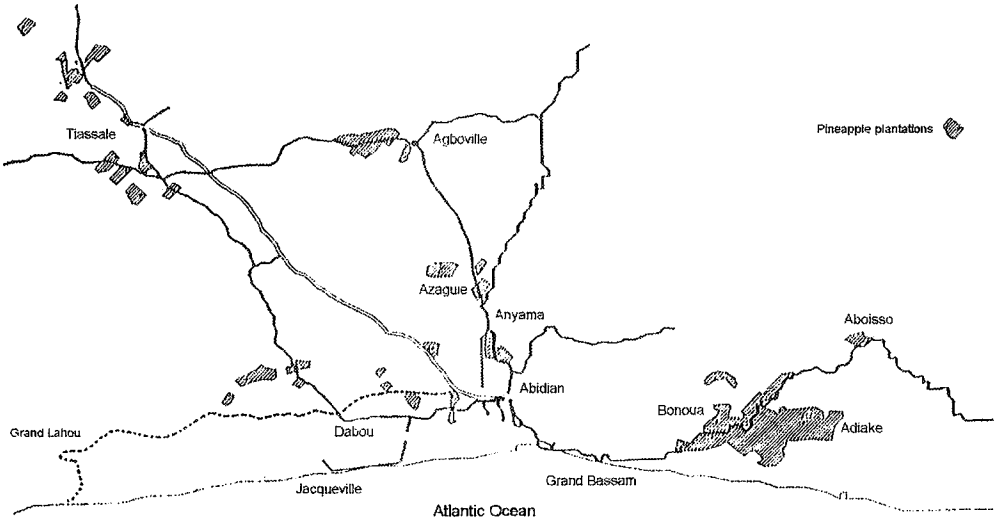

Figure 1.1: Pineapple plantations in southern Ivory Coast (Source: OCAB, 1999:10).

According to Jexco Queyrane Conseil (1998:141), small-scale producers represented 95%, or 925 producers, of the total number of pineapple producers in Ivory Coast in 1998. I interviewed 20 to 25% of these small-scale producers.[5] Jexco Queyrane Conseil (1998:141) also reported that 42 medium and large-scale pineapple producers were active in 1998; I interviewed 16 of these producers. During the interviews, I would note the names of interviewees, packing houses, organizations and other actors mentioned in

[4] e.g. colleague producers, cooperatives, the overall pineapple export organization OCAB, local vendors, quality controllers (of the quality control organization Veritas) in the harbour, the transit company and the importers.

[5] It is difficult to provide an exact percentage due to the potential overlap between individual and group interviews, and also considerable overlap in family names of the interviewed farmers, which makes it difficult to distinguish between them.

the discussion and would visit and interview these actors on a follow-up visit, following a similar procedure. This so-called 'snowball effect', enabled me to expand my network as I proceeded, as well as to analyse the linkages between the various actors, by adjusting my checklist of questions for each particular actor.

An additional advantage of the method was that it allowed me to cross-check answers to my questions, an exercise which turned out to be very profitable and sometimes enlightening. Most importantly, cross-checking provided contrasting perspectives on particular situations, shaped by the differing realities of the actors involved. For example, where farmers complained about unfair treatment (e.g. low prices returned for their produce by their market intermediaries, such as cooperatives, large-scale producers or others), another perspective might have been that quality aspects or market saturation kept the prices low. Also, in a number of interviews I found that people drew a nicer picture than actually was the case. Often, this was based upon the (unfounded) assumption that I was working for an importer and that I was trying to identify potential producers for this importer. In order to overcome this handicap as much as possible, I re-interviewed certain actors, and, in particular, key actors such as representatives of OCAB, directors of export organizations, and a selective number of small, medium and large-scale producers and harbour employees, at several stages of my study. Also, by hanging out in the production areas and at the harbour I could follow and observe actual activities and practices and chat with people in a less structured way. Some of these observations and interviews have resulted in descriptions of individual people's experiences presented in this thesis.

Apart from producers, I also interviewed landlords, government employees, staff of institutes, family members of producers, and staff of international organizations supporting developments in the Ivorian agricultural sector, such as the European Union (EU) and the World Bank as well as other donors. Besides these actors (based in Ivory Coast), I have furthermore interviewed representatives of the forwarding agent Léon Vincent and representatives of importers and retailers in Europe.

In addition to these interviews and field observations, data and information were collected on the basis of secondary information sources – reports and other documents – on the production, export, services, policies, marketing aspects and statistics of the Ivorian agricultural sector and the pineapple sector in particular. Substantial information on the past and current situation of the pineapple sector was available from OCAB and the EU Program for the 'Stimulation of the Export of Pineapple and Banana'. Unfortunately, however, it appeared that publications concerning the early years of the pineapple sector were very limited and difficult to find and, as a consequence, I had to rely mainly on people's experience.

1.4 Structure of this thesis

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework of this thesis and explains the concepts, theories and approaches used to analyse the field of social action of the actors involved in the Ivorian pineapple network. The theoretical framework centres on an analysis of key elements of globalization of agriculture and related social processes, as a basis for the research design. Furthermore, the concepts of 'life-world' and 'local knowledge', critical components of the reality of actors, as well as that of actor orientation are further elaborated in this chapter.

Building on this theoretical framework, Chapter 3 elaborates on trends and developments specific to the pineapple sector, giving emphasis to the Ivorian struggle within the international pineapple market. The chapter also focuses on the increasing role of retailers and transnational corporations as key actors in the global domain, including their influence on consumer behaviour, as well as the importance of branding and standards.

Chapter 4 analyses the impact of global trends and developments on the Ivorian pineapple sector from the perspective of the producers, while Chapter 5 assesses the same from the point of view of institutional actors, or 'intermediaries', such as export and import organizations, cooperatives, and sector and supporting organizations. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes with a final analysis of the findings of the research.

Due to sensitivity, I have used pseudonyms for the names of the people mentioned in this thesis. Actual names are used for organizations and companies.

CHAPTER 2

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

RESPONDING TO TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE GLOBALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

2.1 Introduction: globalization, commodity networks and supply chains

Today, many agricultural commodities[6] found at markets in the West are cultivated in developing countries. Meals consumed in Western countries often consist of ingredients from around the world: truly global meals. While not so long ago most products went straight from the farm to the local market in many parts of the world, nowadays agricultural commodities may be shipped around the world. Western consumers can often not imagine where the products they consume have been cultivated and under which conditions. Similarly, producers in developing countries are often not aware of the global networks through which their products pass, or their final destinations on the plates of consumers.

What we see today is that agricultural commodities pass through "a complex and often diverse set of reconstituting processes, organized from the local to the global scale" (Arce, 1997:185). These processes are managed by a complex network of actors, each with their own specific function and role(s), together constituting a 'commodity network'. Friedland (1984) was one of the first to analyse such a network with his important work on 'commodity systems methodology'. His work has evolved from a focus on the organizational aspects within a commodity network (labour, producers, distribution and marketing), in the early 1980s, to consideration of scale (region-specific commodities *vis-à-vis* globalized commodities), state involvement (regulations and legislation), and culture (the attribution of cultural elements to a particular commodity) (Friedland 2001; 1984). His work, as well as that of others who followed in his footsteps, shows the complexity of factors and social interactions affecting processes within the commodity network.

The commodity network (in this case of the Ivorian pineapple) is the central element around which this study is built. Within the context of this study, a commodity network can be defined as *an interactive network of actors organized around a commodity flow.*

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[6] Appadurai (1986:16) defines commodities as "things that, at a certain phase in their careers and in a particular context, meet the requirements of commodity candidacy" and is an "object of economic value" (*ibid.*, 1986:3).

These actors include those who are directly involved in the production, distribution and marketing of a commodity, or provide services such as information, extension and finance, as well as actors with no direct connection to the production, distribution or marketing aspects of a commodity (such as family, tribal leaders, religious authorities, etc.), but playing a certain role in the commodity network. Within the same context, a commodity flow or 'supply chain' may be defined, following Sturgeon (2001:11), as a "vertical sequence of productive (i.e. value-added) activities leading to end use"; thus, involving different actors who are linked from 'farm to fork' to achieve a consumer-oriented product through the establishment of a sequence of flows (products, capital, information and knowledge) and processes (governance, decision making and execution).[7] Gereffi (1994), a pioneer of global commodity supply chain analysis, stresses the important role of social actors in the functioning of global commodity supply chains, including the importance of power relations between key actors within the chain.

This thesis is concerned with analysing the field of social action of actors engaged in dynamic international commodity networks, within the context of what is today referred to as the globalization of agriculture. There are many different definitions of globalization, often depending on the particular focus of the individual analyst. For example, Giddens (1990:64) defines globalization as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa", thus he emphasises dimensions of globalization related to networking and social relations. Others, such as McMichael (1996), view the process of globalization in terms of a new international division of labour and a repositioning of state function and regulation versus a more global financial capital, a process driven by a search for opportunities to increase profits. This latter conception of globalization recognizes the way that dividing processes of commodity production between different locations can offer labour and efficiency advantages, which are important 'driving forces' behind the globalization process.

In any case, however, what may be defined as the core of the globalization of agriculture is what one could describe as *the growing connection between actors from different parts in the world who are directly or indirectly involved in the production, flow, merchandise, and eventually consumption of agricultural products.* Many factors, including social relations, profitability, labour divisions, laws and regulations, technological development, and consumer awareness play important roles in the globalization process, as will be shown later in this chapter.

[7] This explanation is partly influenced by the definition of a supply chain given by van der Vorst (2004:105).

The overall view emerging from the literature of globalization is a contradictory one: some are optimistic and some are pessimistic. Authors, such as Chalongphob (2000) and Kaplinsky (2000), criticize an optimist's view of globalization and its effects. They point out the risks of globalization that need to be carefully evaluated in shaping development strategies, and insist that the specific socio-economic environments in each country should be taken into account in deciding strategies to meet the challenges of globalization.

Despite the way academic literature has recently made the term 'globalization' popular, the process itself is by no means new. Ever since the era of seafarers and colonists, and arguably even before, through for example nomadic movements and long distance land-based merchandise caravans carrying salt and ivory (across Africa), silk and spices (across Asia), a gradual but always intensifying globalization of agricultural commodity networks has taken place. The following section provides an overview of this historical rise of the globalization of agriculture.

2.2 The rise of the globalization of agriculture: an historical overview

Although authors such as Hirst and Thompson (1996), McMichael (1994) and Bonanno et al. (1994) argue that it was not until after the Second World War, and in particular during the 1960s, that the world became truly globalized, the exchange of goods between people living far away from each other dates back many centuries. In these early days, this included primarily agricultural products such as spices, salt, palm oil and fibres (Hoogvelt, 2001). Numerous books have been written about the time that early seafarers defeated geographical distances to discover new territories (e.g. Braudel, 1984; Wallerstein, 1974). Over time a network of material exchange appeared and developed into a world market for agricultural products. Amongst early commodity networks are the export of sugar from Brazil by the Portuguese and spices from South-East Asia by the Dutch (Braudel, 1984). The establishment of these early global networks can be seen as the origin of present-day globalization.

There are a number of important historical processes that need to be considered in order to understand the development of the globalization of agriculture. First of all, during colonial times, European countries conquered distant lands and in the process produced region-specific goods such as cocoa, rubber, cotton, sugar and other crops, making use of cheap labour and exploiting other resources such as minerals (gold, silver, diamonds). In order to accommodate these objectives, the European conquerors invested in plantations for the production of agricultural products, set up a national infrastructure to support the transport of goods (mainly agricultural products, minerals, and also slaves) from locations inland to the coast for shipping overseas. They also

introduced well-organized administrations including policies to regulate trade (Hoogvelt, 2001). The colonial states consequently became dependent on their conquerors not only in terms of the administration of their (new) national government, but also for their economic development, which was principally driven by the export of products, including agricultural commodities.

Another early historical process was the Industrial Revolution, which started around 1800, and which was importantly based upon a number of technological innovations, including the invention of steam power, and later the petroleum-based engine. The same inventions also reduced transportation costs and time through the application of motorised ships and trains, and consequently provided an important boost to the globalization of the world.

After Independence of most developing countries in Africa in the 1950s and 1960s, many ex-colonial countries retained strong ties with their previous conquerors in terms of trade relations and financial support. Ivory Coast is a good example of an ex-colonial state that continued to rely heavily on its colonist, France, after Independence. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of this thesis seek to capture the important role France continuous to play in the present-day development and export of agricultural commodities from Ivory Coast.

World trade has grown significantly since the 1950s. The world economy has become internationally organized, resulting in a 'thickening' of networks of global economic and social relations (Frieden and Lake, 1995). Dicken (1992) perceives this to be a clear indicator of the increased internationalization of economic activities and of the greater interconnectedness which has come to characterize the world economy. As argued by Cohen and Kennedy (2000), this expanding interconnectivity and interdependency ties individual actors, localities, companies and countries into an ever denser network of transnational exchange and affiliations. Dicken (1992) further argues that transnational corporations (TNCs)[8] have been the single most important force in creating such global shifts in economic activity. This influence of TNCs emerged in the early 20th century, when TNCs from the United States of America (USA) started to invest in a number of so far underdeveloped countries, attracted by the availability of cheap resources and labour. In the process, production became internationalized into cross-border supply chains, with both products and shares traded between countries. In the post-World War II phase, TNCs expanded their activities and investments all around the world, making them one of the most dynamic actors in globalization processes (Koc, 1994).

[8] 'Transnational corporations' refers to multinational companies. The prefix *trans* implies across, rather than *within*, different nations, as the term multinational implies.

Until the 1970s, the main agricultural commodities that were traded and transported around the globe were wheat, beef and tropical bulk commodities such as coffee, cocoa, sugar, rubber, vegetable oils and cotton (Friedmann, 1994). The demand for food increased when urban areas worldwide started to grow. Increased consumption of wheat and meat during the 1950s-1970s meant that the agro-food sector had to re-organize and intensify its production and distribution activities (also across borders), resulting in large-scale, intensive monocultural production, also referred to as the Fordist production system.[9] Because of the increased pressure on land, new food production locations arose to produce food at lower costs to feed urban population around the world (Friedland, 1994), thereby incorporating such new locations into the world-economy (Wallerstein, 1983). TNCs expanded their activities across many borders, international trade increased and international flows of (cheap) labour and capital emerged. National state policies became internationally oriented.

The USA and the United Kingdom (UK) were the main drivers behind international economic liberalization (decolonization) after World War II. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the United Nations (UN) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) were established to institutionalize international liberalism in international relations. As described by Gaisford and Kerr (2001), until the establishment of these international institutions, the international rules of trade in agricultural commodities largely operated outside governing international trade rules. Bilateral agreements between trade partners were negotiated and tariffs and other trade-restricting policies were put in place by nations. After the establishment of these international institutions, international trade relations became more institutionalized, and by the 1960s, import tariffs[10] were substantially reduced in all industrialized countries. On the other hand, as argued by Henson et al. (2000) and Lake (1995), non-tariff barriers emerged, such as newly imposed food quality and safety standards, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

As argued by Friedland (1994), because of favourable demand trends in high income countries towards the consumption of fresh exotic products, a considerable and growing 'window' emerged for producers in developing countries. In particular, large-scale producers in developing countries have capitalized on these opportunities by re-enforcing their collaboration with other businesses active in the commodity network. In various cases, local producers have linked their production activities to the interests of TNCs, achieving vertically coordinated and often fully controlled operations in cross-

[9] The Fordist agricultural production system is understood to refer to the industrial mass-production of agricultural products, uniform in quality and size, produced in 'farm factories' meant for mass-consumption.
[10] Taxes imposed on goods entering a country from abroad.

border trade.[11] Well-known examples of this collaboration are the involvement of Central and South American producers of fresh fruits and vegetables who have linked up with North America retailers and companies such as Wal-Mart and McDonald's, and similar for East Africa, where producers of fresh fruits and vegetables operate in association with large European retailers such as Tesco and Royal Ahold. Examples of such collaboration are described among others by Dolan and Humphrey (2004; 2000), Cook (2003), Friedland (2001; 1994), and Jaffee (1995). At the same time, however, various groups such as traditional small-scale producers and temporary workers have largely failed to benefit from these developments.

The importance of international trade has spectacularly increased during the past five decades. World Bank statistics show that over the period 1965-1999, world trade has grown more rapidly than world income in almost each year (World Bank, 2001). This rapid growth and its consequences have, however, brought the issue of globalization to the attention of the public. A growing awareness of issues such as food safety and quality has led to change within globalized agricultural commodity networks. The following section provides a perspective on these currently trends in globalization.

2.3 Current trends in globalization of agriculture

Today, we are witnessing a shift in consumer preferences; demand for fresh, exotic, organic and artisanal agricultural products is increasing. Contemporary consumers are more concerned about the safety, nutritional value, quality and freshness of their food; also, due to their busy lifestyles, they demand for more 'convenience' food. Consumer concerns relating to health, the environment and social impacts of production systems, have forced producers to diversify their products and to adapt their production and supply practices and systems. Technological innovations have made it possible for a global restructuring of the agro-food sector to take place to meet this emerging consumer demand. Agro-food studies, such as reported by Friedland (2001), Marsden et al. (2000) and Marsden (1997), have contributed to explain these new trends in consumption and their impact on the restructuring of the agro-food sector. Due to new technologies, people have started to communicate directly, transportation facilities have improved, information is disseminated faster, and international financial transactions take place more rapidly. Highly sophisticated 'expert' management systems[12]

[11] We can speak of vertical integrated supply chains when all activities of the supply chain (production, processing, transportation, distribution and marketing) are governed in their logical sequence, often coordinated or controlled by a lead company in the supply chain.

[12] In this context, expert management systems refer to technology based systems such as computer programs and quality control systems.

supported by modern technology are being applied to improve and safeguard the quality, safety, nutritional value and freshness of these agricultural products.[13]

Modern technology makes it possible for retailers and TNCs to follow the worldwide seasonal production cycle and source products from different agricultural localities to assure a year-round supply. Advanced information technologies enable traders to respond quickly to changes in consumer demand and to facilitate the flow of goods in today's highly complex global marketplace. Two main organizational spheres (production and marketing) have started to interact to secure provision of demanded agricultural products for consumers.

In recent years, retailers and TNCs have focussed on the rising food safety concerns of consumers who were especially alarmed by the *bovine spongiform encephalopathy* (BSE) disease and dioxin problems and, scared by threats such as salmonella, listeria and cholera. The EU and national governments responded by imposing tighter food safety requirements, including increased monitoring, use of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point systems (HACCP)[14], product liability and labelling. The private sector, individually as well as collectively, reacted by implementing measures to prevent food safety scandals. Although food safety problems may have resulted from practices 'up-stream'[15] the supply chain, the retail sector and importers of food would be blamed for it by national consumers, thus harming their reputation. In response, many retailers have developed their own specific private standards to safeguard food safety and quality – examples of which are 'Nature's choice' of Tesco, 'Filière Qualité' of Carrefour and 'Rio Grande' of Edeka – some of which even exceed the public food safety regulations.[16]

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[13] While many expert management systems have been set up to protect consumers, these consumers are probably not aware of the complex systems that guide the production and flow of goods they consume.

[14] Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point is a science based tool to assess hazards in the supply chain of food. The HACCP control system identifies specific hazards critical points at an operation and processing side. Efficient and accurate record-keeping is essential to the application of a HACCP-system. According to EU directive 93/43/EEC on Food Hygiene effective in December 1995, all food business operators in the European Union will implement HACCP (Grijspaardt-Vink, 1995).

[15] Up-stream of the supply chain refers to actors operating at the production side of the chain (producers). The term is furthermore used in cross-border chains to indicate actors in other countries then the final consumer, including producers, local traders, processors and exporters.

[16] Marsden et al. (2000) demonstrate that in order to address new demands arising from increased consumer awareness, the private sector increasingly collaborates with national governments on issues such as food safety and quality. The retail trade associations such as BRC and its European counterpart - EuroCommerce - are involved in the draw up of the Guidelines for Good Hygiene Practices for Food Retail under the provision of the Hygiene Directive (EU Directive on Hygiene for Foodstuffs, 93/43/EC), demonstrative of a process over recent years, in which the public legal framework and the private code of practices provide the consolidated framework for the commodity network to operate in.

Gereffi et al. (2001) recognize this development and argue that the more retailers and other companies are exposed to risks as a result of supply failures, the more they will directly intervene to coordinate and monitor the supply chain. As an example, in 1998, retailers in the UK such as Tesco, Sainsbury, Safeway and Summerfield cooperating in the British Retail Consortium (BRC)[17] took the initiative to formulate their own common standards for food processing and packaging. The BRC standard and other private 'codes of practice' and standards, like EUREP-GAP[18] and SQF[19], are nowadays applied by supermarkets and importers all over the world to control food safety and quality (Henson and Reardon, 2005; Jaffee and Henson, 2004). Dolan and Humphrey (2000) confirm that monitoring and control of suppliers is of increasing importance. Van der Ploeg (2003:25) refers to this development as an attempt to "control from a distance".

Another recent development that can be identified in the agro-food sector is the increasing development of brands of products and companies (including retailers' brands). Brands stand for values such as quality, safety, trust, culture, fairness, organic, fun, pleasure, etc. The perception and experiences that consumers have with a product and therefore the value they attach to certain brands is of great importance for the success of a product in the market. TNCs, retailers and importers attach value to their products through branding. Marketing activities and promotion campaigns have become extremely important for the success of these brands (products).

2.4 Framing the research objective

Based upon the previous section, it may be argued that what may be called the 'rationalization' of global agricultural commodity chains has been taking place. Although the Fordist monocultural production system of the 1970s may in a certain sense also be seen as a rational system, based on its characteristic mass-production and product uniformity, more recent technological and other developments in the fresh commodity sector have furthered this into highly sophisticated production systems.

[17] The British Retail Consortium private standard measures the Good Hygiene Practices of a company. The standards is meant for companies that process, pack and handle food. The standard is comparable to the HACCP standard. BRC is not a public standard but is nowadays applied by companies all over the world (www.brc.org.uk).

[18] The Euro-Retailer Produce working group platform in which the major European retailers are grouped has developed the EUREP-GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) standard for the producer level of the supply chain. The EUREP-GAP protocol includes a guideline to assure good agricultural practices and the production of safe food (www.eurep.org).

[19] Safe Quality Food (SQF) is an Australian initiative. This private standard is designed for all participants in the supply chain to assure safe and high quality food. SQF 1000 focuses on the production level, SQF 2000 is meant for the processing, handling and packing operations and SQF 3000 is meant for the retailer level. SQF includes HACCP and ISO 9000 principles as well as tracking and tracing requirements (www.sqfi.com).

These systems are used to manage and control the supply chain from production through to handling, marketing, and the final destination, the consumer. Systems have been developed to supply specific markets such as the retail, wholesale, catering and niche markets (as fair trade, organic and ethnic) with products meeting specific demands.

What are the characteristics of present-day rationalities in agricultural commodity chains? First of all, it follows that far-reaching product and process *standardization* has taken place. The standard categories of specific products, distinguished by size, colour and other characteristics, standardized packing procedures and methods, and standardized boxes and pallets have resulted in homogeneous, identifiable products. As Daviron (2002) indicates, such standardization provides products with an identity that is no longer based on the identity of the producer but is defined by standard product specifications and standard production and handling criteria and methods. Electronic systems to track and trace the specific location of the product and to control all the handling at different stages in the supply chain are increasingly being implemented. Such *tracking and tracing systems* are also used to trace back processes that have resulted in unwanted quality or other product characteristics. This demand for traceable products has been boosted by the earlier mentioned increased consumer demands for 'safe' products. Products are sourced from all over the world. Distant places are connected through modern *information and communication technologies*. Buyer and supplier communicate directly on issues related to their trade relation. *Contract arrangements* between buyers and suppliers specify the exact volume and characteristics of products to be supplied on a particular day, including product quality specifications, a pre-agreed price and registration requirements of the practices in the field and during handling. With regard to the latter, *certification* of implemented defined production methods and procedures and quality management systems has become the entry-point for trade relations between the buyer and the supplier.

The above provides a brief overview of the type of rationalization processes observed in present-day fresh produce supply chains. As may be clear from this overview, these recent developments involve increased control of all practices, actions and transactions in the complex networks through which agricultural products pass. These developments have resulted in more effective and cost and time efficient production, logistic and marketing. It is therefore not surprising that it is the private sector which has been the initiator of the development of these expert management systems to monitor and to control activities in the commodity supply chain. It should be recognized that, for many participants in these supply chains, these certification schemes, tracking and tracing systems, and other 'control' mechanisms are not easy to comprehend. Although the various actors often implement and follow 'the rules of the game', as Gibbon (2001)

argues, they fail to understand the exact meaning or logic behind them, consequently increasing their dependency on others, and reducing their room for manoeuvre[20]. An important consequence of this rationalization process is that actors who have the capacity and knowledge to respond to these developments have a competitive advantage, as is generally the case for well-established actors such as TNCs, globally operating retailers and importers, and large-scale producers.

The above developments have prompted an intellectual debate among scientists and professionals within the sector that concentrates on the development of these expert management systems, on the impact of the current restructuring of the agro-food sector and on the achievement of highly efficient and effective supply chains (e.g. Henson and Reardon, 2005; Castells, 2004 & 1997; Camps et al., 2004; Dolan and Humphrey, 2004; Hendrickson and Heffernan, 2002; Marsden et al., 2000; Goodman and Watts, 1997; Friedland, 1994; Bonanno et al., 1994). These debates, however, typically pay little attention to the conflicts, struggles and negotiations that take place in the field of social action in the localities where food is produced, and which may impact upon the function and performance of the commodity network (and by implication also upon the quality and reliability of the supply chain's products). There are some exceptions, though, such as Wells (1996), who closely focuses on the labour struggles of Mexican migrants in the Californian strawberry sector, as well as Murray (1997), who analyses how Chilean smallholders are dealing with more stringent contract agreements enforced upon them by large-scale firms.

As pinpointed by Marsden (1997), commodity networks are situated and embedded in localities. It is therefore important to analyse the local social context in which these commodity networks are embedded. However, as Friedland (2001) notes, it is often the economy that is taken into account and not so much the complexities and realities of local actors operating within these commodity networks. On the other hand, authors such as Granovetter and Swedberg (1992) refer to an opening up of the academic debate about the economy to include a social perspective. Nevertheless, practical examples of such cases are relatively limited.

In the public arena, the debate on globalization focuses more on the moral[21] (or 'ethical') aspects of the globalization process, and its implications for various social groups. Anti-globalization and anti-corporation movements form well-known 'pressure groups', which follow world development issues and organize protests at the meetings of world leaders (G8 meetings) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) against the 'dark sides' of globalization, such as the exploitation of poor countries by the rich and

[20] Section 2.8 further elaborates on this aspect of 'room for manoeuvre' of actors.

[21] The use of child labour for instance.

TNCs. The popular 'No Logo' book of Naomi Klein (2000) provides, for example, a critical account of the marketing, organizational and operational strategies of TNCs. She shows how companies such as Nike and Levi's that promote 'a world-wide style culture'[22] are exploiting the poorest countries by applying immoral (at least to western standards) labour conditions and low salaries, all for the benefit of unimaginable profit. Or as Barlow and Clarke (2001:1) describe "creating a seamless global economy with universal rules set by big business for its own advancement". Within the same context, Milanovic (2003:668) portrays globalization as a phenomenon with "two faces: the benign one, based on voluntary exchange and free circulation of people, capital, goods and ideas; and the other face, based on coercion and brute force".

As also concluded by Bhagwati (2004), it is mainly thanks to these pressure groups that society world-wide is informed about the negative influences of globalization on poor countries and poor people. These groups bring to light the practices of TNCs (exploitation for high profits) and national and international governments (trade barriers to protect national or regional agriculture) that, at least in their opinion, disfavour the world's poorest. Undeniably, these groups have an important function in communicating the circumstances of people who often have not the possibility and the power to do so.[23]

Within the context of the debates referred to above, I took up the challenge to contribute to understanding of the social complexities and realities of local actors engaged in globalized networks of fresh agricultural commodities: Who are these actors? What shapes their realities (determined by their life-world and local knowledge)[24]? And how do they respond to global trends and developments? This study therefore focuses on the social dimensions of the Ivorian fresh pineapple commodity network. In this respect, the local ability to act upon and adapt global elements – such as economic restructuring, political and cultural processes, consumers' demands and concerns – depends on the local capacities and capabilities to translate and internalize the global into the local (Long, 2001; Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 1999; Marsden, 1997). Individual local actors will respond to global processes according to their specific local knowledge and life-world, or, as noted by Remmers (1999), the capacity and capability of local actors and institutions determines which global

[22] Source: www.levi.com, 1996.

[23] The private sector has reacted to this public call for awareness on the negative impacts of globalization in a number of ways. Most large-scale companies, for instance, have developed Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs to assure better labour conditions, higher salaries and a larger share of profits for the people at the poorer end of the commodity chain. However, protest groups are critical about these CSR programs and blame companies for using CSR only to enrich the social chapter of their yearly reports.

[24] The concepts of life-world and local knowledge are further described in Section 2.7.

elements are selected to be transformed and adapted to local circumstances, thereby generating local diversity and identity.

Based on this understanding the objective of this study is:

> to analyse how local actors respond to globalization trends and developments according to their own 'realities' (i.e. their life-worlds and local knowledge) and how they internalize these trends and developments in their actions, practices and relationships.

Such analysis of actors' actions and practices includes the way actors operate in their everyday life, whereby each individual actor is a locus for a complex set of social relations (Arce et al., 1994). In this respect, Giddens (1984) points out that human action occurs as a continuous flow of conduct. These actions are often "intentional with sometimes unintended consequences which may systematically feed back to be the unacknowledged conditions of further acts" (*ibid.*, 1984:8). This indicates that actors' actions and practices can be rather complex. Within this context, local actors' responses to trends and developments should be understood to be *the processes through which individual actors translate, interpret, organize and transform these trends and developments through their social actions.* Internalizing refers to *a process in which local actors embed these trends and developments into their world, their own reality.* The processes of responding and internalizing could therefore be seen as interdependent processes: an actor may internalize a development or trend before he/she responds to it. Through such internalization, the global and the local thus become connected.

As suggested by Long (1992), an actor orientation provides a useful window for analysing such actors' behaviour and actions, or, as he concludes, "to understand the processes by which particular social forms or arrangements emerge and are consolidated or reworked in the everyday lives of people" (Long, 2001:49). Section 2.8 elaborates on the concepts and approaches related to such actor orientation as used in this thesis. The following section further defines the specific research framework of this thesis.

2.5 The research framework

The research objective is in line with recommendations from authors such as Long and Villareal (1998) and Marsden and Arce (1995) who call for an analysis of social configurations and global tendencies; as they argue, trends related to globalization cannot be seen as linear and un-problematical processes that result in the reorganization

of international financial systems, the development of an international division of labour, the emergence of TNCs, the formulation of national state policies, and the development of complex cross-border agricultural trade relations. They urge us to analyse social processes to understand how local social spaces are created, which lead to the production of commodities for the global market.

This study aims to analyse the pineapple commodity network focusing on the social processes in different social spaces. Three main spaces are distinguished in this thesis. These are the production space (local producer's involvement in production for the global market), the intermediary space (actors and agents connecting the production and the global market) and the global market space (marketing agents and consumers).

A large number of different actors in these three 'spaces' will be identified in the course of this thesis. The production space, first of all, includes actors directly or in-directly engaged in the production of the commodity. The key actors in this respect are farmers and their families and community, landlords, input suppliers and wage labourers. The intermediary space comprises actors affiliated with the transportation, handling and export of products, most importantly traders, exporters, producers' groups (e.g. cooperatives and associations), freight forward agencies and quality control agencies. Actors in the global market space are associated with the marketing of the product, such as global buyers and retailers, as well as the eventual consumers. Figure 2.1 presents a schematic representation of these different spaces which have helped to design the overall analytical conceptual setting. It should be noted that the different spaces indicated in the figure are not closed systems but are diffused spaces.

The case study presented in this thesis focuses in particular on the practices, actions and relationships of local actors in Ivory Coast associated with the global pineapple space. Although Chapter 3 provides a general perspective of the global space for pineapples, the actor analysis presented in this thesis is largely confined to the production and intermediary spaces that organize and establish the social dimension of the Ivorian pineapple commodity network.

The trends and developments in globalization influence the actions of the various actors in the three defined social spaces. Individual actors respond to and internalize these trends and development processes, resulting in the (re)shaping of actions and behaviour at the local level; the manner in which such responses and internalization takes place is determined by the actor's 'reality'. Marsden and Arce (1995) indeed have concluded in their article that internalization and translation processes are social components of how actors construct 'reality'. It should be noted however that such reality is constructed by an actor through his/her own understanding (knowledge) and

life-world, and does therefore not necessarily reflect the reality of others but may be perceived and ordered in such a way that it is a very understandable reality for a particular actor. Because of the importance of actor's life-worlds and local knowledge in shaping actor's behaviour and actions, these aspects form an important window for analysis in this thesis. The concepts of life-worlds and local knowledge are further elaborated in section 2.7.

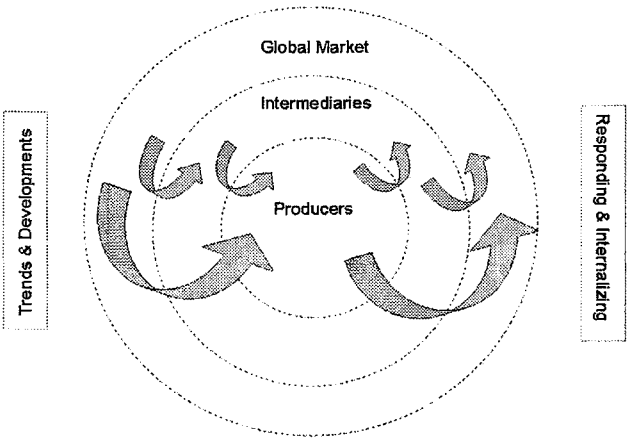

Figure 2.1: Model of the conceptual framework of this thesis

In summary, therefore, the research framework of this thesis is moulded by, on the one hand, the characteristics – trends and developments – of the globalization process, and on the other hand, the responding and internalizing processes of these trends and developments by local actors, placed within their respective realities.

The subsequent sections provide further insight into the various research components. Section 2.6, first of all describes the trends and developments of globalization of agriculture that have, in my opinion, importantly shaped today's social context in which local actors operate. Rather than focussing on the more 'superficial', directly identifiable aspects of globalization, such as the increased internationalization of commodity networks, labour division and financial markets, this section focuses on the identification and analysis of the key 'elements' behind the globalization of agriculture, such as technological developments and consumer awareness. Section 2.7, furthermore, elaborates on the concepts of local knowledge and life-worlds, which shape the reality in which local actors perceive, think and act. Finally, Section 2.8 describes the main analytical windows used to understand the reality of local actors and their agency.

2.6 Key elements in the globalization of agriculture

As presented in Section 2.2, in the earlier stages of globalization, an important reason for seafarers to explore new territories was to obtain exotic new products such as spices, salt, rubber, cotton, vegetable oils and minerals (gold, silver, etc.). The *'expansion of territories'* from which these products were sourced was therefore an important driving force. In time, however, (bio-)technological developments have resulted in the creation of product varieties that grow well in different locations and have consequently led to an 'erasure of place specificity' of the production of particular products. Friedland (2001) and Bonanno et al. (1994), for example, describe the well-known case of the kiwi. Formerly closely tied to New Zealand, the kiwi is nowadays cultivated in France, Italy and Chile, amongst other countries. From this and other cases, it is clear that technological developments have made it possible to *'de-territorialize'* agricultural production and processing, and hence overcome problems associated with physical distance. As may be concluded from Stroper and Salais (1993), this de-territorialization has an additional advantage, in that it enables a whole year round sale of products because of seasonal overlap between different geographical locations.

Nevertheless, even today many agricultural products are cultivated at *place or region-specific locations*, whether it is because of logistical considerations, cultural and historical ties, production characteristic conditions (climate, soil, etc.), or product characteristics. With regard to the latter, French regional cheeses, Italian Parma ham and Parmigiano Reggiano cheese (see also de Roest and Menghi, 2000) and the many regional wine varieties are examples of products that may only carry region-specific labels when produced according to traditional recipes and mostly linked to specific regions (or 'territories'). A well known example is the many region-specific French wine brands such as Bordeaux, Champagne and Côte du Rhône. As shown by van Ittersum (2001), consumer motives to purchase these regional products are linked to the functional, social and emotional value – taste, healthiness, quality, identity, desire, and happiness – which they attribute to these products. Vincenzo Tassinari, CEO COOP Italy (cited in Grievink et al., 2002:96) argues that "consumers desire products that relate to their culture, tradition and territory". These 'local and traditional' products are therefore important for retailers. Even today, therefore, the expansion of territories remains an important driving force in globalization processes.

The benefits offered by the availability of (cheap) resources such as land and labour, driven by a demand for *production capacity and cost reduction* have been an important motive for the globalization of agriculture since colonial times. Colonists established plantations and attracted a labour force to work on them. For example, the French

colonists in Ivory Coast established large-scale plantations to supply their home market, benefiting from an abundance of land and cheap labour. To further expand their capacity, they attracted labour force (including slaves) from surrounding areas and neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso and Mali to work on the large-scale cocoa, coffee and rubber plantations. In other cases, where suitable land and production conditions were found in areas with a less abundant (or useful) labour force, such as in the Americas, colonial countries, such as Portugal, Spain, Britain and the Netherlands engaged in large-scale migration of the labour force (slaves) mainly from Africa.

After Independence this expansion in authoritarian capacity was generated through less regimented economic mechanisms. Despite political independence, most previous colonies still remain tied to their previous colonizers through economic factors, such as access to markets, capital and technology. This climate of economic dependency has tightened in recent decades, when foreign debt obligations forced many developing countries to attract outside investors in order to obtain foreign currency. This was also concluded by Dinham and Hines (1983) who analysed the impact of foreign companies operating in African countries on Africa's food and agricultural production. They argue that these companies often control the choice of which cash crops are grown, the direction of foreign investment, and the job opportunities agriculture provides for many living in these African countries. Within the same context, regional and international trade agreements and politics influence the country's agro-export opportunities and restructuring of the agro-food sector. Raynolds (1997), for example, shows how domestic and international political as well as economic forces, interconnect in transforming the agro-food sectors and trade in the Caribbean. She emphasises the critical role of the national states in regulating agrarian restructuring and shows that due to international pressure to increase export earnings for debt repayment, the Dominican Republic defined a development strategy centred on non-traditional agro-exports, free trade zone manufacturing, and tourism.

We may conclude from cases such as the Dominican Republic, that the new type of labour relations evolving from these processes of change are often less tight, providing much freedom of operation for TNCs and foreign investors, with limited influence from the host country itself. In the case of the Dominican Republic, for example, we see that the TNCs started to operate largely through contract-farming with local small-scale pineapple, banana and cane sugar farmers. Raynolds (1997) sees these contract-farming relations mainly as forms of labour arrangements through which producers and exporters are linked. Based upon Little and Watts (1994), this definition may be expanded, to include vertical forms of coordination between growers and processors/buyers that directly shapes production decisions through contractually specifying market obligations – by volume, quality, and, at times, advanced price

determination – to provide specific inputs and exercise some control at the point of production.

Contract-farming has become an important form of collaboration between local farmers, on the one hand, and exporters, large-scale farmers, importers and TNCs, on the other. The institutional and organizational arrangements of contract-farming vary considerably, resulting in heterogeneity of contract relations. In any case, however, it is clear that these contract-farming arrangements are flexible in ways that cannot prevent TNCs from retreating from the country in case the export market falls apart, leaving the local farmers with the costs of lost investments and markets and declined prices.

Even at present, the search for cheap resources is an important driving force for globalization as scarcity of land and high labour costs, and also unfavourable tax regimes, motivates companies and farmers to (partly) move to countries that offer land (at low cost), a cheap labour force, and low taxes. Many European farmers are, for instance, moving to Eastern-European countries because of favourable conditions and lower costs.

Undoubtedly, *technological developments* are another important driver behind the globalization of the agricultural commodity sector.[25] In particular, developments in transportation have made it possible for products to be sourced from far away places and transported to markets thousands of miles away. Furthermore, developments in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector have eliminated many limitations in communication and information flows. Today, people are in direct contact through the Internet and information can be sent without any time constraint. Within this perspective, Yearley (1996) goes as far as defining globalization as the process in which people develop cross-national and worldwide connections through the use of modern information and communication technologies. Despite this limited view, it is clear that a reduction in communication time and costs has enormously eased the logistical burden of connecting people in different, distant localities. Moreover, largely thanks to the same technological development in communication technology, the increasingly global financial sector has facilitated the international financial transaction processes: nowadays, financial transactions can be made through the Internet and other means of communication, thus limiting transaction time and costs.

[25] It may be questioned whether part of these technological developments has actually evolved to fulfil a specific need entailed by the call for enhanced global access to territories and their resources. For example, the invention of the steam and later petrol engine was clearly related to a search for more efficient means of transportation. Nevertheless, it is clear that many related and non-related technological developments have boosted the pace and direction of the globalization of agriculture.

These innovations led to what Castells (2004; 1997) calls a 'network society'. He argues that a society is built around microelectronics-based information technologies and states that "what is specific to our world is the extension and augmentation of the body and mind of human subjects in the networks of interaction powered by microelectronics-based, software-operated, communication technologies" (Castells, 1997:7). Information and knowledge may indeed drive these social networks and will empower those who have access to it. However, as also pointed out by Inda and Rosaldo (2002), globalization is an uneven process and many people have little or no access to means of communication and transport. Although the world may be full of complex mobilities and interconnections, there are also quite a number of people in places whose experiences are marginal to or excluded from these movements and links.

Because of technological progress, huge production areas have developed to efficiently serve markets at almost opposite ends of the world. An example is the flourishing flower industry in East Africa: the large-scale flower plantations are able to cultivate a very perishable product which is harvested in the late afternoon, transported by direct flights to the Dutch flower auctions, where the flowers are auctioned upon arrival early the next morning and subsequently transported to further flower markets around the world, all on the same day. Auction prices are communicated directly to the plantation managers through the Internet.[26] Other cases show that technological developments invoke rather extreme situations; for example, effective logistical operations have convinced fruit processors in Ghana to import seasonal melons from Brazil for the production of fruit salads for markets in the Netherlands.[27] Also, efficient means of transportation and preservation have made it possible for shrimps caught in Northern European waters to be transported to Morocco to be pealed by low paid women, before being sold on Northern European markets.[28]

New technological expert management systems that have developed in recent years make it possible to control the flow of products throughout the supply chain and to track and trace the products at any moment in time. These developments are a result of the numerous food scandals that have occurred over the past 20 to 25 years in Europe, which have alarmed consumers and lead to food safety becoming a top priority for governments and the private sector. Governments and retailers have reacted by imposing strict food safety measures on the international food system. As a result, food

[26] It is interesting to note that although modern technology allows for flowers to be sold through the Internet without being moved to flower auctions, buyers often prefer to see the actual physical quality of the product (value) before buying it. Buyers apparently experience the Internet as unreliable. Technology has not yet been able to embed values such as smell, colour and freshness.

[27] Source: Interview with Royal Ahold's Program Manager of Ghana, Ghana, October 2003.

[28] Source: Interview with Mrs. E. Roth, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental and Business Economics, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark, May 2003.

safety continues to rank higher and higher on political and business agendas. Over the past decade, major market players have developed food safety into a 'core competency', by bundling skills and technologies (Willems et al., 2004). A range of new technologies to support the control of food safety and quality management in supply chains, to increase the use of ICT and to improve logistics, were developed. Technological standards and systems to guide and control processes and flows of goods and information (such as tracking and tracing) are becoming increasingly internationalized.

Driven in particular by cost reduction benefits (economies of scale), and a desire for control over all activities in the supply chain, a gradual process is taking place to *fully coordinate* the activities in the commodity network by specific actors. This has led not just to collaboration between actors but also to activities being merged in order to coordinate and control the supply chain – production, processing, transportation, marketing, etc. – within the same entity. The emergence of TNCs is a relatively recent example of such fully coordinated processes (also indicated as consolidation). Hendrickson and Heffernan (2002) provide three examples of emerging clusters of large firms that control most of the practices and the decisions taken in the supply chain from gene to supermarket shelf. They conclude that, in their examples, farmers only provide labour and sometimes some capital but never own the product that moves through the supply chain. A much earlier example of fully coordinated processes is, however, the organization of farmers into cooperatives and associations, to serve the growing market and to reduce the costs and logistical burden of their production, for example, through the joint purchase of raw material, sharing of production facilities and machinery, and coordination of sales and information supply.

The consolidation of companies and of retail power in the supply chain has resulted in vertically coordinated supply chain activities. With production, distribution and marketing no longer being disconnected, this development has facilitated the process of globalization of agriculture into more efficient, effective and cost-reduced practices. Companies such as Del Monte Fresh Produce Company and Chiquita Brands Inc. for instance, have set up plantations for the production of fresh fruit at different locations around the world. The companies process the fruit, take care of the distribution to markets worldwide, and launch huge marketing campaigns to attract consumers to their products. The operations of such TNCs are truly global, as is shown for example in Figure 2.2 for Dole Food Company Inc.

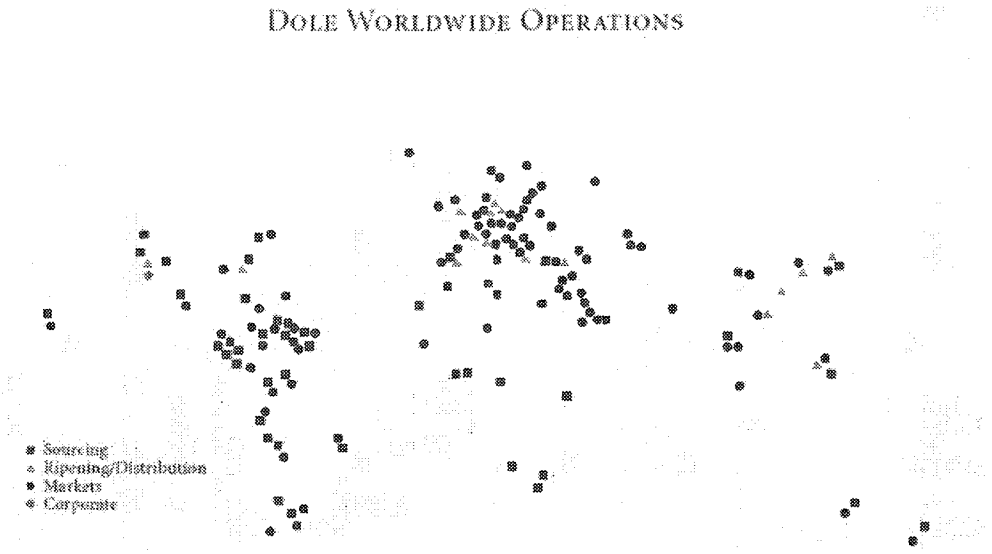

Figure 2.2: Dole Worldwide Operations (Dole Annual Report, 2003).

Another example relates to processes of consolidation in the retail sector. With a market share of around 80% of total fresh produce retail sales, supermarkets nowadays account for the majority of fruit and vegetable retail sales in Western Europe (Rabobank, 2002:14). Fearne and Hughes (1998:29), for example, show that in the UK the six largest food retailers had captured a 76% share of fruit and vegetable sales by 1997. What can be observed is that most of the retailers have established governance structures to control activities in the supply chain and to assure food safety, quality, price and in-time delivery.[29] Instead of being directly involved in production, they specialize in marketing and supply chain organization (Dolan and Humphrey, 2000).

Food safety and quality protocols (code of practices) and certification requirements (such as BRC, HACCP, EUREP-GAP) for the retail sector are enforced for each supplier and can be seen as the 'rules of the game'. Compliance with retail private standards has become a 'license to produce'. In order to comply with such standards, producers have good control over production and register all production and handling practices.

Although most retailers do not own the entities along the supply chain, they increasingly attempt to dictate and control all practices along the supply chain. To do so, most retailers deal with preferred importers and processors (contractors) to source

[29] Humphrey and Schmitz (2001) use the concept of 'governance' to capture the way that some firms in the supply chain set and/or enforce the parameters under which others in the chain operate.

products. Humphrey and Schmitz (2001) and Schmitz and Knorringa (2000) call such contractors working for, or on behalf of major retailers, 'global buyers'. The preferred importers or global buyers have in most cases established long-term relations with producers (often large-scale[30]) in developing countries for the productions of fresh products.[31] These buyers are very demanding as it concerns aspects such as cost control, timely delivery, quality and safety. However, on the other hand these buyers do transmit best practices and provide hands-on information and advice.

Change in the retail sector has been critically followed by researchers such as Dolan and Humphrey (2004; 2000), Humphrey and Schmitz (2001) and Thrupp et al. (1995) who argue that the sector is becoming very powerful and producers are becoming fully dependent on them. Critics argue that the unequal power relationships in the supply chain and trade barriers – through for example stringent food safety and quality, environmental impact assessment and social accounts requirements – impact not only the organization of the cross-border supply chain but have also affected the division of costs and benefits. In particular, as argued by Trienekens et al. (2004), small-scale producers in developing countries are in a disadvantageous position in this respect, since they have little capital to invest, use traditional techniques, depend on family labour and lack contact with international market players.

An illustrative example of this increasing dependency is presented by Murray (1997), who shows that multinational and national private export companies play a central role in the Chilean fresh fruit and vegetable export sector. He argues that the nature of economic power relations, which tilt heavily in favour of export companies, form an important explanatory factor in the increasing rate of failure among the fruit growing *parceleros* (small-holders). He describes how private export companies have restructured following the decline of fruit prices on international markets, due to the global oversupply of fruit which resulted in a saturation of northern markets and the stagnation of volume. These developments had a direct impact on small-scale producers in Chile, because the private export companies started to impose higher quality demands and 'tighten-up' contractual agreements and included various clauses related to disputes, clearing firms from responsibility at crisis points and side-stepping any claims for compensation. In addition, small-scale producers can become dependent

[30] It is noted that the preferred large-scale producer has in most cases out-grown arrangements with local small-scale producers to complement their export volume.

[31] Some of these retailers and importers even invest in plantations in developing countries to upgrade the production, to improve the quality and safety of the products, and to obtain transparency of production, harvesting and post-harvest handling. From a survey conducted in 2003 amongst several major European buyers of fruit and vegetables from producers in developing countries it may be concluded that there is a clear willingness of retailers and importers to invest (finance, knowledge and technology) in plantations with whom these buyers have developed long-term trade relationships (Willems et al., 2004).

upon (and indebted to) export companies for loans, inputs, information and technology. The low bargaining power of small-scale producers and an inability to market their products in alternative ways, gave them little choice but to accept the conditions contained in within new contract agreements. Murray (1997) argues that this has caused small-scale producers to be significantly 'squeezed'.

There is no doubt however that the efficiency obtained through consolidated efforts by internationally operating companies, has improved the competitiveness of these companies. In my view, consolidation can therefore be seen as another key element in the globalization of agriculture. It should be realized though that consolidation is, in part, actually a result of globalization: companies and farmers had to consolidate in order to serve the growing market and new consumer demands through cost reduction and higher quality of products and services. It is also clear that many recent developments in globalization would not have been possible without such consolidation having taken place. For example, the enormous investment in expert management systems and the extensive product and marketing (branding) developments that we see nowadays would not have been feasible on a small-company basis.

We can identify the rise of a *market orientation* to be another important element within the globalization of agriculture. One can argue that this characteristic has become associated with the 'experiential' shopping behaviour of contemporary consumers: customers lining up for a Starbucks coffee are not just there for the coffee. It is, as Klein (2000:20) suggests, "the romance of the coffee experience, the feeling of warmth and community that Starbucks communicates in its advertisements that attracts large numbers of people to the Starbucks shops". Scott Bedbury, Starbucks' vice president of marketing, recognized that "consumers don't truly believe that there is a huge difference between products" (cited in Klein, 2000:20); they are there to be part of the experience that Starbucks successfully communicates.

A change in marketing strategy of TNCs took place in the late eighties and early nineties, when companies such as Microsoft, Nike and Marlboro changed their approach from simply selling a product as a commodity to selling a brand that represents an experience, a lifestyle and a value. These companies changed from being product-oriented to marketing-oriented; in effect the company's brand became their lifestyle marketing tool. Sales of name-branded bottled water in the Western world are another example of a product that has seen a tremendous annual increase over the past five years. Smart marketing campaigns have turned a seemingly 'simple' product such as water, into a fashionable high-value commodity in Western Europe and the United States. Gereffi (1994) shows in his work that brand name companies and retailers in

these 'buyer-driven chains' exercise key governance functions. These companies focus on the design, retailing and marketing of the product and control the organization of the supply chain. They define what is produced but do not produce it themselves.

TNCs and retailers increasingly attach labels and brands to their products, representing, as argued earlier, a guarantee of quality and safety, or conveying a particular meaning, value, feeling, taste or sense of product prestige. Or as Miguel Lladón, CEO of BIMBO, a leading bakery manufacturer in Spain, explained "brands represent more than just products because they are connected to consumers via emotive issues such as trust, loyalty and safety. The brands that succeed in nurturing this emotional connection with the consumer will lead to the growth of strong companies" (cited in Grievink et al., 2002:212).

The brand or label 'message' is often transmitted to the world through huge advertising campaigns (such as Coca Cola, Nike, Levi, Peugeot, Chiquita and Heinz). These campaigns are of great importance for the final decision of a consumer to buy a particular product. As Arce (1997:180) argues "... reality appears to be governed by global objects that determine human actions and behaviour". In light of the foregoing discussion, one can add that the 'image' attached to objects may be more important in determining the way people respond, internalize and act upon such global objects. As argued by Verhallen et al. (2004:137), "the products and services are merely the instruments needed to obtain the actual value: the consumer's experience".

Ake Modig, executive vice president of Arla Foods, one of the largest dairy product companies in Europe, points out that "the most successful brands are global brands because people want to be part of global trends" (cited in Grievink et al., 2002:204). This conclusion is in line with Gereffi et al. (2001), Marsden et al. (2000) and Marsden (1997), who recognize that companies are more and more associated with their product value and quality. They conclude that corporate retailers and manufacturers have become dominant players in the social definition of food and the identity of food. They also argue that these retailers and manufacturers play a crucial role in sourcing products from places all over the world, and in translating the quality definitions of consumers to their suppliers. These retailers and manufacturers are therefore gatekeepers to suppliers entering the global market.

However, more important to the consumer than this rather rational perspective on the brand-related image of products, is the more emotional and experiential connection to such global objects. This is also demonstrated by many present-day advertisement campaigns which portray products within their traditional territory-specific context (e.g. coffee from Columbia, chocolate from Ghana, pasta from Italy), in this way

smartly using the earlier discussed aspect of the 'expansion of territories' of products. The fact that the present-day consumer behaviour and actions are influenced by such strategies shows that people's perspectives of the spaces they live in have dramatically changed.

A point to be noted is that capitalist economists have only recently started to appreciate the value of non-commoditized aspects of a commodity, such as the desires and the social and cultural values a person uses to purchase a particular product due to its experiential associations. Within the context of commodities produced in developing countries, this implies that questions like why some persons are willing to pay a higher price for a cup of coffee that has been produced by small-scale producers in Guatemala or why some people prefer to buy gifts in Fair Trade shops instead of regular gift shops, have been neglected for a long time. To understand such purchase behaviour, the analysis of social relations and values that people contribute to products is essential.[32]

Although we have seen that the huge promotion campaigns of large companies influence consumer purchasing behaviour, it is important to recognize also the growing role of consumers in the process of globalization. *Consumer awareness* has become an important element behind the globalization of agriculture, in particular during the past 15 years. Changing life-styles, social trends (e.g. increased number of single-households) and a general rise of income, in particular in Western markets, has caused important changes in consumer interest in new types of products. For example, the demand for convenience food (ready-made meals) has significantly increased in Western markets over the past few years. Furthermore, the growing attention of consumers for healthy, natural and ethical trade products has prompted corporate retailers and manufacturers to invest in innovations in product choices and to source products the whole year round. As argued earlier, environment-friendly and ethically-correct (fair trade) production systems have expanded tremendously over the last few

[32] Appadurai (1986) for instance analyses 'the social life of things' by focussing on the commodity exchange value. He outlines how desire, demand and power interact to create economic value in specific social spaces. He explains that "... economic objects circulate in different regimes of values in space and time" (*ibid.*, 1986:4). He argues that by following a 'thing' from production to consumption, the value (meaning, spiritual value, nutrition value, price, etc.) which people attribute to it at different spaces and time can be analysed, thereby focusing on the economic value of a 'thing' (a commodity) in terms of the desire of a person for a particular 'thing' that is overcome through economic exchange.

years. In response to increased consumer awareness, many private retail standards have been extended to include social, ethical and environment issues.[33]

Sklair (1991), for example, recognizes capitalism and cross-border cultural and ideological factors of consumerism in the process of globalization. An important factor in this process is what can be referred to as increased 'connectivity'. As Cohen and Kennedy (2000) argue, through connectivity, flows of values, images, ideas and fashion along global pathways is increasing as is consumer demand for particular 'exotic' products. Nowadays, many people travel around the world to explore new cultures and lifestyles, and teenage backpacking to exotic places is a popular phenomenon. Also, Internet invites people to all parts of the world. The way people and places are becoming more connected has increased people's demand for 'global' products. Inda and Rosaldo (2002) show how people and cultural subjects nowadays readily traverse national boundaries and create spaces of cultural juxtaposition and mixture at numerous places. They show that culture is highly mobile and point out that cultural subjects and objects, such as commodities, meanings and ideas have become disembedded from particular localities.

An additional characteristic of current consumer influence is the fact that increased consumer awareness has generated a new type of business: fair trade organizations. Numerous fair trade organizations have grown up in the past decades, focussing on fair trade relations with poor farmers and other disfavoured groups (such as women and indigenous groups) in developing countries, and on assisting such groups in the trade of their products on the competitive global market. The fair trade concept is based upon the principle that producers are getting a fairer proportion of the profits, in this manner improving the standard of living of the poorer participants in the supply chain. By buying their products, consumers of fair trade products can use their spending power to affect the lives of others. As argued by Arce and Fisher (1999), it may be concluded, therefore, that fair trade provides 'agency'[34] to consumers: consumers recognize the social implications of their consumption choices. Although based upon an idealistic principle, fair trade organizations increasingly take a market oriented approach (Whatmore and Thorne, 1997), including attractive promotional campaigns to encourage consumers to buy their products in order to support these poorer groups, whereby the concept of 'fair trade' itself is the main selling point.

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[33] Consequently, retail suppliers (farmers) have to embed these new standards such as the SA 8000 (social accountability) and FLO (Fair trade Labelling Organization) in their operations, consequently rising production costs. However, certification of these standards may also open up niche markets for a number of producers.

[34] The concept of agency is further elaborated in Section 2.8.

There are undoubtedly a number of other factors which, depending on the specific focus taken, play an important role in the shaping of the globalization process. Several of these are, to a more or lesser extent, highlighted in this thesis wherever appropriate. However, the above principles provide the basis for the analysis as presented in this thesis. The following section elaborates on the concepts of 'local knowledge' and 'life-world', as the basis for response and internalization processes by local actors of the trends and developments as presented in this section.

2.7 Local knowledge and life-world

As argued earlier, the way actors internalize and respond to processes of globalization is closely related to their local knowledge and life-world. As indicated before, the significance of these aspects is often ignored in studies of globalization processes; I would therefore like to review these two concepts more closely.

First of all, as Giddens (1990) pinpoints, it is quite obvious that the intensification of worldwide social relations through globalization influences events in distant localities. In this respect, in the present-day competitive market, large-scale producers and exporters have access to modern technologies and communication facilities and are therefore well informed about the market situation in other parts in the world. In contrast, many small-scale local producers act on demands of the global market without understanding its requirements – such as quality and value aspects. It is obvious that these participants in the global market do not have equal access to information and communication facilities and therefore are not equal competitors.

Considering the above, this raises the question of how small-scale producers in developing countries are able to participate in the global market even when their local knowledge is restricted in terms of their capacity to understand the workings of international markets and consumer demand. As argued by Arce and Fisher (2003), such a focus on local knowledge would enable us to explore how it is generated in different contexts and to understand the actions and practices of people resulting from this knowledge. In other words, bearing in mind the research focus of this thesis, such insight would help us to understand how local actors respond to and internalize processes of globalization present at the local level.

As Schutz (1966) points out, local actors obtain an important part of their knowledge through interactions and social networks. Some of these networks and interactions are tighter then others but all serve as a source of knowledge. Consequently, actors are entangled in a web of social relations and connections with multiple roles and power relations, together constituting, what Boissevain (1974) calls, a 'social network'. He

argues that, in fact, all of society can be viewed as a network. Also Mitchell (1969), one of the pioneers of the concept of social network, uses the concept to comprehend social processes in society. Within the context of this thesis, one could define 'social networks' as *dynamic interactions between people; these networks can be tight or loose (which may change over time), formal or informal, direct or indirect (face-to-face, through agents or for example through the Internet).*

Life histories, experiences and local culture, together constitute an actor's life-world, and are at the basis of local knowledge. Schutz (1966) conceptualises the life-world as the capacity of human beings to experience, amongst other human beings, culture and society through interaction. He speaks of the 'everyday life-world' as the world in which humans experience, at every point of their existence life as immediate and simply given. Berger and Luckmann (1966) explain that everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by men and women and subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world. It is a world that originates in their thoughts and actions, and is maintained as real by these same persons. In this respect, as Joas (1996:158) argues, what a person experiences is not a "subjective tailoring of reality, but reality as such".

Luckmann (1970) furthermore argues that the life-world of human beings does not exist as one piece, but instead unfolds within a variety of small 'worlds' that are often connected with one another. Within a lifetime – the round of one day – the individual is alternately, consecutively or simultaneously a participant of variegated groups of actors which, in many instances, he is able to leave at will. Instead of being a member of one 'total and whole' society, the individual is a part-time citizen in a variety of part-time societies. The individual constantly experiences life within the various social groups in which he participates. The experiential process does not stop at a given point in time since the individual continues to participate in various social groups. Castells (1997) calls a person's source of experience and meaning the persons' identity. Within the context of globalization, Castells (1997) and also Campbell and Rew (1999) argue that not only local but also global forces shape the identity of people.

People experience and interpret everyday events in their life-world differently and therefore have their own expectations, intentions, and impulses arising out of this experience and interpretation, resulting in a social life of 'multiple realities'. The individual actor uses the experience he or she has obtained to act and react, in effect organizing his or her life-world. Mannheim (1970) argues that besides experience, the interest a person has determines what will be grasped and incorporated. In similar vein, Schutz (1966) concludes that a person's interest determines which knowledge of a pre-given world is relevant for the individual to define his situation in order to think, act, feel emotion and to find his way and come to terms with the world. In case this

knowledge is not adequate, it becomes necessary to 'know more about' the situation, problem, etc.; new knowledge must be acquired or the knowledge at hand must be transformed into higher degrees of familiarity. The acquisition of knowledge implies that the situation is no longer perceived as unquestionable but worth questioning.

The story of the Tanzanian women's group, who export fresh cut flowers to the Dutch flower auction, as presented in Chapter 1, shows that actors' local knowledge, social practices, and relations in all their shapes and complexities are crucial for the success of international trade. Having visited the Netherlands, the women realized that depending solely on their local knowledge and practices would mean that some of their flowers were unlikely to meet all market requirements (quality, colour, etc.) and that social relations with actors connected to the global market were important for the transfer of market information and requirements and for the translation of market trends into local practices and actions.[35] In other words, by 'extending' their life-worlds, these women re-shaped their understanding of the global flower business.

Given these considerations, this thesis places particular emphasis on the role of local knowledge and life-worlds as a basis for understanding local action and practice. In this respect, as argued by Arce and Long (1994), it is important to pay close attention to the organization of everyday practices, taking into consideration specific actor strategies, manoeuvres, discourses and struggles over identity, social networks and social imagery. In this way one can tease out the intricacies of how information is translated, and knowledge internalized, used and reconstructed by individual actors. Analysis of actor-specific responses and internalization processes, within their respective realities as constituted by their local knowledge and life-worlds, requires an appreciation of actor-orientation and agency. These concepts are elaborated below.

2.8 Actors and Agency

Within this thesis, the various actors are connected to a larger fresh produce commodity network and are influenced by a range of elements, as described in Section 2.6, which often evolve in distant places. In order to comprehend the dynamics and outcomes of the social strategies and struggles of local actors in this global setting we need to understand how actors respond to and internalize globalization-related trends and developments within the context of their own individual realities. These realities, in turn, are shaped by their life-worlds, which form the basis for the development of their local knowledge. The understandings, actions and behaviour of these actors are therefore importantly dependent on such realities.

[35] Personal field survey conducted in 1994-1995.

This study analyses the ways in which such realities shape the room for manoeuvre actors have when engaged in particular actions and the discourses[36] that justify these actions. This room for manoeuvre by local actors, in turn, defines the space that frames the context in which they act, and in which powerful discourses, conflicts and struggles may play a role. These elements compose the 'field of social action' in which struggles take place, and are themselves reconfigured by the particular actions and negotiations that ensue (Long, 2003).

Giddens (1984:14), insists that action "depends upon the capacity of the individual to 'make a difference' to a pre-existing state of affairs or course of events". It should be noted, however, that actions do not necessarily need to be rational since many actions are the result of unexpected or unforeseen circumstances. In these cases, certain circumstances (such as unexpected weather conditions, the death of a family member) may influence actor's choices and actions to be undertaken. Actors can also be driven by spontaneous and emotional moments or by moral principles which drive them to act in a particular way. We should also remember, as Joas (1996:4) suggests, that "there is a creative dimension to all human action". Joas (*ibid.*) criticizes the predominant focus on rational action in many sociological theories, in which forms of deviation (such as emotional and spontaneous action) are distinguished from strictly goal-oriented action as a starting point for discussions on action. He goes on to argue that recognizing the creative character of human action enables one to give greater importance to concepts such as identity, intention, norms and roles, thus doing justice to what they are meant to express.

The 'room for manoeuvre' or 'space' of actors to act and react within this context underlines agency of these actors. Long (2001:240) explains that agency refers to "the knowledgeability, capability and social embeddedness associated with acts of doing (and reflecting) that impact upon or shape one's own and others' actions and interpretations". He points out that persons and groups of persons have agency that can shape other actors' perceptions. Similarly, people's perceptions of the actions and agency of others shape their own behaviour. Hence agency refers to relationships between actors and their interacting practices *vis-à-vis* relevant institutions, the physical environment, culture, and economic and political entities. By applying the concept of agency, many local realities, such as the patterns of interaction between

[36] Long (2003:5) describes discourse as "a set of meanings embodied in metaphors, representations, images, narratives and statements that advance a particular version of 'the truth' about objects, persons, events and the relations between them". In the same line, Arce et al. (1994:169) view discourse as "important social practices which actors deploy to attribute value to material resources and to define social identities". Furthermore, Foucault's (1980) emphasizes discourses as instruments of power and dominance. The analysis of discourse thus offers a useful way of exploring the significance of particular ideas and cultural repertoires and how they interact and interpenetrate situationally (Long, 2001).

actors, the organization of, and negotiations between actors, and coping with life in general, may be more fully explained. It should be noted here that analysing agency requires us to ground actors' practices, intentions, experiences and values in the circumstances of everyday life, not in some abstract philosophy of 'free will'. Or, as Marsden et al. (2000:5) put it, we should recognize that "actors are located in concrete situations or 'actor spaces'".

In line with these principles, this study aims to explore how interactions between actors, sometimes entailing conflicting or divergent interests and values, affect and influence their 'room for manoeuvre', and how such 'room for manoeuvre', or 'space' is deployed by actors in an attempt to develop and execute strategies, power plays, interpretations, interests and knowledge at "critical points of linkage or confrontation" (Long, 1989:221). Van der Ploeg (2003) and Long (2003) show, for instance, that actors often interact with others to realize their individual projects (goals). This requires a degree of organizing and ordering capability by those who are able to identify where they are going (future perspectives), in order to modify other people's actions to achieve their own goals (see also Latour, 1986). Within the context of this thesis, special attention will be given to the organizing practices of (diverse) individual and collective actors that enable them to respond to events in the global arena[37]. These organizing practices may, as a result of their striving to achieve common goals, lead to the creation of 'informal' or 'formal' organizations. Such synergy, as Evans (1996:1130) shows, "usually consists of a combination of complementarity and embeddedness".

In this context, Zijderveld (2000) distinguishes between the organizational and institutional dimensions of such organizations. He explains that the organizational dimension manifests itself in what he calls "functional rationality". This "consists of the careful matching of means, methods or procedures on the one hand, and the goals that have been set by the organization on the other...[whereby]...the functionally rational 'organization men' (managers) will search for the most efficient and effectual means to realize the ends" (*ibid.*, 2000:35). He contrasts this with the "substantial rationality" of an institution, which focuses on the definition of the ends to be realized in view of values and norms, and not so much on the careful matching of ends and means (*ibid.*, 2000:36). Hence this implies that within the organizational mode of actors different institutions (i.e. state, market, church, marriage) operate to 'guide'

[37] Long (2001:59) describes arenas as "social and spatial locations or situations in which contests over issues, resources, values, and representations take place. In these locations and situations actors confront each other, mobilise social relations and deploy discursive and other cultural means for the attainment of specific ends, including that of perhaps simply remaining in the game". In the global pineapple arena, actors operate from distant places and are connected to each other through direct and indirect interactions.

particular actions and practices in order to realize a common goal or common goals (for example, in this case, export to the global market).

Although Zijderveld presents a useful analysis of the dimensions of organizations, his views are rather limited to the "functional and substantial rationalities" of such organizations. Others, like Law (1994), Morgan (1986) and Latour (1986) focus more on the 'organizing practices' of actors ("modes of ordering" as Law calls it) within organizations and on the negotiations and struggles of these actors to achieve common goals and interests. They emphasize the processes through which organizations are socially constructed including the influences of complex social interactions, culture, situations and actions therein.

Within the context of this thesis, it can be argued that different actors participate in various social networks and are thus embedded within different forms of organization; examples include producers' and sector-wide organizations, but also more one-to-one arrangements such as contract-farming agreements and other forms of formal and informal cooperation between larger and smaller producers. Also, institutional frameworks may be set-up by such coordinated entities which embed negotiated frameworks of rules, norms and values as derived through ordering and governing processes between actors. Within these institutional frameworks, the social organization and social grouping of actors takes place, in the struggle to 'defend' common goals or interests, within a larger field of social interactions. As such, individual actors may very well act in different institutional frameworks or domains[38].

Within this field of social interactions, power relations play an important role. Weber (1946:180) defined power as "the ability of individuals or groups to realise their will, even where others resist, through the use of force or the threat of it, or where the powerless conform because they accepted the legitimacy of the powerful". Within this definition, we may thus qualify power as both an important determinant and constituent of agency; it therefore deserves specific attention in this thesis.

In addition to the awareness different actors involved in asymmetric relationships have about their circumstances, three conditions are deemed necessary for the existence of a power relationship between actors namely, control, dependency, and resistance. Zald

[38] Long (2001:241) defines domains as "the loci of rules, norms and values that become central to the process of social ordering and to the establishment of certain pragmatic rules of governance. The idea of domain is also important for understanding how social and symbolic boundaries are defined and upheld, though, precisely which normative or strategic principles will prevail situationally or over the longer term remains an open question". In this thesis, the concept of domain will be used in particular within the context of the institutional framework of the Ivorian pineapple sector, as discussed in Chapter 5.

(1970) defines control as "the ability of a person or group ... to affect another person's or group's ability to achieve its goal". Control evokes and invokes asymmetry in relationships (White, 1992), a condition that supports the exercise of power by the actor or group possessing the ability to control. Moreover control may be legitimised by the controlled who recognise a lack of self-sufficiency as well as the controller's ability to contribute to attaining certain strategic objectives (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).

Thus, it is the dependence of an actor over another that gives the other leverage or control over the relationship (Frooman, 1999). However, we should not fall into the hegemonic trap of arguing that subordinates are simply subjected to the whims and commands of the more 'dominant' party. Emerson (1972) and Marsden (1983) argue that the dependency of actors revolves around resource value and availability. Power will be associated with an actor that controls in sufficient quantity and quality, idiosyncratic resources that are valuable and rare and are required by another actor or agency to achieve strategic objectives. This view of power is embedded in a resource-based theory of organizations. Power is increasingly entrenched when the owner of the rare and valuable resource is able to use it to control the ability of the other to achieve a particular objective i.e. to enhance dependence upon the other.[39]

Following from this, exchange theorists observe that the existence of power imbalances usually engenders resistance on the part of the 'conscious' powerless (individual and collective).[40] This, according to Clegg and Wilson (1991), often creates a potentially vicious circle of increasing power in response to resistance, which calls forth greater resistance. This vicious circle is generally unstable unless the power centre possesses critical and rare resources and is able to control the other's ability to achieve its objectives through these resources or by other means. In the absence of these conditions, the instability of relationships engenders 'inefficiencies' that eventually defeat the objectives of the power centre, such as pertains in the relationship between landlords and farmers, small-scale producers and powerful buyers.

From the foregoing, we may conclude that the recognition of strategic resource gaps by actors in relationships may lead to the development and legitimization of power relations that arise from control of strategic resources or a dependency on them and/or acquiescence to the resource owner whenever such actions are deemed to enhance

[39] As argued by Giddens (1984:16), it is important to note that "power itself is not a resource. Rather, resources are media through which power is exercised". Law (1994) explains that power should be seen as an effect, rather than a cause.

[40] There are situations when less powerful partners are unaware of the power exerted by their more powerful partners and fail to recognise that their strategic interests are at risk, and consequently they make no attempt to defend those interests (Lukes, 1974). This cognitive barrier prevents resistance and dissipates whatever power may exist.

strategic objectives. In other words, should an actor in a relationship possess rare, valuable and critical resources that are necessary for another to achieve certain objectives, the former can, if desired, exercise a strategic power position in the relationship. Less powerful partners may collaborate with more powerful partners within specific power contexts – i.e., allow themselves to be controlled, become dependent or refuse to resist – if they perceive that their strategic objectives are enhanced by specific power relations (Vanderslice, 1988; Hinkin and Schriesheim, 1990). Thus, given the foregoing definitions, all strategic power relationships will exhibit degrees of control, dependency and resistance.

2.9 Conclusion

The above sections reflect on a number of trends and developments in the globalization of agriculture which have, in my opinion, shaped the field of social action of actors operating within the fresh produce sector of agricultural commodity networks. Such key elements include the expansion of production territories and the de-territorialization of products, technological development, such as in the transportation and communication sector, the demand for production capacity, and pressure for cost reductions. Furthermore, the trend towards fully coordinated supply chain activities and related consolidation of companies, is driven by cost reduction benefits (economies of scale) and a desire for control over all activities in the supply chain (mainly from a food safety and quality perspective), associated with an increased market orientation and consumer awareness.

The following chapters assess how the Ivorian pineapple sector has dealt with these key elements in the globalization of agriculture. A number of theoretical concepts as described earlier – life-worlds, local knowledge, actor orientation and agency – will be applied to analyse the field of social action of the different actors operating within the Ivorian pineapple commodity network, and how such actors respond to trends and developments within globalization processes within the context of their own 'realities' (i.e. life-worlds and local knowledge) and how they internalize these features in their actions, practices and relationships.

CHAPTER 3

THE INTERNATIONAL PINEAPPLE SETTING

COMPETING IN THE BIG LEAGUE

3.1 Introduction: from local to global

Prior to the discovery of the pineapple fruit (*Ananas comosus*[41]) by Cristobal Colón (Christopher Columbus) in 1493 (Morrison, 1963), the pineapple[42] was already widely used by native Americans in the lowland tropics (Laufer, 1929). Besides consumption of the fresh fruit, the pineapple was used for the preparation of alcoholic beverages, for the production of fibres, and for medicinal purposes, for instance against stomach problems. Native tribes sailing from South and Central America to the West Indies are thought to have spread its growth before Columbus arrived. Early European explorers became intrigued by the pineapple and brought it back to their home countries. From the early 1500s, the pineapple became truly globalized when seafarers distributed the fruit to other parts of the world. In some European countries, producers started cultivating pineapples in greenhouses. This 'greenhouse technology' meant that the pineapple became 'de-territorialized' from the lowland tropics and could be cultivated in a colder climate. According to Rohrbach et al. (2003), the first successful pineapple production in a greenhouse was reported at the end of the 17th century near Leyden (the Netherlands). Gibault (1912) also reports that in 1719 the pineapple plant was spread from the Netherlands to England and in 1730 to France. During the 18th and 19th centuries, pineapple production expanded in European greenhouses. Many varieties were imported from different parts of the world, of which the variety Cayenne Lisse became most popular. The latter variety was introduced by Perrotet from French Guiana in 1819 (Perrotet, 1825).[43]

The increased import of fresh pineapples from, notably, the West Indies to Europe in the early 19th century, resulted in a decline of prices in European markets. Greenhouse production was not profitable anymore. Europeans therefore decided to shift the production of the pineapples to tropical and sub-tropical regions. Colonial countries

[41] A herbaceous perennial of the *Bromeliaceae* family (Chan et al., 2003).

[42] Pineapple was originally called 'anana', a Caribbean word for 'excellent fruit'. European explorers called the fruit the 'Pine of the Indies'. Later, when it was introduced into England, the word 'apple' was added to associate it with another delicious fruit that people enjoyed; thus, the 'pineapple' was born (www.mauipineapple.com).

[43] The Cayenne Lisse variety is still common in the Guiana's under the local name '*Maipuri*', meaning 'tapir' (Chan et al., 2003).

were favourite locations for the establishment of large-scale pineapple plantations, benefiting from the climatic conditions and the availability of cheap land and labour. According to Py et al. (1987), fresh pineapples from the Azores (Portugal) dominated European markets until after the Second World War, when production in colonial Africa increased significantly. Even today, some of the ties between former colonial African countries and their previous European colonists are still in place. Ivory Coast is such an example: the majority of pineapples produced in this former French colony is still mainly exported to France. Figure 3.1 shows the global distribution of the Cayenne Lisse (also called 'Smooth Cayenne') pineapple, still the most popular variety over time (Rohrbach et al., 2003).

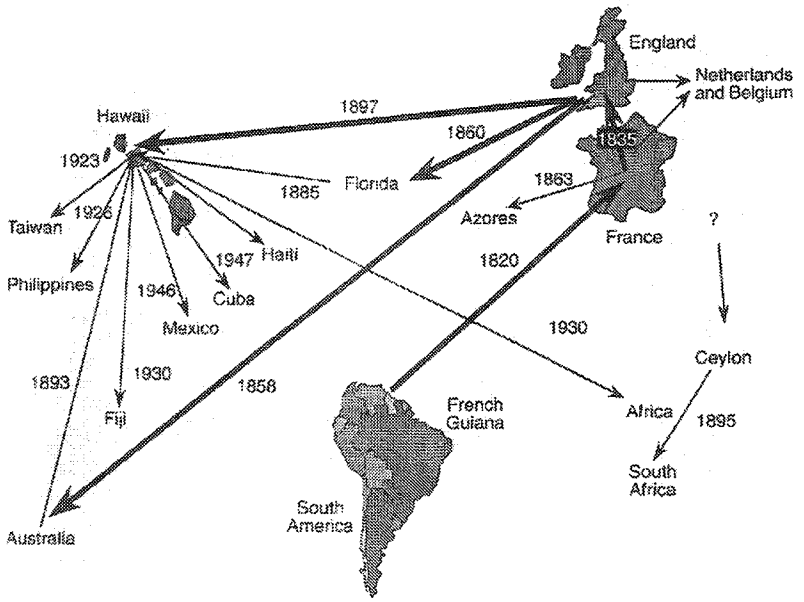

Figure 3.1: Global distribution of the Cayenne Lisse variety (after Collins, 1951, cited in Rohrbach et al., 2003:3).

Towards the end of the 19th century, commercial processing of pineapples started to evolve. Technological developments such as automatic peeling and coring, invented by Henry Ginaca, an employee of the Hawaiian Pineapple Company Dole in the early 20th century, gave rise to the large-scale commercial pineapple processing industry (Rohrbach et al., 2003). Apart from Hawaii, several countries in South-East Asia, the Caribbean, Australia, South Africa, Kenya and Ivory Coast became important locations for canning pineapples. During the Second World War, many of these processing facilities closed down. However, despite increased competition from countries such as the Philippines, Ivory Coast and Thailand in the 1950s-1960s, Hawaii retained its leading position during this period.

World production of pineapples has more than tripled over the last 30 years, from 3,833,137 tons in 1961 to 13,738,735 tons in 2001 (Anon, 2002). The strong leadership of Hawaii in the global pineapple market in the first half of the 20th century gradually declined due to increased competition from Thailand and the Philippines, which today dominate global pineapple production. Hawaii consequently shifted its production from processed fruit for the international market to fresh fruit primarily for the domestic market (Rohrbach et al., 2003).

Today, world trade still consists mainly of processed and preserved fruit (slices, chunks, crushes, spears, juice), constituting around 80% of total production (Loeillet, 2003:10). Asian countries are the primary suppliers, having increased their share from 69 to 85% over the period 1983 to 1992, while Africa's share declined from 25 to 10% (Rohrbach et al., 2003:5). Leading countries in processed pineapples are Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Kenya and Malaysia. Today, Thailand processes approximately 1.6 million tons of its total production of 2 million tons (Rohrbach et al., 2003:4), with the TNCs Dole and Del Monte having invested heavily in the canning industry.

Technological development in refrigerated sea transport has stimulated production and export of fresh pineapples. In particular Hawaii, Ivory Coast and Taiwan have passed on to the production of fresh pineapples. Although the canning industry is still dominant, the market value of the fresh pineapple has increased rapidly over the past 30 years (Loeillet, 1997). The international fresh pineapple market is dominated by Costa Rica, Ivory Coast and the Philippines. Costa Rica and Ivory Coast account for half of the international trade of fresh pineapples, followed by the Philippines (Loeillet, 2003). North-America is mainly supplied by Costa Rica and Hawaii, the European Union by Ivory Coast and, increasingly, by countries such as Costa Rica and Ghana. The major fresh pineapple market in Asia is Japan which is supplied foremost by the Philippines and Taiwan (Rohrbach et al., 2003). We may therefore conclude that despite the large expansion of production spaces, production territories of fresh pineapples still remain closely linked to specific markets. This is mainly related to logistical considerations and reasons of cost efficiency and demonstrates the limits to de-territorialization as far as it concerns the sourcing of products.

International trade is dominated by a few TNCs that have developed an infrastructure for fruit production, processing, distribution and marketing, and control all processes along the supply chain. The Philippines is a good example of a country where TNCs control nearly all pineapple production and export.[44] However, there are exceptions to this global trend, such as Thailand, Indonesia and Ivory Coast, where most production

[44] Vellema (2002) describes the introduction of the transnational corporations Del Monte and Dole and the expanding pineapple industry in the Philippines in more detail.

is still undertaken by small-scale producers. Nevertheless, large-scale production, high levels of technology and low labour costs, make competition with countries such as the Philippines very difficult for small-scale pineapple producing countries. Countries such as Australia and South Africa therefore sell their canned and fresh pineapples mainly in local markets and remain competitive because of efficient processing and production, as well as due to the presence of international trade barriers. Other pineapple producing countries, such as Brazil, India, China, Nigeria, Mexico and Colombia, similarly produce pineapples for local fresh-fruit markets (Rohrbach et al., 2003).

Table 3.1: Global pineapple production (tons), harvested area (ha), and yields (t/ha) for 2001, by country.

Country	Production (t)	Harvested (ha)	Yield (t/ha)
Thailand	2,300,000	97,300	24
Philippines	1,571,904	45,000	35
Brazil	1,442,300	59,238	24
China	1,284,000	57,700	22
India	1,100,000	80,000	14
Nigeria	881,000	115,000	8
Mexico	535,000	12,500	43
Costa Rica	475,000	12,000	40
Colombia	360,000	9,000	40
Indonesia	300,000	42,000	7
Venezuela	300,000	15,000	20
USA	293,000	8,130	36
Kenya	280,000	8,500	33
Ivory Coast	225,675[45]	5,200	43
South Africa	145,441	6,200	23
Australia	140,000	3,000	47
Dominican Republic	136,862	5,500	25
Malaysia	130,000	7,000	19
Guatemala	101,287	3,710	27
Honduras	70,000	3,900	18
Cameroon	42,000	4,000	11
Martinique	20,800	484	43

Source: Anon, 2002.

FAO statistics for 2001 show production (in tons), harvested hectares (ha), and yield (ton per ha) for the most important pineapple producing countries (see Table 3.1). While stating these statistics, however, it should be noted that FAO does not separate

[45] This figure differs from the estimation of OCAB, the Ivorian sector-wide organization of pineapple producers and exporters, and the Ivorian customers. Their statistics show that 265,900 tons of pineapples were produced in 2001 (OCAB, 2003:65).

fresh fruit from processed pineapples, nor production for export from production for local consumption.[46]

3.2 The Ivorian battle for the international market

The annual export volume of fresh pineapples from Ivory Coast to European markets increased considerably between the mid 1970s and the mid 1980s, with a peak export season in 1986 (193,775 tons) (OCAB, 2003:65). During this period, Ivory Coast accounted for 95% of the pineapple market in Europe (OCAB, 2003:7). This period clearly represents a period in which Ivorian pineapple growers flourished; because the European market held such promise, large numbers of producers became involved in pineapple production.

As a result of increased competition from countries in South and Central America, such as Costa Rica, Honduras and the Dominican Republic, this picture changed in the early 1990s. The competition came in particular from Del Monte and Dole, which strongly penetrated European pineapple markets, especially in Germany.[47] As a result, the market share held by Ivory Coast dropped considerably and accounted for a little more than 50% of total European imports in the mid 1990s (OCAB, 2003:7). During the same period, the European market share of fresh pineapples from Central American countries rose from close to zero to 30% in the mid 1990s (Loeillet,1994:9). Annex II presents an overview of the volume of fresh pineapple import by the main European pineapple countries for the period 1996-2002, as well as export volumes of the main suppliers of the European market. In the early 1990s, the Ivorian pineapple export organization OCAB[48], realized that it had to increase the quality of pineapples (homogeneity of colour, size and taste) and to lower sea transportation costs in order to maintain the Ivorian market share within the European market. This aspect of OCAB's intervention in the Ivorian pineapple sector is further elaborated in Chapter 5.

The question then arises *how were these transnational companies able to conquer the European fresh pineapple market?* The main reason for this was that these TNCs are

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[46] Some of the results in Table 3.1 seem inaccurate, considering for example the low yield levels quoted for countries such as Indonesia and Nigeria. This could either be because production is very inefficient, or because yield is low as a result of climatic or other natural conditions (e.g. diseases), but may also well be due to poor quality data.

[47] Dole Food Company Inc. was founded in Hawaii in 1851. Dole Food Company is a U.S.-based transnational known until 1991 as Castle & Cooke. The Del Monte Fresh Produce Company, originally a U.S.-based company, was known as Del Monte Tropical Products until late 1992 (Friedland, 1994).

[48] As introduced in Chapter 1, OCAB stands for 'Organisation Centrale des Producteurs - Exportateurs d'Ananas et de Bananes', an organization created by exporters and producers to facilitate the export and marketing of Ivorian pineapples. The role and functioning of OCAB is further presented in Chapter 5.

able to offer a homogeneous product of high quality, profiting from their highly organized production system, planning and export system and using modern ICT applications. The TNCs control the entire supply chain from cultivation to marketing, with little intervention from third parties. In order to ensure a high quality and homogeneous product, large investments have been made in technology, research and streamlined organization. Also, their pineapples are traded under well-known brand names that are recognized by consumers as a guarantee for high quality fruit, which is further stimulated through promotional campaigns. Obviously, the investment required for such a comprehensive approach is only viable for large companies like Dole and Del Monte. These companies have therefore become powerful agents in the European fresh pineapple market.

Ivorian exporters are not yet in a position to offer the same level of quality, homogeneity and marketing efforts. This is not only due to the capital requirements, but also because their production system consists of multiple producers, mostly small-scale, who use different production techniques, resulting in heterogeneous products and varying quality. Ivorian pineapples are furthermore traded under many different brand names, by many different importers, which limits opportunities for effective (large-scale) promotional campaigns. The Ivorian pineapple sector has thus not yet been able to organize its production or to control processes at the same level as the TNCs with whom they compete. This has seriously weakened their position in the global marketplace.

Nevertheless, until 1996, Ivorian pineapples (the Cayenne Lisse variety) had several important advantages over Central American pineapples (see Table 3.2), among which were colour and taste, two very important marketing factors. In the early 1990s, most pineapples from Central America were of the green 'Champaka' variety[49] (dark green external coloration when ripe) and had fewer aromas than pineapples from Africa (Loeillet, 2003; COLEACP, 2002). The TNCs started huge campaigns to promote their green variety on European markets, homing in on a rising consumer appreciation of 'natural' and 'organic' aspects of agricultural products; green pineapples were associated with these aspects. Green pineapples from Central America flooded the European market during this period, as a result of which market prices dropped enormously. However, despite all promotion efforts, the TNCs failed to successfully market their green variety in the European market, since European consumers remained attracted to yellow coloured pineapples.

[49] Champaka is a variety of the Cayenne Lisse (Chan et al., 2003).

The launch of Del Monte's new hybrid variety MD-2[50] in 1996, a yellow sweet pineapple, with the new brand name 'Del Monte Gold', however, dramatically changed this situation. 'Del Monte Gold' is coined as the new label of Del Monte and has been rewriting the pineapple business ever since, beating the Cayenne Lisse variety which had been the backbone of the global pineapple industry for more than a century. Until the introduction of the MD-2 variety, the global pineapple industry had relied almost entirely on a single variety, the Cayenne Lisse, for both processing and fresh production, a monopoly largely due to its high yield, adaptability to different conditions, and good characteristics for canning. However, the narrow genetic base makes the variety vulnerable to the threat of pests and diseases (Chan et al., 2003).

With the development of the MD-2 variety, the deficiencies of the earlier green pineapple had thus been overcome, and a good alternative for existing popular varieties such as the Cayenne Lisse is now available. Despite the many advantages of production in South America (see Table 3.2), the green Champaka pineapple never really penetrated European markets. However, with the development of the MD-2 variety, and its introduction – in the first instance on South American plantations – a strong competitor arose; one which is by all accounts equal to or better than current varieties. Compared to the Cayenne Lisse, the MD-2 has an intense orange-yellow colour, high sugar content[51], high Vitamin C content, low acidity, a good texture, and is generally smaller in size. According to Chan et al. (2003), the new variety is also resistant to internal browning and is more productive than the Cayenne Lisse.

Undoubtedly, Del Monte is benefiting greatly from the popularity of the MD-2 pineapple and is rapidly gaining significant market share of the European market, thanks to superior promotion and marketing campaigns. According to Danielou and Ravry (2005), the high value strategy of Del Monte has resulted in net profit margins of 25 to 30% on Del Monte's pineapple lines. Building upon this success, it is expected that Del Monte will launch a second new pineapple variety under the name 'Del Monte Honey Gold' in 2006, aiming to capitalize on the growing international demand for fresh pineapples (Danielou and Ravry, 2005).

[50] The MD-2 was developed by Del Monte Fresh Produce Hawaii Inc. and the Pineapple Research Institute in Hawaii from a cross between the PRI hybrids 58-1184 and 59-443 for the fresh-fruit market (Chan et al., 2003).

[51] The average brix (sugar) level of the MD-2 pineapple lies between 15 and 18 whereas the average brix (sugar) level of the Cayenne Lisse ranges from 12 to 14.

Table 3.2: Advantages and disadvantages of pineapple production in Africa and Central America for the European market before 1996.

Africa	Central America
Advantages	*Advantages*
Taste	Homogeneous product
Colour	Transnational export structures
Cultural and economical ties with Europe	Large-scale, professional producers
Shorter distance	Commercial strategies
Favourable reputation	Modern ICT applications
	An integrated production
	High cultivation techniques
	Lower production costs
	Good infrastructure
	Owner of sea transport
Disadvantages	*Disadvantages*
High production costs	Taste
Many different production systems	Colour
Many small-scale producers	Distance
Low or moderate cultivation techniques	
Many different export organizations	
Heterogeneous product	
High sea freight costs	
Bad infrastructure at farms	

Source: Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998.

Other TNCs, such as Dole, Compagnie Fruitière and Chiquita follow closely in the footsteps of Del Monte by switching over to the new variety[52] or by inventing new varieties. As a result, the MD-2 variety is nowadays not only applied in South America but spread to other large-scale pineapple producing areas. The introduction of the 'Del Monte Gold' pineapple has thus set a trend, with 'Golden' and 'Super Sweet' pineapple brands flooding international markets (see Figure 3.2): Chiquita has launched the 'Chiquita Gold Extra Sweet Pineapple', Dole the 'Dole Premium Select Super Sweet Pineapple Tropical Gold' and Bonita the 'Bonita Sunripe Ultra Sweet Pineapple' (Leoillet, 2003).

[52] The MD-2 variety is not a proprietary cultivar exclusive to the Del Monte Company, but the company has patented the breed. Even the latter, however, is being disputed by Del Monte's competitors. Conflicts, in cases resulting in law suits, between the companies have and are presently ongoing. For example, the Produce News (2000) published an article on a lawsuit of Del Monte Fresh Produce Co. who sued its rival Dole Food Co. in 2000 on the claim that Dole's new extra-sweet pineapple brand - 'Premium Select' - was based on plant material taken unlawfully from a Del Monte pineapple plantation in Costa Rica (Wright, 2000 published at www.theproducenews.com).

Figure 3.2: The 'Golden' and 'Super Sweet' rush of pineapple brand names.

For small-scale farmers, however, these changes are much more difficult. Their production and processing techniques have been specially adapted to a specific variety, mostly Cayenne Lisse. A change to MD-2 would involve considerable investment in new technology. For example, where shoots from existing plants are used to grow new plants from traditional varieties, the MD-2 variety requires the application of in-vitro techniques. In particular small-scale pineapple producers such as in Ivory Coast and Ghana are unable or would hesitate to shift to MD-2 due to the high costs involved.

Nevertheless, as stated in Table 3.2, the African pineapple traditionally had other important advantages, next to its taste and colour, including the smaller logistical distance to Europe, and related lower transportation costs. Such disadvantages were, however, largely overcome by the powerful TNCs which implemented up-to-date production and transportation technologies. Furthermore, TNCs established their own plantations, or bought shares in existing African plantations (although the majority of production of fresh pineapples by these TNCs still takes place in South and Central America). These large companies started to dominate the European fresh pineapple market by closing deals with large European buyers (see Box 3.1), thereby overthrowing, along the way, long-term incumbent suppliers, amongst which are Ivory Coast's pineapple producers (Amanor-Boadu et al., 2002).

Box 3.1: The case of a Dutch fruit importer who changed from the import of West-African pineapples to produce of Del Monte.

The Dutch fruit importer, Bakker Barendrecht, supplies pineapples to the largest Dutch retailer Albert Heijn. Until 2000, Bakker Barendrecht imported its pineapples mainly from West Africa. The person in charge of the purchase of pineapples warned some African pineapple producers of the success of the 'Del Monte Gold' pineapple and advised these producers to change their pineapple varieties 'Cayenne Lisse' and 'Queen' into 'MD-2' since the 'Del Monte Gold' pineapple is of a better quality. According to this buyer, the 'Del Monte Gold' pineapple has a longer shelf life and shows rotten spots at the skin when the fruit turns old. He experienced that the skin of the variety Cayenne Lisse does not show rotten spots when the internal flesh is starting to rot. Consumers therefore believe that the pineapple is still fresh and become very disappointed when they find out that the inside is rotten. Also, the taste of the 'Del Monte Gold' pineapple is very sweet, although the Bakker Barendrecht pineapple buyer argues that it may even be too sweet and that he therefore personally prefers the taste of the African pineapple.

In 2000, Albert Heijn and Bakker Barendrecht decided to shift to 'Del Monte Gold' pineapples because of the higher quality, the guaranteed supply of homogeneous fruit, and the superior logistical services of Del Monte. Consequently, their import of African pineapples stopped almost entirely.[53] A Dutch agent of Del Monte is taking care of the logistical aspects of the import of the Del Monte pineapples. Bakker Barendrecht receives the pineapples from this agent. Problems with the pineapples are reported back to the agent. Albert Heijn has direct contacts with Del Monte concerning quality and food safety issues, the yearly supply of pineapples, and price. At the time when Bakker Barendrecht was still importing pineapples from West Africa, they had to organise the contacts with the African producers and the transport of the fruit to the Netherlands themselves. Managing issues such as quality, food safety and price and delivery guarantees was consequently much more difficult.

Source: Interview with Bakker Barendrecht, April 2002.

[53] It should be noted, however, that the mother company of Albert Heijn, Royal Ahold, started a development program to support small-holders with the establishment of sustainable trade relations in Ghana in 2002. Pineapple is one of the sectors that Royal Ahold is supporting. The focus of Royal Ahold is mainly on the introduction of the MD-2 variety and on fair trade and organic pineapples. Royal Ahold's Program Manager of Ghana has insisted that Royal Ahold has no direct commercial intentions in Ghana, although the company may source products from Ghana once producers and exporters have proven to be reliable suppliers (Source: Interview with Royal Ahold's Program Manager of Ghana, Ghana, 2003). Generally, however, Royal Ahold's support to Ghana should be seen as a demonstration of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility program.

3.3 Consumer awareness or deception?

The long-standing position of traditional pineapple varieties, most importantly the Cayenne Lisse, is very remarkable within the light of global trends in commodity development and diversification, under the influence of consumer awareness. As mentioned in Chapter 2, consumer concerns and trends may have great impact on the market opportunities of agricultural fresh produce. In present times, consumer's demand is changing rapidly, especially in the fresh produce sector. An accurate response to these trends is necessary in order to maintain market position. Producers and traders therefore need to be innovative and add value to their products to profit from the developments that open up new market segments. As Vincenzo Tassinari, CEO COOP Italy, argues "producers who fail to differentiate or offer real value to the consumer will diminish greatly" (cited in Grievink et al., 2002:95).

As shown by Chan et al. (2003), for many years, breeding and research programs in the pineapple sector have not been able to produce new varieties that differ significantly from native types, or provide worthy improvements. Consequently, the global pineapple industry had relied almost entirely on the Cayenne Lisse variety, and innovations in the pineapple sector have been restricted to a few diversifications to the existing varieties. For instance, chilled fresh-cut pineapples packed as spears or chunks in sealed plastic bags for retail sale are relatively new products (Rohrbach et al., 2003). Also, in 1999, Dole introduced a new product to the market designed to appeal children, namely the 'Fun Shapes': bite-sized pieces of pineapple available in a range of kid-friendly figures such as fish, turtles and stars (Rabobank, 2002). In addition, in 2003 they also introduced pineapple chunks as part of a line of fresh fruit offerings (Dole, 2003). It has, however, only been in recent years that the TNC Del Monte has been able to accomplish a breakthrough, through the development and introduction of a new hybrid variety, based upon extensive innovative research, long-term commitment and high investments. Other companies have followed later by also switching over to the new hybrid variety. It is therefore interesting to look into the actual factors behind the success of this new pineapple variety, as a case study, to gain insight in the multiple facets involved in such global processes, including the role of consumers and other actors.

As argued in the previous section, with the introduction of the MD-2 variety, a new pineapple with superior characteristics has been introduced to the market. The benefits of the new variety in terms of quality, yield, and price are clear, however, a question that should be asked is: *to what extent do consumers actually play a role in the success rate of the new variety?* The introduction of the MD-2 pineapple, the Del-Monte Gold, was preceded by a study on consumer behaviour in Europe. The study showed that the

European consumer is in favour of a bright yellow-coloured pineapple (Eurofruit, 1996). However, a recent independent study by Agrotechnology and Food Innovations B.V. of 405 consumers in eight European countries[54] on preference for the MD-2 over the Cayenne Lisse pineapple, as reported by Sefa-Dedeh (2005), shows that there is no significant difference in consumer choice between the two varieties. Apart from a small preference for the MD-2 variety in the Netherlands, and for the Cayenne Lisse variety in Sweden, consumers showed no clear preference for either variety. Unfortunately, thus far little further study on this topic has been published. Nevertheless, its results make us suspect that consumer preference alone can probably not explain the success of the new pineapple variety.

If indeed the consumer's taste does not solely explain the success of the MD-2 variety, then what other factors have been determinant? The answer is probably multi-fold, but may be largely explained by the strong position of the large-scale suppliers, mainly TNCs, and the retail sector. As a starting point, it should be noted that the development of the new pineapple variety would most probably not have come to being without the enormous consolidation process that has taken place in the pineapple and other fresh fruit sectors: the establishment and growth of TNCs and other large-scale companies has strongly boosted development and innovation in the sector, which traditionally was too fragmented to allow for the level of investment in research, technological development, and marketing required for the development and introduction of the new variety. From the foregoing, the benefits to the supplier, mostly a TNC, are clear: a product which is better in quality, can be produced homogenously, and has a higher profit margin. With the new variety, the TNCs are now able to offer a competitive product.

The benefits to the retail sector are also clear, as demonstrated by, for example, the interview presented in Box 3.1. It should be noted that the fresh produce department in supermarkets is growing because of an increase in demand for such commodities. Promotion of fresh produce has become a key component of the retailer's strategy to attract and build loyalty in consumers (Weatherspoon et al., 2002). As discussed in Chapter 2, with a market share of around 80% of total fresh produce retail sales, supermarkets nowadays account for the majority of fruit and vegetable retail sales in Western Europe (Rabobank, 2002:14), the majority of which is in the hands of few large-scale retailers.

From interviews with a number of European retailers and importers in 2003, it has become clear that many of them tend to prefer to deal with globally operating

[54] These countries were the Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Germany and Spain.

companies because of the services offered by these companies (Willems et al., 2004). Dole, for instance, provides a full range of fresh products and customer services to maximise sales and profits for both the retailer and Dole. On a regular basis, the Company introduces new products, such as pre-cut fruit and mixed salads. Furthermore, it offers a strong global brand, state-of-the-art transportation services, a global distribution network, low-cost production capabilities, and last but not least huge trade promotion activities (Dole, 2003). With regard to the latter, TNCs like Del Monte and Dole promote their own products, which is hardly the case for more individualized suppliers.

An important factor is also the increased attention to food safety and quality by retailers and TNCs. In an interview with the Director of Del Monte in the Netherlands, he argued that Del Monte's safety and quality requirements go beyond those stipulated by supermarkets. The Company is well aware that consumers buy their products because they link their brand with food quality and safety. To assure the confidence of consumers in their brand, food safety and quality are the Company's highest priority, and it therefore strives to control the whole supply chain and thus guarantee safe and high quality products.[55] TNCs like Dole and Del Monte have therefore implemented chain-wide information and tracking and tracing systems in order to monitor performance at all steps in the chain.

As follows from the above, the branding of products, linked with an image of quality and safety standards, are an important aspect of the marketing strategy of companies like Del Monte: consumers are now able to buy 'Del Monte Gold', not simply a pineapple. Competitors in the market follow similar marketing strategies. For example, Dole has invested heavily in branding of a variety of fruit and vegetables, in order to portray their products in the market.[56] Because of the important role of branding, more about this is presented in the following section.

As is clear from Box 3.1, the benefits to retailers switching over to TNCs rather than individual suppliers are therefore large, and many have taken this step. It is probably this fact that has been the key factor in the successful introduction of the MD-2 variety in the market. The TNCs marketing strategies are strongly geared towards both consumers and retailers. It is this approach that has generated a firm image and strong consumer interest in the MD-2 and which has enabled Del Monte to penetrate many parts of the European market with their new variety; even in France which is the

[55] Source: Interview with the Director of Del Monte in the Netherlands, May 2003.

[56] Source: Lawrence Kern, Board of Directors Dole Food Company Inc., 2002. Lawrence Kern gave a presentation on 'Pre-cut fresh produce for the convenience market' at the Global Conference on Fresh Produce, organized by Rabobank International in the Netherlands, May 2002.

leading market for pineapple consumption and is traditionally dominated by pineapples from Ivory Coast (Eurofruit, 1996). This trend has also been demonstrated by Leyden (2003) who conducted a survey among major buyers of fresh produce in the United Kingdom. She concludes that although the major UK supermarkets source different pineapple varieties, Del Monte has largely convinced them that the MD-2 is the future.

Nevertheless, despite all the advantages to retailers and consumers, the level of success of the introduction of the MD-2 variety is remarkable, in particular when considering that the market price for a MD-2 pineapple initially was up to two times higher than, for example, the Cayenne Lisse (meanwhile, this price difference has reduced). According to the Wall Street Journal (Frank, 2003), Del Monte's price for the MD-2 was as high as US$20 for a 25-pound box, which usually hold 5 to 7 pineapples. This is confirmed by a Dutch importer of pineapples who indicated that the price of a 12 kilo box of MD-2 pineapples was 19 Euro in April 2002. At the same time, a similar box of Cayenne Lisse pineapples was priced at 9 Euro.[57]

Although from the foregoing it may be argued that the success of the introduction of the MD-2 pineapple variety has been largely driven by the retail sector and TNCs, and only marginally by consumer taste, it should be noted, that an important driver behind the process of consolidation and increase in power by these sectors has actually been the globalization and individualization of consumer trends. The latter has led to consumers who are more concerned about issues such as safety, quality, and health aspects but also about issues like animal welfare, environmental friendly or organic products and social elements such as working conditions, salaries of employees, etc.

As also shown by Marsden et al. (2000), retailers have translated consumer interest into the demand for a transparent supply chain to trace back the product upstream. This, in turn, has led to increased power in the retail sector: growing consumer concern regarding certain issues has granted retailer's bargaining power within supply chains to act as protectors of consumers' interests; in the process they act as a kind of legislator. In this respect, special attention is given to fresh products for which transparency of the supply chain is becoming more and more important. As a result, the retailer imposes quality and safety standards on producers. In turn, such standards can only be met by a well-organized producer/suppliers, with access to the required technology, organizational setting and sufficient capital for the necessary investment; hence, a boost for the TNCs.

[57] Source: Interview with a Dutch importer of pineapples, April 2002.

It is interesting to note that until the mid 1990s, the characteristics of the TNCs (well organized, control over the supply chain, etc.) had not provided them with a competitive advantage in the European fresh pineapple market. It can be noted, however, that until early 1990, the European fresh pineapple markets had also not been the focus for TNCs such as Dole and Del Monte. The launch of the MD-2 variety came at a time when other issues such as food safety, but also branding, became important marketing topics for European retailers. TNCs were able to respond adequately to the increasing food safety concerns of the retailers, who became important players in the fresh produce market and launched huge promotional campaigns to attract consumers' as well as retailers' attention for their fresh products, including the pineapple. These developments and trends made it, in my opinion, possible that TNCs were able to capture the European fresh pineapple market.

3.4 Branding the standards

As indicated earlier, the main competitors of the Ivorian pineapple, Dole and Del Monte, control the entire supply chain from 'soil to shelf' and have implemented chain-wide information and tracking and tracing systems in order to monitor performance and to quickly act on any problems. Dole, for example, has taken special steps throughout production and distribution to ensure that high quality and safety products reach consumers. These processes and practices have been embedded in specific, officially registered quality and safety management systems such as:[58]

- Good Agricultural Practices: specific procedures from the tillage of the soil to harvest activities.
- Good Manufacturing Practices: specific procedures for manufacturing activities such as cooling, sanitation, washing, drying and packaging.
- HACCP: hazard analysis at critical control points, including design of processing facilities and operational procedures to eliminate food safety risks.
- Cold Chain Management: refrigeration is maintained from post-harvest to the shelf.

Implementing such standards[59] has clear merits, in terms of quality control and management of supply-on-demand delivery. However, for companies, an important

[58] Source: Lawrence Kern, Board of Directors Dole Food Company Inc., May 2002. Presentation on 'Pre-cut fresh produce for the convenience market' at the Global Conference on Fresh Produce, organized by Rabobank International in the Netherlands.

[59] It should be noted that these process-level standards come in addition to specific product standards, which may vary from quality specifications such as size, colour and taste, to safety standards such as sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) and Maximum Residue Level (MRL) norms. For most of these standards, countries (or groups of countries such as the EU) have established official minimum (enforced) requirements. However, on top of this, the private sector often has established its own, often more stringent, standards.

trigger to implement such practices is often the label attached to the product. These labels are linked to a 'code of conduct' and a registration scheme – certified by accredited certification bodies – which is equally applicable to producers and suppliers all over the world. The existence and increasing relevance attached to these standards has major consequences for local fresh fruit producers, especially in developing countries, since implementation impacts not only on supply chain organization, but also on financial aspects of chain cooperation (Cook et al., 2001): adherence to certain standards is often a requirement of individual buyers, and in the case of HACCP and many product standards even enforced by the importing country. As pointed out by Reardon and Farina (2001), producers that are not able to implement the standards consequently find themselves relegated to fading and unprofitable markets.

The establishment of the EUREP (Euro-Retailer Produce working group) organization in 1997 is an example of the introduction of private standards to assure quality and safety. EUREP is an organization of more than 20 major European retailers and buyers. Developed and introduced by EUREP, EUREP-GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) is a package of norms aiming to guarantee the production of environmental friendly, safe and high-quality agricultural products. These norms are becoming increasingly stringent and have, on most accounts, become more rigid than national government and European Union regulations. The cost for certification is high as producers have to be audited on an annual basis, by an accredited company, in order to obtain an official EUREP-GAP certificate. Because of the lack of accredited companies in many developing countries, producers are forced to fly in expensive auditors from Europe.

A study conducted in 2003 on changing public and private food safety and quality requirements in the EU for imported fruit and vegetables from non-EU countries, concluded that EUREP-GAP has virtually become the 'license to produce' for the major EU retailer markets, although some retailers also maintain a private 'code of practice' (Willems et al., 2004).[60] The emergence of these private retail standards has profound impacts: if each retailer develops its own standard, producers and traders have to follow multiple administrative requirements, as well as having to cope with the related expenses of auditing.

As argued above, adherence to certain standard practices is often a prerequisite for entry into a given market, for example as regards HACCP and EUREP-GAP. However, even when this is not the case, companies may use such (certified) labels to boost their brand name: e.g. buying a 'Del Monte Gold' means buying a pineapple which is

[60] A study conducted for the project 'Food Safety and Agricultural Health Standards: Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Country Exports' for the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Trade Unit and Agriculture and Rural Development Department of the World Bank.

produced according to strict internationally accepted standards for food quality, safety and environmental conduct. Such brands of products but also brands of companies (including retailers' brands) are increasingly developing. Brands stand for values such as quality, safety, trust, culture, fairness, organic, fun, pleasure, etc. The perception and experiences that consumers have of a product, which are associated with certain brands, is of great importance for the success of that product in the market.[61] It is a general trend that the market share of private brands (including retailer brands) is increasing and some of these brands develop into what are often referred to as 'A-brands', especially private brands of large international retailers (Grievink et al., 2002).

3.5 Outlook: meeting the challenges

Recent developments in the global fresh produce sector and in the pineapple sector in particular, as described in the previous sections, greatly impact the Ivorian pineapple sector. Large-scale companies such as TNCs and retailers which are increasingly dictating the global fresh produce sector have generated strong agencies that impact and shape local actors' room for manoeuvre, actions and interpretations in the international market. In particular, small-scale producers are becoming more and more dependent on these powerful companies that are setting the 'rules of the game'.

Despite some of the remarks in the above sections, in particular with regard to the dominance of TNCs and struggles by smaller producers, globalization does offer opportunities to producers and exporters in developing countries, such as in the Ivory Coast. Retailers and importers, as well as TNCs, are continuously expanding their international sourcing operations to meet consumer demand for year-round fresh and exotic fruit. However, such cross-border trade relations invoke new organizational and production forms, (on-farm) technologies, labour processes, and social networks. That such a shift can successfully be made is demonstrated by the case of Mexico and the United States, where cross-border trade has induced shifts in production methods, changes in the social division of labour, and development in on-farm technologies. In effect this has led to the cumulative reorganization of an entire fresh produce supply system; it is through these shifts that Mexican producers have become the suppliers of North America's 'salad bowls' (Little and Watts, 1994).

[61] Arce and Marsden (1993:300) in this respect note that "... an understanding of the different existence, development, and transformation of food (value) trajectories is required. That is, how is value in food constructed and transferred globally, nationally and locally? What interests and agencies influence these processes?". While the discussion here presented touches upon certain aspects of these questions, it is obvious that the actual factors involved in value-related processes are intricately more complex.

In the case of Ivory Coast, in order to maintain the Ivorian fresh pineapple sector's share in European markets, or more challengingly, to re-win their share of the mid 1980s - early 1990s era, the pineapple sector needs to adequately respond to and internalize the trends and development processes that determine the present-day global market. Undoubtedly, a major effort is ongoing in Ivory Coast to re-polish the image and to enhance the performance of the Ivorian pineapple. The responses so far focus on a number of aspects, including the improvement of the quality and the homogeneity of the fruit, a more efficient organization of the sector, and a reduction of logistical costs. A promising factor is that the predominantly small-scale producers that are occupying this sector are still able to produce and sell pineapples for the global market. Chapters 4 and 5 further describe how the various actors in the Ivorian pineapple sector have so far responded to and internalized some of the trends and developments described in the previous sections.

Note: A large part of this chapter will be published under the title 'Meeting and beating the market requirements: Competing in the Big League', In: Ruben, R., M. van Boekel, A. van Tilburg and J. Trienekens, 2007 (forthcoming), Governance Regimes for Quality Management in Tropical Food Chains, Wageningen Academic Publishers, Wageningen, the Netherlands.

CHAPTER 4

THE PINEAPPLE PRODUCTION SPACE

THE FIELD OF SOCIAL ACTION OF LOCAL ACTORS IN THE IVORIAN PINEAPPLE SECTOR

4.1 Introduction: the emerging pineapple sector

During the early colonial period[62], Ivory Coast lacked a natural deep-water harbour and navigable rivers to the hinterland. Colonial economic activities were consequently mainly limited to the coastal and tropical zone in the south. In the early 1900s, French colonists introduced a number of cash crops that were widely adopted by local farmers in these areas.[63] The timber industry was the first sector in which the production, distribution and marketing system were linked, followed by cocoa, coffee, rubber and palm oil and kernels, bananas and pineapples.[64] Of all these agricultural commodities, timber, cocoa and coffee became the main export products to the extent that after the Second World War they constituted around 90% of the total export value of Ivory Coast (den Tuinder, 1978:15).

Although France officially abolished slavery in the French colonies in 1848, the colonists continued to apply forced labour until the early 1900s (Hopkins, 1973). Under this forced labour program, the colonial administration forced men to work on state ventures such as the construction of a railroad system, as well as for private commercial interests, including on plantations. Later, some were even sent to Europe to fight with the French in the First World War. Toungara (1980) shows how large groups of men from the northern territories of Ivory Coast[65] were sent to forced labour camps in the forest zone to work on the large-scale plantations of the French and describes how the labour force was recruited by French planters. Men were hired as a group from local administrators or chiefs. Groff (1987) and Toungara (1980) reported that some

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[62] As part of French expansion in West Africa, Ivory Coast was made a colony in 1893 (Encarta Encyclopaedia, 2004).

[63] In 1905, Ivory Coast exported 2 tons of cocoa, 29 tons of coffee (den Tuinder, 1978:13), 1,180 tons of rubber, 3,270 tons of palm oil and 3,169 tons of palm kernels (Castaing, 1906) and 9,600 tons of timber logs (den Tuinder, 1978:18).

[64] Different pineapple varieties were brought to Ivory Coast and were cultivated on a small-scale basis on their plantations. It was determined that the variety Cayenne Lisse was the variety that could adapt best to the local conditions. This variety is still cultivated in Ivory Coast nowadays.

[65] Some argue that colonialism was directly responsible for the depopulation of the Northern region of Ivory Coast (Toungara, 1980).

planters even bought their labour force from administrators, in a scheme that might be considered a type of slavery. Also, labourers from neighbouring countries, mainly Burkina Faso[66], Mali and Guinea, migrated to Ivory Coast to work on the plantations. The forced labour regulation was kept in place for several decades, and eventually ended only around 1950 (Toungara, 1980; Hopkins, 1973).

The introduction of a 'head tax' policy in May 1901 by the French colonist, more or less 'forced' peasant farmers to start producing cocoa and coffee as cash crops to increase their cash income. This 'head tax' was imposed on every man, woman and child over ten years of age. The tax initially amounted to 2.5 francs per head per month, and was collected by local chiefs and turned over to special agents (Groff, 1987; Toungara, 1980). Furthermore, in 1909, cocoa and coffee production became part of a forced cultivation program – in which farmers were forced to dedicate a certain portion of their land to cocoa and coffee production – which the French administration introduced in order to increase the export of these products to their home country (Toungara, 1980). Drawn by the new opportunities, migrants from all parts of the country came to the forest zone to start small-scale cocoa and coffee plantations.

Groff (1987) describes the social networks that developed in relation to local agricultural production activities by the Anyi-Juablin society of the village of Assikasso – the forest region of south-eastern Ivory Coast – during the early colonial era, and changes within this social network as farmers switched over to export-oriented cash crop production. His description of the agricultural and social transformation in the village of Assikasso demonstrates that the patriarchal pattern of social relations gradually disintegrated and a more individualistic pattern arose (see Box 4.1).

[66] Called Upper Volta at that time.

Box 4.1: Agricultural and social transformations in the village of Assikasso, Ivory Coast, during the Colonial era.

Gold mining (started around 1880) and natural rubber production (started around 1890) formed the first principle link between the village of Assikasso and the world market, as a result of the number of trading caravans passing through Assikasso in the 1890s. During this early colonial period, social stratification was largely based on the degree of one's control over labour and the nature of one's role within the local judicial system in the village, which were dictated by land chiefs, political leaders and ritual leaders. Since gold mining and rubber production were linked to land and required a lot of labour, the land chiefs (locally referred to as *aulo kpagnemo*)[67] were de facto in control of the organization of mining, production and trade, therefore having power and authority over other villagers.[68] Family and extended family members and their slaves provided labour for the production of cash products and staple crops as well as work in the gold mines.

Because of its strategic location – near the two main caravan routes in the region and to secure the commercial hinterland of their ports at Assini and Grand Bassam – the French took control of the Assikasso village and implemented a colonial administrative and communication infrastructure, thus undermining the traditional local patterns of social relations, authority and labour. Under influence of the French administrative policies and the consequent change-over to the cash crop production, the Anyi-Juablin production based relations on the institution of the *aulo kpagnemo* gradually weakened and eventually gave way to a new, more capitalist form of productive social organization.

Around 1912, the Anyi-Juablin started producing cocoa because of the collapse of the rubber industry, due to competition from South-East Asian countries. The introduction of the head tax forced the Anyi-Juablin to start producing cocoa, with quite some implications: cocoa production is an agricultural activity whereby the producers control the production and marketing, whereas formerly, in the case of rubber production, the land chiefs were in control of such activities. With this shift from rubber to cocoa cultivation, therefore, the control over export-oriented production passed from the land chief to the producer. Consequently, some *aulo kpagnemo* became large '*planteurs*', using their continued access to traditional labour force.

To enable the expanded cocoa and coffee (from 1926) production, producers converted more land into long-term cocoa and coffee production areas. However, because the forced labour policy had been abandoned, a large portion of the labour force was lost. Producers therefore had to attract migrant labourers to the region. Different types of contract labour emerged – short-term, task-oriented and share-cropping –, transforming producers into employers. At the same time, these producers became increasingly involved in commercial activities. Wealth became associated with cash crop production and the cash income of individual producers, and no longer associated with control over traditional labour and the judicial system.

Source: Groff, 1987.

During the 1940s, African labourers and producers started to oppose the system of forced labour, the exploitative conditions under which they worked, and the low product prices they were paid for their goods (Alschuler, 1998; Groff, 1987; Toungara, 1980; Sawadogo, 1977). This voice of opposition was strengthened when, through the formation of the 'Syndicat Agricole Africain' (African agricultural trade union) in 1944, tribal groups of producers were organized under the leadership of educated African producers[69], often by-passing the authority of tribal chiefs. A national party, Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI)[70], emerged out of the Syndicat, led by the wealthy Baoulé tribal chief, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, who was later, in 1960, to become the first president of the independent state of Ivory Coast (Alschuler, 1998; den Tuinder, 1978, Sawadogo, 1977).

Under these developments, the number of African coffee and cocoa producers grew from 40,000 in 1944 to 200,000 by 1959 and 550,000 by 1974 (Nyong'o, 1987). Although most of these African plantations were small-scale and relied upon family labour, they competed with colonist producers. During the same period, the share of coffee production held by European-owned plantations fell from 55% in 1942 to 6% in 1952, in conjunction with a similar growth in African production (Nyong'o, 1987). This growth in African production was the basis for the establishment of an African middle class society (Alschuler, 1998; Campbell, 1987; Sawadogo, 1977).

Pineapple production increased during the 1940s, with French colonists cultivating pineapples on their plantations, for which they recruited Ivorians and Africans from neighbouring countries as labourers. Besides production on their own plantations, the French stimulated local producers to become involved in the cultivation of pineapples in order to expand the total production area. In such cases, French planters provided vegetative reproduction material for the production of pineapples and assisted with production, in return for the right to market the harvest. During the same period, the first contract-farming relations[71] between French planters and local African producers were established. The first African pineapple '*planteurs*' thus emerged by the end of the

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[67] The king had overall control over land, and delegated responsibility for land distribution to the village headmen, who in turn passed this responsibility to their land chiefs. The king and the village headmen received labour services from the villagers and used this for the production of cash crops.

[68] It should be noted that the *aulo kpagnemo* did not have direct control over agricultural production. Gold mining and natural rubber production were not seen as agricultural production.

[69] Often referred to as '*planteurs*'; Groff (1987) analyses the relationship between the '*planteurs*' and the Ivorian ruling class. He notes that some authors argue that the larger '*planteurs*' constitute a class of rural capitalists who form the basis of the Ivorian ruling class, while other authors argue that the ruling class is an urban-based group who derive their power mainly from political and bureaucratic positions.

[70] PDCI became Ivorians only political party after Independence.

[71] Agreements specifying the production obligations (volume, time of harvest, etc.). See also section 4.4.3.

1940s. However, it was not until the 1960s that more African growers (mainly small-scale) got involved in pineapple cultivation and that the pineapple production area expanded more rapidly.

During this period, the production of pineapples was mainly meant for the preservation of canned fruit. Ivory Coast was the first African country that preserved pineapples when, in 1948, the 'Société des Ananas de la Côte d'Ivoire (SALCI)' started to plant pineapples and subsequently commenced canning in October 1950. At that time, SALCI produced 75-80% of the canned pineapples – as slices, parts, crushed and as juices – in Ivory Coast (Due, 1969:652). In 1971-1972, Ivory Coast processed around 16,000 tons of pineapples, ranking thereby 6th on the list of pineapples preservation countries in the world (Sawadogo, 1977). The development of the pineapple sector attracted more producers to the production regions. As an example of the growth of interest in pineapple production in Ivory Coast, Colin (2003:15) shows in his work the expansion of the pineapple production area in the village Djimini-Koffikro between 1983 and 2002. In 1983, the production area of the village was mainly used for coffee, cocoa, coconut, palm oil and products for home-consumption but by 2002, the area devoted to cultivation of these products had decreased significantly[72], whereas the area devoted to fresh pineapple production had increased from 43.2 ha in 1983 to 407.1 ha in 2002.

Due to technological improvements in refrigeration processes for sea transportation, the production and export of fresh pineapples expanded rapidly at the beginning of the 1970s. Whereas in 1961 only 2,100 tons of fresh pineapples were exported, 39,400 tons were exported in 1972 (OCAB, 2003:65). Hence, Ivory Coast became the largest fresh pineapple exporter in Africa at that time (Sawadogo, 1977; Skinner, 1964). Due to the successful export of fresh pineapples to the international markets, the number of pineapple producers increased, as more and more local producers became aware of the profitability of the pineapple business. As a result, the demand for land increased.

As discussed in Chapter 3, in 1986 Ivory Coast had a 95% marketing share of the European market (exporting 193,775 tons of pineapples) (OCAB, 2003:7 & 65). However due to international competition, mainly from the TNCs Dole and Del Monte, this market share dropped to around 50% in the mid 1990s (OCAB, 2003:7). In this competitive environment, Ivorian pineapple producers now face the challenge of maintaining or re-capturing their primary position in the European market. Annex III

[72] The production area of coffee and cocoa decreased from 139 ha in 1983 to 5.6 ha in 2002. The production of coconut declined from 68.3 ha in 1983 to 19.4 ha in 2002, and the production area of food crops for home-consumption decreased from 167.2 ha to 95.7 ha over the same period (Colin, 2003:15).

presents the development of the Ivorian export of fresh pineapples in the period 1960-2002.

In summary, we may conclude that the key factors that helped shape the development of commercial peasant agriculture in Ivory Coast during the colonial and post-colonial period was the way in which access to, and exploitation of, land and labour were structured and governed. The economic transformation in itself was the result of the ways in which peasant farmers and labourers responded to the different social, legal and political settings in which they worked. Peasant farmers and labourers themselves influenced to a large extent the locally invented arrangements and new forms of social relations, as well as their particular practices and actions, within this governing setting. We may also conclude that the organized resistance of the African farmers and labourers towards the imposed French system, provided them a certain agency that eventually led to a change from a position of dependency on the French colonists, into an African middle class '*planteurs*' society, providing them with more room for manoeuvre to produce and export.

It should be noted that the Ivorian pineapple sector is characterized by a large group of heterogeneous producers, all operating within their respective life-worlds and local knowledge, and consequently experiencing, interpreting and responding differently to local and global trends and developments, and internalizing these into their own realities. The next sections provide a closer look at these different realities, which shape the everyday actions, practices and relationships of the different producers and related actors such as landlords, family and communities, including their specific strategies, manoeuvres, power relations, discourses and struggles. Discussed are respectively the diversity of the Ivorian pineapple producers sector, aspects of land and labour structures as central facets of the local pineapple production space, and finally specific examples of internalization processes and consequent actions and practices of local producers.

4.2 The diversity of the pineapple producers

As mentioned earlier, the Ivorian pineapple sector is characterized by a large group of heterogeneous producers, who differ in terms of farm size and scale of production, their technical capacity, and their access to land, labour and capital. They also differ in terms of their ethnic background, which as we shall see later is important because it acts as a significant factor in shaping their relationship to other actors at the local level. However, generally, pineapple producers can be divided into three main groups,

namely: small-scale, medium-scale and large-scale producers.[73] The sector is typified by, on the one hand, a large number of small-scale producers (cultivating between 0.2 - 6 ha of land) and, on the other hand, a small number of large-scale producers (cultivating over 100 ha of land). In between are a number of medium-scale producers (cultivating between 6 and 100 ha of land). The following sections elaborate further on the characteristics of these broad categories of producers.

4.2.1 Small-scale producers

It is difficult to provide the exact number of small-scale producers cultivating pineapples in Ivory Coast. The main reason for this is that a number of producers are located in remote areas and sell their harvest to local middlemen that handle the products from the farm-gate onwards. These producers are consequently invisible for the pineapple export organizations and are therefore not included in official statistics. Furthermore, a number of small-scale producers cultivate pineapples on an irregular basis, especially after a year in which European market prices are high because producers tend to start cultivating pineapples in the hope of benefiting from these high prices the following year, whereas less profitable years lead to a decline. Because of this, the number of producers differs from year to year. The general trend is, however, that the number of small-scale producers has increased since the late 1980s as a result of the good market opportunities in Europe (OCAB, 2003).

Officially, 925 small-scale pineapple producers were registered by the overall export organization OCAB in 1998 (Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998:141), representing around 95% of the total number of registered pineapple producers. Of this number, around 400 producers are of Ivorian nationality and approximately 400 producers are from Burkina Faso, while other producers originate from other African nations or from outside the Continent. The majority of the small-scale producers are men. However, women do assist their husbands in the field, among others in activities such as weeding and planting.

It was estimated by Jexco Queyrane Conseil (1998:26) that, in 1998, small-scale producers cultivated 73.2% (or 3,490 ha) of the total pineapple production area in Ivory Coast. Nevertheless, they account for a little less than 50% of total pineapple exports (OCAB, 2003). The main reason for this is the relatively low production efficiency of these producers. Another reason is that, as noted earlier, many small-scale producers are not registered with any export organization. It should be noted, in this respect, that most of the small-scale producers are only involved in the production of pineapples and not in any marketing and export activities. Instead, they export their pineapples either

[73] This division into groups of producers is actually applied by producers and export organizations in Ivory Coast.

through an export organization or via a middleman, where a middleman can be a pineapple producer or someone specialized in the trade. If the latter is the case, the producer is consequently not registered with the export organization. A reason for using middlemen is, as some small-scale producers argued during interviews, that they prefer to sell their pineapples directly to a middlemen in order to obtain cash directly instead of waiting a couple of weeks to receive their revenues.

Most (but not all) of the small-scale producers lack capital to invest in modern technology and therefore use traditional tools; these producers also depend mainly on manual labour of family members. Because of limited financial means, chemicals and fertilizers are often insufficiently applied. This affects the quality of the fruit. Producers transport the harvest to packing houses owned by export organizations or by middlemen where the fruit is graded, checked and packed. Most small-scale producers consequently have no direct connection with the European market and hardly receive any market information, although limited information is transmitted through the export organizations, OCAB, middlemen or via other producers.

Most small-scale producers are also involved in the production of other commodities such as bananas, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, rubber, as well as crops for home-consumption, such as manioc, cassava, maize, plantains, and vegetables. A large number of small-scale producers interviewed stated that they cultivate pineapples in view of the fast return of currency, particularly because pineapples are relatively easy to grow. Also, they have recognized that the Ivorian pineapple is appreciated in Europe, since demand has increased significantly, an increase they witnessed in the 1980s and early 1990s.

4.2.2 Medium-scale and large-scale producers

The most obvious difference between medium and large-scale producers is the size of their plantations (production area) and the annual volume of pineapple exports. Other differences, such as access to technology, capital to invest, and market participation were hardly mentioned when asking producers to identify the differences between these two groups.

The number of medium and large-scale pineapple producers in Ivory Coast is very low compared to the large group of small-scale producers. In 1998, a total of 42 medium and large-scale pineapple plantations were counted by OCAB, of which four were owned by large-scale producers (Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998:141). It should be noted, however, that producers who export exclusively by air or container are not included in these statistics, since they are not members of the overall export organization OCAB. However, at the time of this field survey, the number of medium

and large-scale producers operating outside of the OCAB structure was very limited (see also Chapter 5, Section 5.4.1).[74] Jexco Queyrane Conseil (1998:26) estimated that, in 1998, the total production area of all medium and large-scale producers together was 1,278 ha, or 26.8 % of the total production area, of which the three largest cultivated nearly half. Together, they export over 50% of total Ivorian pineapple exports to the European market. The majority of the medium and large-scale producers are men. Only a few women manage a medium or large-scale plantation.

The level of technology and capital input applied by medium and large-scale producers is generally high. Differences between companies do exist (despite the earlier presented view of the producers themselves). For example, 'Société de Culture Bananière' (SCB), the largest pineapple producer in Ivory Coast (exporting over 47,800 tons of pineapples in 2002)[75] applies modern production technologies and owns a laboratory to control quality and safety aspects and to conduct experiments with in-vitro reproduction. Also, the transnational corporation Dole holds shares in this company and was the first to introduce the new pineapple variety MD-2 to Ivory Coast in the late 1990s due to their technologically and financially advantageous position. For most medium- (and small-)scale producers, it is impossible to make comparable investments in innovation.

All medium and large-scale producers, however, use modern information and communication technology, have direct contact with importers, and can follow international market developments through the Internet. These producers visit European markets on a regular basis, and are thus able to respond to market developments in a timely fashion by adjusting practices when necessary (such as the size of pineapples and the type of packing material). Also, some importers visit plantations on a regular basis to discuss the export schedule, innovations and new markets.

4.3 The issue of land: from use value to market value

In the pre-colonial period, the southern region of Ivory Coast was characterized by a low population density, ample availability of land and non-export oriented agricultural production. Traditionally, land in southern Ivory Coast was controlled at the village or lineage level (Colin, 1998). The unwritten village 'code' implied that each member of a community group had the right to cultivate pieces of land to assure the household's subsistence. Households were not restricted to a particular acreage of land and one did

[74] According to OCAB, less than 5 medium-scale producers export pineapples to Europe outside the OCAB structure on a regular basis (Source: Interview with OCAB, August 1998).
[75] Source: OCAB, 2003:78.

not need to ask permission for the usage of the land on the condition that the piece of forest to be cleared had not already taken by someone else. The lineage 'code' implied, furthermore, that the usufruct rights over a piece of land that were granted to a group member included usufruct rights over the same piece of land after a period of fallow. These usufruct rights could be passed to heirs, but it was not possible to sell the land (*ibid.*). Outsiders had to request the authorization of the '*chef de terre*' – the descendant of the first land-clearer – and offer him gifts (gifts would typically be exchanged after the harvest or at special social events such as weddings or funerals) in exchange for permission to cultivate a precisely indicated piece of land (*ibid.*). Colin and Ayouz (2006) show that this 'duty of gratitude' would continue for a long time after the transaction had taken place, and which often entailed implicit and renegotiable rights and obligations.

Colin (1998) argues that, in the pre-colonial era, 'regulated access to land' for outsiders should not be interpreted on an economic basis – since land was not scarce – but mainly socially, within the context of integration into a community. He also indicates that historically two interrelated processes of change took place in relation to land rights in southern Ivory Coast, namely the introduction of tree crops such as coffee, cocoa and rubber, and increased land scarcity related to a rise in demand for land by both local 'native' producers and by immigrants. In regard to the first, traditionally, crops were considered to be the personal property of the individual who planted them. Tree crops therefore legitimized permanent control over land for a long period of time. In regard to the second, the demand for land in southern Ivory Coast increased, due to its fertile soils and favourable climatic conditions for the production of export commodities such as cocoa, coffee and pineapples, which attracted many migrants.[76] This was further induced by the establishment of large plantations in this region by the French.[77] Such new migrants were mostly received by people of their own ethnic group already living in the area (Colin, 1998; van den Breemer, 1984). Land that these newcomers could clear was often assigned by these fellow ethnic producers or by the village administrator.

In the beginning, these newcomers were welcomed, since most migrant producers were living in remote areas in the forest and were pleased to meet fellow group members. Later, when land became scarcer (especially from the 1940s onwards), this regulated free access to land for newcomers disappeared, and immigrants had first to become wage-earners before getting access to their own land. Colin and Ayouz (2006) describe

[76] Hill (1986) describes a similar situation for Ghana where large groups of migrants moved to the thinly populated forest country to cultivate land for cocoa and coffee production.

[77] The French colonists established plantations in the south of the country because of the favourable conditions for perennial tree crops such as coffee, cocoa, oil palm, rubber and coconuts (den Tuinder, 1978).

the case of the Agni kingdom of Sanwi to illustrate that some indigenous groups attempted to control the settlement of migrants by refusing a complete alienation of land, and rather insisted on land rent. This local resistance to migrant land control in the Agni kingdom started in the 1930s.

After Independence, by signing commercial, monetary and aid pacts with Burkina Faso and Mali, the Ivorian government maintained the large flow of cheap labour migrants into the country, to work on plantations and small-holder farms (Hecht, 1983). Due to the massive arrival of these migrants into the region, especially in the 1960s, traditional village structures changed and village control over land collapsed into a multiplicity of individual or family appropriation rights. The development of a plantation economy made land more valuable. During this period a 'land rush' emerged, since it became important to plant trees to obtain control over land. As Crook (2001) describes, a 'marketisation' of land took place as land transactions became increasingly commercialised.[78] As a reaction to the emergence of individual land ownership, people started to indicate their boundaries with stones, which had never been done before. As Colin (1998) describes, family blocs appeared and the plantations of family members were connected and shared with one another.

Although the state tried to redefine the structure of property rights over land, in practice this was unsuccessful and therefore its role in land claims was limited. As Crook (2001) explains, in order to encourage migration and the expansion of cocoa and coffee cultivation, the Ivorian government policy on access to land formally favoured private ownership. Just after Independence, President Houphouët-Boigny stated that 'the land belongs to those who cultivate it'. This is important: land 'use' therefore became equivalent to land 'right', a feature that would emerge as important in later years as the export sector developed. In reality, however, land rights continued to be based on voluntary local agreements or power relations, embedded in interethnic relationships. Hecht (1983) shows that most disputes over land were being settled through village meetings or arbitration by local administrators. He also indicates that once land was taken by someone, it offered granted security of tenure, also to the migrant farmers, releasing them from any obligations to pay rent, and awarded them the right to transfer the land freely to third parties at a later date. This was therefore a great incentive for

[78] Hopkins (1973) describes a similar phenomenon in other agricultural producing regions for export in West Africa (e.g. Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana).

immigrant farmers from other regions of Ivory Coast and from neighbouring countries to settle down in the southern zone where cocoa and coffee could be grown.[79]

The situation, however, gradually changed during the 1960s and 1970s. Colin (1998), who conducted extensive research on land property rights in the village of Djimini-Koffikro (South-East Ivory Coast, Adiaké Sub-Prefecture) over a 20 year period, describes the appearance of the phenomena of renting out land in the mid-1960s. He shows that land rental started after a company introduced contract-farming opportunities for the cultivation of pineapples in the village. Local inhabitants would start cultivating pineapples for this company and expanded their production area by renting land from neighbours. Also, outsiders were attracted to the village and searched for land for pineapple cultivation in the neighbourhood. As Daviron (2002) explains, this type of contract-farming relations between large and small farmers would evolve to become a 'normal' form of labour organization in tropical crop cultivation for export (see also Section 4.4.3).

Colin and Ayouz (2006) also describe how at the beginning of the 1960s the principle of buying a piece of land emerged, as land was given a market value due to increased demand. According to Colin (2003), reasons to sell land were, among others, an urgent need for cash, producers returning to their native villages or heirs unwilling to settle close to the land they inherited. Crook (2001) points out that these new principles of buying and renting pieces of land led to a 'clientelisation' of land relations at the local level.

As in the pre-1960s situation, the newly evolved process of marketing land was handled by local communities, lineages or powerful individuals, on the basis of negotiated arrangements, thus providing a degree of agency to establish their own rules and regulations for the sale, rent and use of land. These local actors and agents struggled to retain control over natural resources but also wished to benefit from the 'new value' of land. Because of the lack of state intervention and limited legalisation of land, locally negotiated arrangements for access to land arose. As a result, multiple sets of local norms and rules governing land and labour relations emerged in the southern region of Ivory Coast. Due to limited state intervention, these local norms and rules could not easily be confirmed or enforced by formal law, although in principle the state could, if wished, assert its overarching right to land use and ownership (Crook, 2001).

[79] In his article, Hecht (1983:41) describes the flow of immigrants in the village of Braboré which was so intense in the late 1940s and early 1950s that by 1955, 46% of tree crops were owned by immigrants; 80% of the 1,057 ha of cocoa and coffee grown by these immigrants had been ceded to them before the end of the 1950s.

Colin and Ayouz (2006) show that over the past few years, the issue of land has become characterized by a process of politicization and 'ethnicization' due to political and ethnic tensions which started at the end of the 1990s. In December 1998, a law was introduced that prohibits foreigners from owning land; ending the governments' policy of 'land use is land right'. The law stated that private property rights would be legally applied only to registered land – a tiny proportion of the national territory – whereas unregistered land – almost all arable land – was constitutionally the property of the state, hence easing the process of transferring individualized rights to private property (*ibid.*).

In summary, it may be concluded, first of all, that the increased demand for land in the southern region of Ivory Coast is closely linked to the specific characteristics of this territory, namely the favourable soil and climatic conditions. As a result, pineapple plantations were established and small-holder production sites arose. The plantation owners, as well as the government, stimulated the flow of migrants to this region, as a source of cheap labour. Access to land was, at least in the beginning of the migration flow, no problem. However, as a result of the continuing migration flow and consequently the changing population of the southern region, the local use and ownership structure, as well the value of land, changed from a 'use value' to a 'market value', empowering those who were able to negotiate and set local rules and regulations for the usage and rental of land. The next sections will enter into more detail about the consequences of the subsequent commercialisation of land.

4.3.1 Mosaic land patterns

As follows from the above, the pressure on land grew dramatically over the past century, due to the demand for fertile lands for the production of cash crops, which attracted many migrants to the southern territory of Ivory Coast. This region includes also the main three areas for the production of pineapples, which are East of Comoé, Abidjan and Agboville-Tiassalé. The fertile soil conditions and excellent climate of these areas, as well as its relative proximity to the financial capital Abidjan, where a relatively efficient infrastructure exists (seaport, airport, roads and telecommunication)[80], makes these regions an attractive territory for the production of pineapples, as well as other products.

As a result, because of this high demand for land, most pineapple producers are nowadays forced to rent different plots of land at different locations, sometimes even in different regions, as sufficiently large plots of land are no longer available. As a result, producers have to move around to visit their plots. As an example, I met a small-scale

[80] Hart (1982) argues that the improvement of the transport infrastructure was probably the most important contribution made by colonialism to West Africa's economic development.

producer in Bonoua who explained that he works on a plot located east of the town of Bonoua in the morning, then takes a bus to visit one of his plots on the way to Grand Bassam. In the evening, he works on a plot close to his house.

For the French and other European planters who started producing pineapples during the colonial period, large pieces of land in one location were still available. The medium and large-scale plantations of these producers, which still exist, are often located some kilometres away from villages or towns. Nevertheless, driven by a desire for expansion, these producers also rent complementary pieces of land at other locations and in different regions. At each of these locations, a plantation headman takes care of the daily work and the supervision of employees (see also Section 4.4.4). Most of these plantations are fully equipped with a packing station and trucks to transport the pineapples to the harbour. Their access to capital (often also from shareholders) and technology thus enables these larger producers to establish fully operating production sites with all the necessary facilities at the different locations.

Nevertheless, expansion by medium-scale producers and also some large-scale producers is hampered by logistical and organizational problems related to the distribution of production areas, including labour organization at the field level, transportation of equipment for land preparation, packing facilities and organization of transport to the harbour. During an interview, one medium-scale producer stated "*I am constantly enquiring about possibilities for renting a large piece of land somewhere in the region. Wherever I go (local shops, restaurants, public offices, etc.), I let people know that I am searching for land and that I am willing to pay a good price. The only way to find land is through social contacts*".

4.3.2 Land rental agreements: people's security or meaningless?

Many landowners have reacted to the rising demand for land by increasing the rental price, as they realized that 'there is money in it' (see also Colin, 2003:15). The local market for land has consequently become a flourishing business. According to the pineapple producers, the rent of land has doubled over the past couple of years, resulting in rental fees ranging from 60,000 to 100,000 FCFA (approximately 90 to 150 EURO) per ha per year in 1999 in for example the Bonoua area.[81] According to OCAB, only 20% of pineapple producers actually own the land they cultivate.[82]

For this reason, Mamadou, a small-scale pineapple producer and land owner, prefers to rent his land to someone else instead of cultivating it himself. Mamadou's story, below,

[81] The main pineapple production centre in Ivory Coast.

[82] Source: Interview with OCAB, January 1999.

shows that he has witnessed a tremendous increase in demand for land during the past years and has realized that he can ask a tidy sum for his land.

Mamadou is 56 years old and has two wives and eight children. He has lived close to the town of Bonoua for all his life. He inherited 14 ha of land from his father in this region, of which 4 ha is rented to his own son, who produces palm oil, and 6 ha is rented to pineapple producers who are not relatives. Mamadou himself cultivates 3 ha of land with pineapples and 1 ha with maize. He states that he has never had a problem with his land tenants. Of the 6 ha land he rents to pineapple producers, for the past three years he has rented 3½ ha to the same European producer and for the past two years 2½ ha to an Ivorian.

Since 1982, Mamadou cultivates pineapples on a small-scale basis. According to him, the 1980s were very good years and he made a good profit during this period. He has noticed that the demand for land has increased since the end of the 1980s, due to the fact that more people have become involved in pineapple production, while others have expanded their plantations. As a result, the price of land has increased. He realized that renting a piece of land was as profitable as cultivating pineapples himself, which is why he prefers to rent most of his land to others. Europeans pay particularly well for land; indeed the land that he presently rents to the Ivorian, he would like to rent to a European but he can not easily do this since this man is from the same community as he is and he is therefore afraid of causing conflict.

Mamadou often visits the land he rents out to see if everything is fine. The European producer who is cultivating his land has asked him to take partial care of the plantation. This producer cultivates pineapples on a number of other pieces of land and has little time to visit all his plots. He knows, however, that Mamadou has been a pineapple producer himself and has therefore asked him to conduct some activities in the field. The producer visits the plantation on a regular basis to check whether all the activities are conducted well. During these visits, the producer discusses the activities with Mamadou and provides further instructions. Some activities, however, such as applying fertilizers to the plants and spraying them with ethylene for flower induction and fruit ripening are conducted by one of the producer's assistants, since these activities require careful attention and strongly influence the quality of the fruit.

Mamadou employs labourers (men and women) and makes sure that the work is done properly. He acknowledges that when the European producer is satisfied with the work he may decide to continue this way of working in the following season. He has therefore carefully selected labourers of whom he knows that they do their work properly. Most of these labourers are relatives of Mamadou. The European producer provides inputs for cultivation, wages for the labourers, and a fee for Mamadou's supervisory work. Mamadou pays the labourers after each completed task (such as preparing the land for planting the shoots, applying fertilizer, spraying chemicals, and weeding). Once the pineapples are ready for harvest, the European producer or his assistant is present to

monitor the harvesting practices and to make sure that the pineapples are handled properly.

Land is, in most cases, rented for a certain period of time. Different types of contracts exist, both verbal and written, and both short and long term. Most contracts are, however, verbal agreements and are relatively short-term. A land lease agreement is, in most cases, made with the eldest man in a family, who holds a special status, although other members of the extended family[83] may also be involved. In most cases, a witness is present when the rental deal is made. Colin (2003:18) acknowledges this arrangement, as his survey shows that in the village of Djimini-Koffikro, 93% of the '*abougnon*' rental agreements (see Section 4.3.3) for land for the pineapple production are made in the presence of a witness, albeit without a written contract. Most of the time the landowner does not intervene in the actual production process; instead, it is the producer who takes care of the work in the field, buys the inputs and relies on his knowledge for cultivation. However, some landowners provide certain inputs, inform the producer about the characteristics of the land, and assist him with the production process (as in Mamadou's case).

Only a few small-scale producers have written agreements that outline the rental arrangements for the land, although such tenant agreements are often not legalized due to the high costs involved. There are also producers who prepare their own written agreement, signed by both the landlord and the tenant. One producer (of European origin) indicated that his landlord did not provide an agreement and that he therefore prepared his own, which was signed by both parties to avoid problems with for example the agreed rental period and the rental price.

The pineapple production cycle is 12 to 15 months. Many small-scale producers rent their land for three production cycles, or 5 to 6 years (including a period to grow shoots). However, a number of small-scale producers rent land only for one production cycle. Landowners may have different reasons for renting their land out for only one production cycle; one reason mentioned by certain landowners is that they prefer to keep the period short, so that they have the option to rent the land to someone else after each production cycle, and raise the price of the rent. These landowners argue that it is not easy to demand a higher price for the land from the same tenant. However, many tenants mentioned that they would accept an increase in rent, since they would have

[83] In most societies in Africa, the nuclear family (two adults living together in a household with their own or adopted children) is part of a larger kinship network, namely the extended family. According to a definition given by Giddens (1997), we may speak of an extended family when close relatives other than a married couple and children live either in the same household or in a close and continuous relationship with one another. An extended family may include grandparents, brothers and their wives, sisters and their husbands, aunts and nephews.

problems finding an alternative plot. The tenants also pointed out that once they are used to a certain piece of land (structure, size, location, etc.) they wish to continue cultivating the same plot.

In contrast, most medium and large-scale non-African producers, rent land for a period of 5 to 10 years, but in many cases for a much longer period. When renting a piece of land for this period of time, it is possible to accommodate three or more pineapple cycles, while allowing for a fallow period. The rent is normally paid in stages, but in a few cases all at once. Most of these producers have written agreements with their landowners and have legalized these agreements. To legalize a tenant agreement at the Palace of Justice, an approval is needed from the village mayor and district representative, as well as the Agricultural Department of the Ministry of Agriculture in the region.[84] This is a time consuming and costly process and therefore most small-scale producers do not bother, but instead rely on a verbal agreement. For many local groups in Ivory Coast, a verbal agreement has the same legal meaning as a written agreement for Europeans. Nevertheless, some people have reported that their landlord did not honour their agreement and rented the land to someone else before the end of the rental period.

As mentioned earlier, most producers rent different pieces of land at different locations or regions. This implies that these producers also have to deal with different landowners. These landowners may have their own views about the agreement and demand different prices for their land. This makes it often impossible and highly complicated for a producer to formally legalize all the land agreements (in terms of costs and time spent to arrange for all the agreements). For this reason, some medium-scale producers mentioned that they have not formally legalized their written agreements. To prevent problems with the landowner, most producers indicate that it is therefore important to have good relationships with the landowner.

It has been reported that problems about land issues may lead to violent situations, as demonstrated by the story of Ann, an American woman. When I visited Ann's pineapple plantation, and after I had asked her about the reason why she is cultivating pineapples in Ivory Coast, problems related to land rental emerged. She told me the following story:

> Three years ago, I came to Ivory Coast to work at my brother John's plantation, after his death. I have no agricultural background. I was a nurse in the United States until John died.

[84] Source: Interview with the Agricultural Department of the region of Bonoua and several producers, 1999.

In 1984, John came to Ivory Coast to start a pineapple plantation. In the United States he had noticed that Ivory Coast is a good country for the cultivation of export commodities and that the Ivorian pineapples fetched high prices on European markets. He decided to get involved in the pineapple business and quit his job at a farm in the Southern part of the US.

John managed to rent a large piece of land in the region of Agboville-Tiassalé and expanded his plantation over the years. At the beginning of the 1990s John started to have serious problems with his landlord concerning the tenant agreement. The agreement was legalized and the size of the land and the roads of the plantation were indicated in the agreement. However, the landlord did not respect the agreement and re-rented some small pieces of John's land. Apart from this, the landlord and his employees used the roads of John's plantation. John started to complain and threatened to go to court in case the landlord did not give back the land and stopped using the roads.

The landlord did not react to John's request and continued to rent the pieces of land to someone else and to use John's roads. John subsequently went to court, and the tension between John and the landlord rose. One day, someone shot John. It is believed that the landlord had hired this person to kill John, but this has never been proven. Ann came over from the United States to sort out the plantation. While in Ivory Coast, she decided to take over management of the plantation, since she had always enjoyed visiting John in Africa. She therefore stayed in Ivory Coast and now wants to start cultivating other products, such as flowers. Ann still faces problems with the landlord and does not trust him at all. She is planning to move her plantation to another location but this is not so easy since it is hard to find a large piece of land in the region.

Although Ann's story is one with a particularly dramatic edge, it is obvious that problems with land rental agreements are quite common. Often, social and cultural factors play an important role. An example of such is the below-presented case of Saleh:

Saleh, a medium-scale pineapple producer from the Middle East, experienced that someone else had taken a small piece of his land to cultivate. When Saleh reported this to his landlord the landlord promised to do something about it. However, nothing changed. He believes that the landlord cannot do anything because the person cultivating this specific piece of land might be a family member, a friend or someone important from the village. Saleh argues that it might even be that the landlord actually allowed the person to cultivate the land. In this case he can not do much to change the situation. The costs of a court case are very high and, in his view, are not worth the small piece of land. Besides this, Saleh knows that it is hard to find another piece of land in the region and therefore tolerates the other person cultivating his land.

The two cases show quite different individual approaches to dealing with land problems. John's strategy of threatening the landowner appears to have had tragic

consequences, while Saleh's strategy of tolerating a small abuse of the rental agreement appears simply to have led to a degree of discomfort and limited economic loss.

In contrast, some landowners mentioned problems with their tenants. Some reported that tenants are not paying (part of) their rent and abandoning the land straight after the harvest. In some cases, the landlords were able to trace their tenants and to force them to pay the remaining rent, often with interference from the local administrator. Before the rush of migrants to the pineapple region in the 1970s, landlords dealt primarily with tenants from their own village or area. However, nowadays, due to the huge flow of migrants to the pineapple region, landlords often do not know their tenants very well. As a result, they tend to insist on payment of the total rent in advance. Also, landlords prefer to deal only with tenants that are known and recommended by relatives, friends or village members. However, on the other hand, some of the interviewed landowners argued that intra-family tensions over land issues are fairly common. The same is also confirmed by the work of Colin (2003). Such disputes are often related to the boundaries of a piece of land, to the death of a family member and to subsequent inheritance issues. Sometimes, such conflicts last for many years.

4.3.3 Share-cropping relations as land rental agreements

Some landowners' choose to share the profits from their pineapple businesses while not actually executing the field work; in such case, arrangements are made through a share-cropping agreement, whereby rent for the land is paid from an agreed share of the pineapple revenues, rather than upfront. Because the production cycle of the pineapple is relatively short, and because the market value of the fruit is quite profitable, landowners view the pineapple as a valued asset. Colin (2003) describes three types of share-cropping relations between landowners and producers in the village Djimini-Koffikro, as existed at the end of the 1980s.[85]

The first type of arrangement concerns a relationship whereby the landowner (or a tenant renting a piece of land for a long term) provides land and capital in the form of inputs for the cultivation (vegetative reproduction material, fertilizers, etc.) and instructs the producer regarding the specific cultivation practices that should be applied. The producer, or in this case better indicated as labourer, conducts the actual work in the field. Colin (2003) describes this as the so-called *'abougnon-manoeuvre'* relation.[86] '*Abougnon*' is a word used by the Akan people and means 'sharing by

[85] Colin (2003) indicates that these type of share-cropping relations first emerged in this village with the production of manioc at the end of the 1970s.

[86] This relationship can also be seen as a 'labourer-patron' relation.

half'.[87] In most such cases, the landowner and the labourer agree upon an expected price per kilo of fruit before cultivation begins. The landowner takes care of the harvested fruit and transports the produce to an export organization or a trader concerned with the export and marketing of the pineapples. The landowner decides which export organization or trader the pineapples should be sold to, thus having the decision power over product marketing. The net revenue (costs of inputs, transport, fee of the export organization, etc. are deducted from the gross revenue) of the harvest is equally divided between the producer and landowner. The producer thereby accepts the risks that the actual market value of the pineapple is lower and consequently also the revenue he receives for the provision of labour inputs.

The second landowner-producer relationship is called the '*abougnon-rente*' relation (*ibid.*). This relationship is characterised by the fact that the landowner simply rents out the land. In most such cases, land is rented for one production cycle (approximately 15 months) and three production cycles for shoots[88], resulting in a total rental period of 2 to 2½ years. The producer takes care of the inputs, has cultivation experience, and provides all labour inputs. The expected price per kilo of fruit is agreed upon before the actual cultivation. The producer is in charge of deciding whether the harvest is exported through an export organization or is sold to a trader. After the harvest, the landowner receives a rental fee equal to half the agreed value of the produce, after cost of production, transport and export has been deducted. In case the market price of the pineapples is low – possibly even lower then the production and export costs – the producer risks becoming in debt to the landowner.

The third type of arrangement refers to a situation in which the landowner pre-finances the inputs and the producer takes care of the actual work in the field and relies on his own cultivation experience and know-how. This type of relationship is also called the '*abougnon-partenariat*' relationship (*ibid.*). The arrangement can thus be compared to the *abougnon-rente* relation, apart from the fact that the landowner, in the case *abougnon-partneriat* relationship, also provides capital inputs.

The above types of share-cropping relationships have also been reported for other pineapple production areas. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the different types of arrangement, comparing differences in terms of inputs provided by landowner and producer.

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[87] It is not known when or how this word was introduced. In some occasions, a slightly alternative arrangement called the '*abousan*' share-cropping relation is used. In these '*abousan*' arrangements, the producer receives one-third of the harvest revenue and the landlord two-thirds (Colin, 2003).

[88] Shoots are the material for vegetative reproduction.

Table 4.1: Overview of input provided by the landowner and the producer in the different types of share-cropping relations.

Type of share-cropping relation	Inputs by Landowner	Inputs of Producer
abougnon-manoeuvre	Land Capital Knowledge	Labour
abougnon-partenariat	Land Capital	Labour Knowledge
abougnon-rente	Land	Labour Capital Knowledge

Source: Colin, 2003:19.

The type of share-cropping arrangement used depends on the wishes and bargaining power of both the producer and landowner respectively. The same counts for the more specific conditions of the agreement, and the actual share of revenue that goes to the landowner. For instance, in some cases it is agreed that the price of the harvest is decided at the moment of the actual sale, in other cases the two parties might have a pre-arranged agreement. Also, some producers may be caught in a complex web of contract-relations. For example, they may have a share-cropping relation related to the rental of land to a certain landlord, in whatever form agreed upon, and at the same time they may also have a contract relation with a producer for the production of pineapples through contract-farming or other type of arrangement. Such types of relationship are further described in Section 4.4.3. In the latter case, where a producer has an '*abougnon*' share-cropping relation with a landowner, and at the same time a contract-farming relation with another producer, the price of the harvest is set according to the agreement with the latter receiving producer. In most of the contract-farming cases the price of the harvest is agreed upon before the start of cultivation.

4.3.4 Ethnicity and the labelling of tenants

From the foregoing discussion it may be concluded that, as a result of the change in the agro-food sector in Ivory Coast, a whole new repertoire of land and labour relationships has arisen, ranging from outright sale, various forms of share-cropping, a variety of rental payment agreements, to different familial labour arrangements and wage labour contracts. During the field research it also became apparent that land rental can relate to questions of ethnicity. These issues emerged for the first time during a meeting with Karim from Mali. Karim explained to me that he faced difficulties in finding a piece of land for the cultivation of pineapples in Bonoua Region. After some investigation he finally managed to rent a piece of land, although on a rather steep slope. The producers that were cultivating land near the Karim's plot later told him that nobody wanted to rent this particular plot because of its bad location. Nevertheless, Karim managed to cultivate pineapples on the land. A verbal agreement was made to

rent the land for only one production cycle, and the landowner insisted that the total rent should be paid in advance. Fortunately, Karim was able to borrow money from relatives and friends and could therefore pay the 15 months rent in advance; he argued that his landlord probably didn't trust him to pay in stages because of his ethnic background.

I later heard many more tenants (especially of foreign African origin) mentioning that their landlords insisted upon being paid the total rent in advance. Many of them were not able to advance such amount of money and therefore missed out on opportunities. These tenants interpreted the demand to pay rent in advance as mistrust on the part of their landlords; according to some, the landlords prefer to deal with Ivorian or better even European tenants, since the latter pay more rent. However, the complaint that landlords prefer to deal with Ivorian tenants did not correspond with discussions I had with some landlords, who said they preferred to deal with African tenants of non-Ivorian nationality. These landlords argued that in case of problems with the rent agreement, it is easier to deal with foreign African tenants, as Ivorians are seen as their brothers. Consequently, tension within the 'family' may result from rental problems. Beside this, experience has taught that there is no specific problem with foreign African tenants in paying their rent, and many have been renting land for years without a problem. Nevertheless, as many landlords admitted, as regards European or other non-African tenants, they prefer to deal with such tenants as they generally pay a good rental price.

The above situation can be characterized as the 'labelling' of pineapple producers by local landowners. I believe that this can be seen as an indirect reaction by landowners to the globalization process: although most are not directly involved in the cultivation of pineapples, they are aware that the international pineapple business offers opportunities they can exploit due to an increased demand for land and its consequent rise in value. The examples show that, as a result, local landowners have been able to obtain an influential position in the local pineapple business and can choose with whom they prefer to deal and some even treat tenants differently according to their ethnic background.

4.4 The issue of labour

The next sections provide a closer look at labour organization on the plantations and on small-scale farms. Particular attention is given to an analysis of the local practices and activities of different producers, which arise from their individual understandings and interpretations of change in the sector, framed within the context of their local knowledge and experience.

4.4.1 The migrant labour force on the plantations

As shown earlier, people from northern Ivory Coast, as well as from neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea, were attracted to the southern part of Ivory Coast to work on plantations, due to a shortage of local labour.[89] Many of these migrants stayed behind and drawing on their experience of working on large plantations, later set up their own small-scale farms. In regard to the pineapple sector, particularly high levels of expansion have taken place over the last four decades. Development in this sector and the job opportunities it created attracted people from other regions and surrounding countries. Even today, the number of foreign-African pineapple producers is high, with the majority originating from Burkina Faso.

The flow of migrant labour can be seen as a form of 'de-territorialization' of labour from Burkina Faso and other surrounding African countries to the 'territory-specific location' of the fertile southern region of Ivory Coast, where the plantation economy has undergone a huge expansion and development, and consequently created many job opportunities. Wells (1996) describes a similar process in which Mexican immigrants travelled to the fertile territory of the central coastal region of California to work as labourers on large-scale strawberry plantations. She shows that these Mexican immigrants worked as labourers for some years, before starting their own strawberry farms. Most of these Mexican strawberry producers remained closely connected to their previous employer as they established share-cropping relations, in this manner moving from wage labour to contract labour.

Most labourers who work on medium and large-scale plantations in Ivory Coast live in so-called '*campements*'. A *campement* can be defined as a small village, in most cases on the plantation, where there may be several *campements*. Where families travel to join their husband and father (very few women migrate alone), they often live in the *campement*. Family members may also find work on the plantation or at other plantations in the area. In many of the *campements* the labourers have established their own local community, including a hierarchic community system with a community chief and village rules. Even the type of houses and huts (small in size) are often similar to the houses in their home country or region, because many labourers build

[89] Hill (1986), Hart (1982) and Hopkins (1973) all confirm that labour migration has been a very common phenomena for a long time in West Africa.

their own house or hut.[90] The infrastructure in these villages is often very poor, with most *campements* lacking facilities such as schools, medical centres or water wells. A few large *campements* do, however, offer these facilities.

Bouboucar came from Burkina Faso to work on a plantation in the Southern region of Ivory Coast where he lives in a *campement* together with his family who travelled to join him. Eventually they all found a place to live outside the *campement* and Bouboucar started to rent land for the cultivation of pineapples and other crops. Bouboucar told me part of his life story:

> I met Bouboucar on one of my visits to the pineapple area around the town of Agboville; he was working on his land when I passed by. That's how we started to talk. Bouboucar told me that he was born in Burkina Faso and that he is 36 years old. He had lived in Agboville for 11 years and likes the area since it is very fertile and green being a very different landscape from the area he comes from. He described his life in the northern region of Burkina Faso where it is very dry and hot and where it is hard to find a job. Most of the time he had hung around the marketplace in his village, sometimes gaining work from traders. Like many of the men living in his village, Bouboucar came to Ivory Coast to find work. He explained that the country is known for its wealth and job opportunities and many people from Burkina Faso and other West African countries refer to Abidjan as the 'Paris of Africa'.
>
> When he first travelled to Ivory Coast, he left his wife and 3 children behind, which was difficult but he was desperate to find a job. As he had hoped, he immediately found work on a banana plantation close to Agboville. He sent part of his wages to his family and mother in Burkina Faso. He was happy to find a job and lived in a *campement* on the plantation. During the past years, he has been working on different plantations (of banana and pineapples) and always lived in *campements*. At these *campements* he met many fellows from Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea. He explained that they talked about their lives at home when they were cooking and sitting together in the evenings.
>
> At a certain point, Bouboucar decided that his family should join him. On a return trip to Burkina Faso in 1994 he brought his wife and children with him to the plantation. They were happy to come to Ivory Coast and found work on the same plantation. During this

[90] In her overview of Anthropology and Africa, Moore (1994:51) points out that some anthropologists during the colonial era explained that migrants who searched for job opportunities elsewhere (often in towns) would "leave behind the 'rural arena of social life'"... "the previously continuous experience of a native cultural world was reduced to being a memory, a form of knowledge the migrants carried in their heads", while others such as Gluckman and Mitchell would reject this rather negative, culture-loss perspective and argued that the new situations in which African migrants arrived would generate new social relationships, new knowledge and skills, forged new cultural ideas in addition to those that were already familiar to them and provide access to a larger world (*ibid.*, 1994:62). In this respect, the example provided here shows that migrants show a tendency to group together, protecting in this way their native cultural heritage, while benefiting at the same time from their newly-gained access to a larger world.

period, two more children were born. Bouboucar realized that it was not easy for his family to live on the *campement* as there were sometimes conflicts between people and some men were always drunk at nigh, he therefore decided to try to find a place to live outside.

In 1997, Bouboucar found work on a pineapple plantation close to the town of Agboville. He managed to rent a very small house in the town. His wife was delighted to move from the *campement* and to have her own place to live. She started to grow manioc and vegetables around the house. She sells part of the manioc in the local market. She also keeps some chickens for home-consumption. Bouboucar is happy in Agboville because he and his family have work and are able to send money to his mother in Burkina Faso. They mainly socialize with other Burkinabes and do not have much contact with Ivorians. Bouboucar has the impression that some Ivorians are not too happy with the fact that quite a number of people from Burkina Faso are living in this region. He believes that the locals see them as competitors on the labour market.

Since 1998, Bouboucar has rented a small piece of land from a local Ivorian. This is also the place where I met Bouboucar on a well maintained piece of land. Originally, he had difficulty in finding land and mentioned that this is because he is from Burkina Faso and he believes the locals here do not trust people from Burkina Faso much. However, he finally managed to rent a piece of land close to the main road to Abidjan, from someone he had known for many years. At the beginning of each year, Bouboucar gives a one-off payment for the land, as requested by his landlord. It took him and his family a lot of effort to prepare the land for planting as it had been fallow for a year. His wife and children assist him in the field since he cannot afford to pay for labour.

Bouboucar still works at other plantations to earn extra income. Through this, he also obtains knowledge about pineapple cultivation and copies certain practices in his own field. For instance, he explained that he dries the shoots of the plants up-side-down in the field instead of laying them on the ground. He saw this practice at one of the large-scale plantations and decided to use the same technique as a trial for a season. He normally goes to the plantations to ask for work each day, when it fits his schedule. He argues that there is quite a demand for labour and he does not worry about the future. He hopes to be able to rent another piece of land in the near future to cultivate more pineapples but he would like to wait until he has sold his present produce.

The story of Bouboucar demonstrates the difficulties related to the integration of foreign African labourers who have come to Ivory Coast in their search for work. Despite the long history of African labour migrantion in Ivory Coast, the community remains rather disjointed. This is demonstrated by the fact that during the '*coupe d'état*' at the end of 1999; the civil uprising was tribally oriented, since it derived from the question of whether one of the parents of a president candidate can be born outside Ivory Coast (the case in question concerned the presidential candidate, Ouatarra, because his mother was born in Burkina Faso). Many of the labour migrants, even

those born in Ivory Coast, fled back to their country of origin in anticipation of terror against them.

The situation in Ivory Coast is still quite tense. During a visit to Ivory Coast in 2003, producers reported that local inhabitants warned pineapple producers from Burkina Faso not to cultivate their land otherwise their produce would be destroyed; in some cases red flags were placed in the pineapple fields of these producers as a warning sign. Similar stories were heard from Ivorian producers of different ethnic and religious background to those of the native inhabitants of pineapple production regions. Although many of these producers had been living in the local villages for years, the tension between the different ethnic groups was still noticeable.

4.4.2 Labour input: peak and off-peak periods

Most producers indicate that pineapple cultivation is in general not very labour intensive. However, they do mention that certain activities, such as land preparation, planting, fertilizing, weeding, applying hormones, reducing the crone of the fruit, harvesting and packing, require a lot of attention and accurate handling. These activities take place at particular stages of cultivation, which are crucial, as they influence the quality of the fruit, including their size, colour and maturity. Producers therefore have to plan and organize their work well in order to obtain fruit of good quality.

Small-scale producers organize their cultivation activities in such a way that their fruit can be exported to Europe during the peak export season (November-April), when market demand is high. In most cases, small-scale producers export their total harvest in one shipment; they therefore need to organize the cultivation cycle in such a way that they can harvest mature pineapples during the peak season. As will be shown in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1, most of the export organizations assist their members to plan their production and harvesting activities, since these are closely related to the organization of sea transport (cargo space). In cases where producers sell (part of) their harvest to local traders or to medium or large-scale producers, the cultivation plan is often prepared jointly with these actors who consequently act as intermediaries between the producer and the market and arrange all logistical handling from the farm-gate level.

It is interesting to note that, traditionally, November and December were the main pineapple export months because of a high demand for pineapples around Christmas in Europe. However, pineapple consumption has increased in Europe, as such tropical fruit become more and more common to consumers. Consequently, demand is increasingly not seasonally limited (Frémont, 2002). Nevertheless, most small-scale

producers still prefer to export during these two months, even when their export organization advises them also to export their harvest at other times of year, preferably in more than one shipment; although the market price for pineapples in Europe is not necessarily higher during the 'peak season' they are reluctant to change their production schemes and harvest at other times of the year. As one producer explained after I asked him what the harvest period is "*the pineapple harvest period is just before Christmas*". As a consequence, almost all small-scale producers harvest their pineapples during the same period; the activities in the field therefore correspond with each other. The demand for labour is therefore particularly high during this period.

The practice of exporting most or all of the harvest over six months of the year is largely customary and the consequence of insufficient awareness of market developments. In addition, from talking to small-scale producers it became clear that decision-making about productive activities is shaped by their relationships with fellow farmers; what your fellow farmer is doing – his practices – are important determinants of what seems to be the 'right' action. This highlights the way 'group behaviour' arises, in which realities and changes are determined by what others are doing and saying. Due to this group behaviour, changes in actions and practices only slowly takes place since any such change requires a change in the reality of the group as a whole.

In contrast to the small-scale producers, medium and large-scale producers export throughout the year, although with relatively larger volumes during the peak export season. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, such producers organize their production practices according to a pre-set export plan, which indicates how many pineapples will be exported to Europe in particular weeks of the year; this is prepared in close cooperation with both the importer and the export organization through which they export. Their labour planning consequently shows a much steadier stream throughout the year, although their production cycle may involve certain seasonal peaks.

4.4.3 Labour relations: trust versus contractual relations

Most small-scale producers depend primarily on the manual labour of family members due to a lack of financial means to employ labourers. Also, because of limited financial resources, they use simple techniques. Many small-scale producers mentioned that they assist each other with certain activities in order to share the costs of these activities. As indicated earlier, almost all small-scale producers follow more or less the same production cycle. This provides them with the opportunity to collaborate together, to exchange labour and to pool resources. For example, they may exchange labourers or collectively hire someone to execute certain activities. For instance Adou, a small-scale producer, explained that he always assists his cousin, who is also his neighbour, with

the preparation of his field for planting; both are dependent on family labour. Another producer Ibé told me that he and four other small-scale producers used to jointly hire a few boys to apply fertilizer to their plants. Ibé explained that "*when organizing activities together, the cost of hiring boys to conduct a specific task is much lower then when each of us has to hire these labourers separately since we are able to negotiate a good deal*". Also, when chemicals need to be sprayed on the plants, producers whose pineapple fields are closely located to each other tend to jointly hire someone for this task.

A number of medium and large-scale producers and traders contract small-scale producers to cultivate pineapples in order to complement their own production. These small-scale producers cultivate the pineapples on their own (rented or owned) land. Some of these contractual arrangements are simply verbal agreements, but most medium and large-scale producers use written contracts, signed by both parties. Under the terms of such contracts, the small-scale producers agree to harvest a certain volume of fruit on a specific date for a certain price. The date of harvest is critical, since it is connected to the export plan (boat schedule) of the medium or large-scale producer. In many cases, the small-scale producers are also subjected to specific requirements concerning activities such as planting, applying fertilizers, reducing the crone, applying ethylene, and harvesting.[91] The medium or large-scale producer often provides inputs, the costs of which are deducted from the revenue. The following contract-farming relations have been reported by producers during interviews:

1. The medium and large-scale producer or trader provides the inputs and agricultural extension agents of these producers provide advice to the small-scale producer on cultivation, harvesting and post-harvest practices. In quite a number of cases, the medium and large-scale producer actually conducts certain crucial cultivation practices (particularly the most sensitive practices) in the field of the small-scale producer. The small-scale producer mostly receives a pre-agreed price, from which input costs are deducted.

2. The medium or large-scale producer or trader provides the inputs, but the small-scale producer takes care of all work in the field, relying on his own cultivation experience and know-how. The medium and large-scale producers or traders may

[91] Similar contractual arrangements have also been reported by Daddieh (1994) who describes contract-farming relations between smallholders and large companies in the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast. He explains that the contract allows large companies to reclaim the land of the smallholders in the event of neglect or death until all outstanding loans are paid off by the smallholder or his/her heirs. While this arrangement is understandable in the light of the long-term investments related to palm oil plantations, such processes of reclaiming land have not been reported for the pineapple sector, which has a much shorter term production cycle, although the need to pay back outstanding loans in cases of neglect has been reported.

sometimes visit the producer to inspect his fields, but otherwise rely on the experience and know-how of the small-scale producer. The medium and large-scale producers often collect the harvest at the farm-gate; costs of input are deducted from the, in most cases, pre-agreed price.

3. The small-scale producer cultivates the pineapples, takes care of the inputs and relies on his experience for cultivation. Harvested pineapples are sold to the medium or large-scale producer or trader. Before the start of production, the medium or large-scale producer or trader, and the contract producer, agree upon the volume and harvest date. In these cases, medium and large-scale producers are not involved in any aspects of the actual production and harvest activity. They, however, do sometimes visit the producer to check the progress in the field.

It should be noted that these forms of contract-farming relations have emerged from a demand for products (as opposed to land, in the case of share-cropping) and accordingly corresponds with the definition of contract-farming of Little and Watts (1994:9), namely "the coordinated relationship between growers and buyers-processors that directly shape production decisions through contractually specifying market obligations (by volume, quality, and, at times, advances price determination)". Most contract-farming relations reported during this field survey relate to the first and second type of relationship, although to a lesser extent the third appears.

Masakure and Henson (2005), Singh (2002), Raynolds (1997) and Little and Watts (1994) each pay close attention to contract-farming as a form of labour organization (agreements on specific market obligations) often between small-scale producers and large private companies and producers. Such contract-farming relations are often initiated because large private companies have insufficient land or labour for the cultivation of products. However, it should be noted that most literature on contract-farming relations does not take into consideration the contractual arrangements that exist between landowners and producers within the light of rent, and payment of rent, for land. As already discussed in Section 4.3.3, a small-scale producer may enter into both contract-farming agreements with larger scale producers and share-cropping agreements with landowners. Consequently, a wide variety of contract arrangements exist.

Figure 4.1 indicates the different possible contract relations between smallholders and landowners, larger producers or traders, including the various arrangements with regard to the supply of inputs by the different actors, which are basically land, capital, knowledge and labour. Depending on the type of arrangement, each actor takes a specific share. Furthermore, the relationships are determined by, on the one hand, the

exchange of produce (pineapples), between the small- and larger-scale producer or trader, and, on the other hand, a sharing of revenue between the small-scale producer and the landlord.

Figure 4.1 shows that, in the case of an '*abougnon-rente*' type of share-cropping relation with a landlord, for example, inputs put in by the contracting larger producer or trader may be knowledge and/or capital (in the form of fertilizers, chemicals, etc.). The small-scale producer, in such case, would supply labour and, depending on the arrangement with the larger producer or trader, part of the necessary capital and knowledge. In case of, for example, an '*abougnon-manoeuvre*' type of relationship with a landlord, the landlord may supply, besides land, also capital and knowledge. In such cases, the small-scale producer may still have a contract-farming relationship that is purely based on the supply of produce. In the latter case, it is interesting to note that the 'buying' actor, the larger producer or trader, is not involved in production, and often may have no insight into the relationship between the supplying producer and his/her landlord, even though the latter may have a strong influence over production.

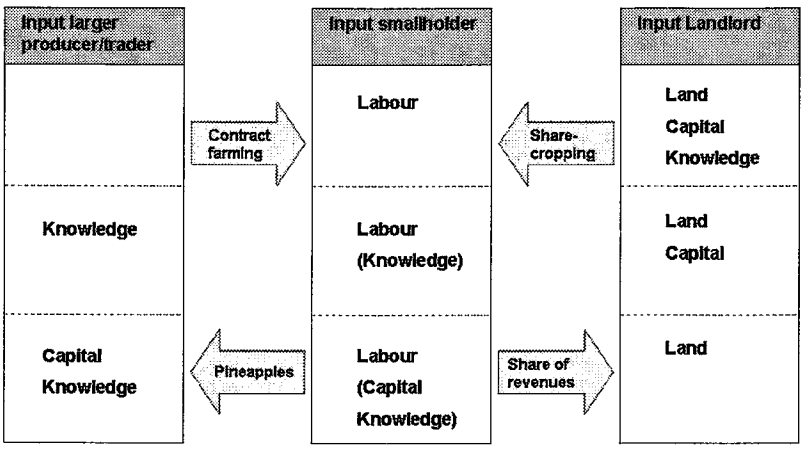

Figure 4.1: Possible contract relations between smallholders and larger producers or landowners.

Apart from these contract-farming agreements, some medium and large-scale producers and traders also buy pineapples from small-scale producers on a more ad hoc basis, whenever they are in need of extra pineapples to complement their reserved cargo or an unforeseen increase in demand from European buyers. In most such cases, these medium and large-scale producers and traders visit producers they know and with

whom they have had good prior experience. They generally offer a slightly higher price and pay directly.

A number of small-scale producers specifically target these traders and larger producers with this objective in mind. Also, producers may sometimes be persuaded to sell part of a pineapple consignment that was actually meant for a pre-contracted buyer, thereby taking the risk of loosing such contract relations. I once met a small-scale producer who explained that he had lost a contract after selling his pineapples to a trader who offered a little more than the buyer with whom he had made the contractual deal. He explained that he had to take this decision because he needed cash after the death of his son. As a result, however, he ended up having serious problems with his buyer, who not only claim back the money for the supply of inputs, but also stopped collaborating with him. The small-scale producer argued that the buyer probably did not believe his story and therefore showed no consideration for his case.

4.4.4 Labour organization and management at the plantation

In contrast with small-scale producers, medium and large-scale producers all employ labourers, often several hundred. Most of these labourers work as full-time labourers, although some are employed only for certain activities or during specific periods (e.g. the export peak season). Most of the labourers are African migrants and are well trained.

As mentioned earlier, few women head medium-scale plantations. These women manage the plantation on behalf of their family, or an external owner. In such cases, they are responsible for all aspects of the plantation, including the marketing of the fruit. In most cases, however, the heads of medium and large-scale plantations are foreign non-African male migrants. Most of these plantations were established during the colonial period and generally only focus on pineapples. However, at the time of this study, some of the plantations were introducing new products in order to diversify production and therefore spread risk. An example of such is the below-presented case of the medium-scale producer Philippe.

> Until 1999, Philippe was only involved in pineapple production. He first wanted to establish a well-organized plantation before initiating any other activities. He is still trying to expand his pineapple production area and to rent more land. However, in 1999, he rented 200 ha of land in the northern region of Ivory Coast for the cultivation of mangoes. This was due to continuing low prices for pineapples on European markets; Philippe therefore felt the need to diversify production. He even plans to rent some

pieces of land in Ghana in order to spread his risk, within the context of political instability in Ivory Coast.[92]

Several European import companies established their own plantations, often managed by one of their employees, although sometimes a dedicated manager is employed. Some European import companies also hold shares in medium or large-scale plantations. The medium or large-scale producer is, in these cases, responsible for pineapple production, while the final decision is up to the importer. Most of these import companies are considerably involved in the management of the plantation, including its activities, development and investment planning and visit 'their' plantation on a regular basis.

To manage labourers and production activities, medium and large-scale producers generally apply a hierarchical organizational structure, such as presented in Figure 4.2. Within this structure, the medium or large-scale producer is the head of the plantation. This producer may either be the actual owner of the plantation, or a manager who takes care of productive activities, for example on behalf of an import company established abroad. Medium and large-scale producers often have an office in Abidjan which deals with export issues; some may live in Abidjan, while others live at the plantation.

The head of the plantation generally has a number of personal assistants, often of European origin; in most cases these assistants are responsible for the organization of productive activities at the plantation. The number of personal assistants depends on whether the production area is split between different regions. Where pineapples are cultivated in different areas, these locations operate as individual plantations with their own facilities, such as a packing station, a field office and trucks to transport the harvest to the port.

Field supervisors assist personal assistants by supervising the work of labourers in the field. Depending on the size of the plantation, field supervisors are often assigned to a particular piece of land on the plantation, and are responsible for the execution of work on this land. The level of responsibility of the field supervisor varies per plantation: sometimes they prepare the cultivation plan and even the export plan, at other times they are only involved in work supervision. Most field supervisors are of African nationality. The work in the packing stations, as well as transportation, is often also managed by dedicated supervisors.

[92] Philippe mentioned this before the *coupe d'état* took place in December 1999 and apparently had good foresight.

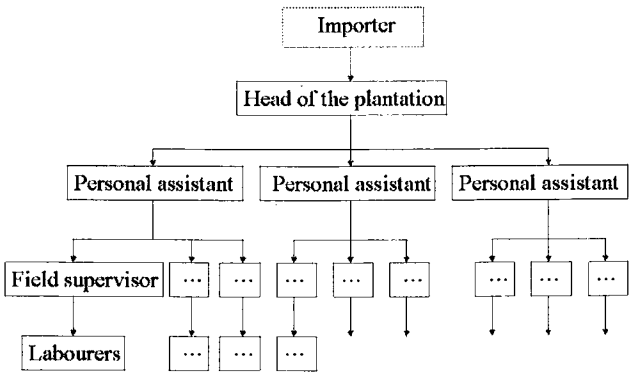

Figure 4.2: Schematic representation of a typical organizational structure for medium and large-scale plantations.

As mentioned earlier, a certain number of labourers work on each plantation on a daily basis. These men and women execute, in most cases, the same activity every day. A large-scale producer mentioned "*when my labourers execute the same activity day in and day out, they become experienced and specialized in that particular activity. This means that the field supervisor does not need to explain the same actions all the time. Furthermore, the group works together and this improves the team spirit of the group*". Especially for activities such as selecting shoots, planting, applying fertilizers and chemicals, reducing the crone of the fruit, harvesting, packing, and controlling the quality of the fruit, good attention and careful handling by the labourers is required.

Women are primarily involved in lighter and delicate tasks such as weeding, reducing the crone of the fruit, cleaning the shoots, selecting and washing the pineapples in the packing station. A number of medium and large-scale producers explained that for sensitive practices such as the removal of the smallest leaves in the centre of the crone to reduce its growth (which is done 45 days after the appearance of the flowers[93]), they prefer to work with women. Reduction of the crone is a very time-consuming activity as it is done manually with a pair of tweezers. At the time of crone reduction, the longest leaves of the crone are around 8-12 cm long, the length of a hand width. According to OCAB, this size of crone is appreciated in the European markets. It should be noted, though, that not every producer reduces the crone because it is a very labour intensive job and many of the small-scale producers are not even aware that reduction of the crone is preferred by European consumers.

[93] Eight to nine months after planting, ethylene is applied to stimulate the flower induction; about 45 days later the flowers will appear.

This preference for female labour for certain tasks is also reported by Barrientos et al. (1999) who provide an extensive overview of the heterogeneity of the labour force (in terms of seasonal labourers, male and female workers, diverse labour activities, labour migration, etc.) in the Chilean fruit export sector. They show that female labourers are essential for the production of fruit for export, because of low labour costs, flexible seasonal employment, and the 'feminine skills' (concentration and precise execution of sensitive activities) of women. A similar aspect is found in the floriculture sector in East Africa, where women are employed to conduct the most sensitive production activities, namely the harvest of the flowers. Their 'feminine sensibility' for the 'right' harvesting time is recognized.

Labour contracts[94] hardly exist, and most agreements with labourers are verbally made. Also, fringe benefits hardly exist. Even field supervisors can work without a written contract. Only the personal assistants of the head of the plantation have, in most cases, a signed contract and may profit from fringe benefits. In most cases, labourers and field supervisors are paid at the end of each week; most plantations work six days a week with Sunday as a day of rest.

The case presented below provides a typical example of the organization of work and labour force at a large-scale pineapple plantation in Ivory Coast.

> Mr. Pirot is a Frenchman who established a pineapple plantation in the region of Azaguié in the early 1960s. His plantation has grown from a small-scale plantation to a huge plantation that provides labour to a large number of families. Nowadays, Pirot has multiple plantations in the regions of Azaguié, Agboville, Grand-Bassam and San Pedro, cultivating different commodities such as palm oil, coffee, cocoa, rubber, banana, pineapple and pineapple-flowers. Since Mr. Pirot himself is now retired and lives in France, another Frenchman has taken over day-to-day management of the plantations. This Frenchman mainly works at the office in Abidjan co-ordinating export activities. He regularly informs Mr. Pirot about activities at the plantation by phone. However, sometimes Mr. Pirot visits the plantation in Ivory Coast.
>
> In 1999, the plantation cultivated around 100 ha of pineapples. The pineapple plantations, situated at two different locations, are managed by two personal assistants. These two assistants, of Belgian and French nationalities respectively, live at the plantations with their families and a number of field supervisors support them and manage field work and report to the assistants. The two assistants regularly drive around to check field activities and to solve problems.
>
> The plantation uses modern equipment and technologies. The head of the plantation explains that he is always searching for innovations in order to further develop the

[94] Contracts specifying the labour conditions, wage, fringe benefits, etc.

plantation. For example, he has imported vegetative material from other pineapple varieties as an experiment to test how these varieties grow in the local climate. The head of the plantation regularly travels to Europe to visit trade fairs where new technologies are demonstrated, and travels to Central America to visit pineapple plantations. He argues that the plantations in Central America are more advanced and that he can learn from their experiences. Through their importer in Belgium, he got into contact with plantation owners in Costa Rica and the Dominique Republic who invited him to visit. In case of serious problems that plantation staff cannot solve, experts from Europe (mainly from CIRAD[95], a French agricultural research institute) are flown over to assist.

In total, around 1,100 labourers, mainly from Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea, work at the two pineapple plantations. Most of the labourers work on a fulltime basis and conduct specialized practices at the plantation. There are teams for fertilization, weeding, harvesting, packing, etc., trained for such specific activities. The teams move around the plantation to work at the different plots, which are at different stages of the cultivation cycle. Most of the labourers live, often together with their families, in *campements* that are situated close to the plantation. The field labourers have no labour contracts, do not receive fringe benefits, and are paid on a weekly basis. During certain peak periods, seasonal labourers are employed.

Medium and large-scale producers are often in need of extra labour and recruit labourers for a short period (seasonal labour). However, during the peak export season, a serious labour shortage may arise because most plantations work 24 hours a day to harvest and pack the fruit for export. As a consequence, wages rise, attracting people from other regions and even other countries to offer their labour services. The average daily wage for work in the pineapple sector lies between 800-900 FCFA (equivalent to 1.2-1.4 Euro in 1999), depending on the activity, and may rise to as high as 1500-2000 FCFA (equivalent to 2.2-3 Euro in 1999) in the peak-season.[96] In general, wages in the pineapple sector are higher then wages in other agricultural sectors because producers want labourers who can perform well and can work on their plantations for a longer period of time. Because of the relatively good wages, labourers often prefer to work in the pineapple sector.

When you drive through the pineapple regions during the peak season for exports, you will see many men and women walking or cycling to the plantations, looking for work. Some of these people may have a job or a small-scale plantation of their own, but nevertheless search for extra work for a few days or weeks to earn extra income. Others are not able to find regular work and try to benefit from the labour demand during this

[95] Centre de Coopération Internationale et Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement.

[96] In comparison, the daily wage in the coffee and cocoa sectors, the two main export commodities of Ivory Coast, is around 600-800 FCFA (or 0.9-1.2 Euro in 1999) (Sources: Ministere de l'Agriculture et des Ressources Animales, 1999; and interviews with several producers, 1999).

peak season. Still others arrive from different regions and countries to search for work during the peak season and leave after the peak season.

In the early morning, labourers seeking piece of work check with field supervisors or their personal assistants whether there is a need for labour that day. Some employers prefer to work with people they already know and from whom they appreciate particular skills. This was the case with Biba, as shown below:

> During the peak season for exports and at other peak periods in the pineapple cultivation cycle, Biba, a 28 year old Ivorian woman, works at the packing station of a medium-scale producer, in Bonoua Region. She knows the man who supervises the work in the packing station well, and he asks her to work for him whenever he needs an extra hand. She has been working at this packing station for five years now and knows how to control fruit quality and how to select the fruit of a particular calibre and appropriate stage of maturity. When she is not working at the plantation, she helps her father in his shop in Bonoua Town, and takes care of her three children. Biba says that she uses the money she earns at the packing station to pay school fees and buy clothes for her children, and to support her husband who has just opened his own hardware shop.

4.5 Different insights – different practices

As discussed earlier, some export organizations and some sub-contracting medium and large-scale producers and traders support small-scale producers in their production and harvesting practices. The specific support provided differs per organization, producer or trader, and varies from discussing general production activities, to actually conducting activities in the field of the small-scale producer. The support is meant to ensure that the right techniques and inputs are applied in order to obtain high quality pineapples. In cases where medium or large-scale producers buy the harvest of smaller producers to complement their own harvest, these buying producers tend to control most of the activities in the field, leaving the small-scale producer with little or no room for his or her own ideas. In such cases the small-scale producer provides land and basic labour resources.

The medium and large-scale producers with whom I discussed such issues, indicated that if they were to leave production decisions in the hands of small-scale producers there was the danger that fruit quality would be poor, being of heterogeneous size and harvested at the wrong time.[97] As a consequence this would result in a loss of money. Furthermore, these producers argued that many small-scale producers do not

[97] When pineapples are not harvested on a particular date, penalties may be charged by OCAB to compensate for the reserved cargo space in the boat that can not be filled up. Chapter 5, section 5.3.1 further elaborates on this issue.

understand the 'principles' behind some of the techniques and practices and therefore do not conduct the practice in the correct manner. While indeed many of the small-scale producers may not adequately comprehend these 'principles', it can be argued whether these small-scale producers are actually sufficiently well informed on particular cultivation, harvesting and post-harvest practices and market demands by the medium and large-scale producers.

It should be noted that this portrait of the limited knowledge and experience of small-scale producers is only a partial picture. Although some small-scale producers may engage in poor practices, many are in fact 'veteran' pineapple producers, who have worked on large plantations and may have extensive knowledge of pineapple production. The capacity of such producers may be recognised by the medium and large-scale producers and they are consequently less 'controlled' in the field. Generally, however, the view of larger farmers is that there is a clear necessity for assistance to small-scale farmers.

The following sections provide an insight into the arguments that medium and large-scale producers give to suggest that it is necessary to control many of the practices of small-scale producers in the field. The examples shown below focus on a number of specific actions, practices and techniques applied by small-scale farmers, based upon their often more limited knowledge and understanding of the issues at stake. The differences in production insights and in the use of techniques and practices may sometimes result in conflicts between the small-scale producer and the contracting medium and large-scale producers or trader. These conflicts are often based on a different notion of quality. These examples thus provide insight into the different realities and internalization processes of smallholders and larger producers.

Fertilization: large or small, sweet or sour pineapples

The interviewed medium and large-scale producers mentioned fertilization as a particularly important issue, since it influences pineapple growth and quality. Applying fertilizer is a labour-intensive practice that is mainly carried out by men. Fertilizer is applied to each plant separately, with a quantity put in the slit of the leaves at the bottom of the plant, a painful job due to the thorns that overhang the path between plants. Most medium and large-scale producers fertilize their fields several times during the pineapple production cycle, in particular at the 2nd and the 4th months of growth and before the 6th month. Producers often also apply an insecticide or fungicide, mostly in solid form, together with the fertilizer.

Research results from a French research institute in collaboration with OCAB concluded that a mixture of NPKMg fertilizers – 10-15 grams per plant – is recommended.[98] However, most small-scale producers apply less than this recommended quantity and may use different type of fertilizers, and may not apply any fertilizer at all. Often this is due to a lack of financial means, but other issues, including a lack of knowledge and understanding of the purpose and functioning of fertilizers, also plays an important role. A well-heard complaint from interviewed agricultural agents of some export organizations and intermediaries is that many small-scale producers only tend to apply nitrogen (N), since they have noticed that this fertilizer stimulates the growth of the plant and its fruit (see also Paull and Chen, 2003). Nitrogen is also relatively cheap. During interviews it became apparent that the reason producers are eager to apply sufficient nitrogen is, as some small-scale producers explained, because "*larger fruit are favoured in our local markets. We therefore wish to export pineapples of large calibre to Europe, since we believe that consumers there also prefer large fruit*".

Many small-scale producers, however, often neglect to apply potassium (K), since this is very expensive, although it is very important in determining the sugar content and acidity level of the fruit. Because of the use of nitrogen and the lack of potassium, the calibre of the pineapples is often large but the taste is less sweet and the colour of the fruit is pale. As the taste of the pineapple and the colour of the fruit are very important quality aspects, these pineapples are consequently valued lower in the market.

Because of this, as argued by a number of medium and large-scale producers, they prefer to send one of their employees to apply fertilisers and chemicals in the fields of small-scale producers from which they buy, in order to ensure that these inputs are applied to 'their' pineapples. According to these producers, and in line with what was said by the agricultural agent of OCAB who witnessed similar practices in the field, most small-scale producers do not understand the exact effects of fertilizer on the plant and fruit. Many believe that fruit size is the key criteria for export. Both producers and OCAB's agent stated that they found it difficult to make producers aware of the effect of fertilizer. Although several training sessions on this issue have been held, producers often believe that the medium or large-scale producer or OCAB just want to promote a fertilizer that is much more expensive and which they may benefit from by having made a deal with an input supplier.

Another reason, often heard, for the application of fertilizers and chemicals on the field of the small-scale producers, is that larger producers tend not to trust the small-scale

[98] Source: Interview with OCAB, March 1999.

producers, since they have experienced, or heard stories of small-scale producers selling part of the supplied inputs to others, or applying parts of the inputs to other plots.

Shoot selection: large or small fruit, strong or weak plants

Another example that some of the interviewed medium and large-scale producers and traders presented were the different strategies for the selection of shoots. Shoots are vegetative material obtained from pineapple plants used for the production of the Cayenne Lisse pineapple. During the harvest, the pineapple fruit is cut from the plant. The plant remains in the field for a few more weeks until shoots appear at its base. One plant can produce up to 6 shoots and once they appear, their selection starts. The medium and large-scale producers explained that they, or their personal assistants, together with specialized labourers, examine each plant, in order to determine which shoot could best be used for the next cultivation season. As these producers argue, the examination of shoots is not easy and is very important for pineapple cultivation. Labourers undertaking selection tasks are therefore usually well trained.

Shoot selection is partly based on a good understanding of the vegetative material but it is also related to a producer's export strategy. The first process of selection is generally conducted in the field, although some producers conduct a second selection at the place where the shoots are left to dry. Selection is mostly based on a producer's experience, observations and interpretations. This local know-how is also often transferred from family members, fellow producers or wage labourers at plantations. I have heard different strategies for the selection of shoots, all based on a specific individual understanding of the vegetative re-production of the pineapple. The following provides a number of examples of such strategies.

Some producers explained that, in general, small shoots produce smaller fruit while large shoots produce larger fruit; fruit selection is therefore based on the size of the fruit that they plan to export. Their choice of shoots therefore depends on their export strategy. Other producers, however, dispute this understanding of small versus large shoots. Other producers have indicated that they only select the shoot that appears first or second; they believe these shoots are the strongest and will therefore produce the best quality of fruit.

Once the shoots have been picked, they are put upside-down to dry in the sun for a long period, sometimes up to five months. Producers use different ways of drying their shoots; some reserve an open or covered area at the plantation, while others put the shoots upside-down in the field on top of the plants from which the shoots were picked.

Due to lack of space, most small-scale producers use the latter method. There are also producers, mainly small-scale, who throw the shoots on a huge heap to dry. However, most do not recommend this practice, as they argue that the shoots at the bottom get damaged and will not dry enough. Medium and large-scale producers soak the shoots after drying in a disinfectant, to avoid diseases which could reduce or damage growth and influence their quality; most small-scale producers do not have the financial means to buy such disinfectant.

Around 3 to 6 shoots can be picked from each plant. Producers therefore harvest a large number of shoots and many of them sell a selection of their shoots for a price of around 10 FCFA (approximately 1.5 Euro cent in 1999) each. A number of medium and large-scale producers explained that they prefer to use their own shoots to expand their production area and are not eager to buy shoots from other producers, especially because they cannot rely on the quality of these shoots. This is also a reason why medium and large-scale producers supply their own shoots to those small-scale producers from whom they buy their harvest.

In early 2000, shoots were found to be infected with soil-born diseases, which consequently reduced the overall production in the Bonoua region. Producers stated that these shoots were imported from the region of Agboville-Tiassalé, which had suffered from soil-born diseases for many years. Because of these problems, some medium and large-scale producers decided to introduce other pineapple varieties that are less sensitive to such soil-born diseases.[99]

Application of ethylene: yellow or green, small or large fruit

The application of ethylene takes place six days before harvesting, to stimulate the fruit to become mature and turn a yellow colour. The region East of Comoé is held to receive insufficient sunlight, which raises the need to apply ethylene to colour the pineapples. The timing of ethylene application is very important for a producer's export plan and therefore for the export organizations and OCAB. If ethylene is applied too late, the fruit may still be immature at the time of harvesting, resulting in a lower fruit quality, and as a consequence exports may need to be rescheduled. This may mean that the producer has to pay a fine, because the reserved cargo space is left vacant (see also Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1). Some export organizations, or medium or large-scale producers, therefore apply ethylene to the fruit of their sub-contracted small-scale producers in order to make sure that the pineapples mature at the appropriate date. Another reason for this is that some small-scale producers tend to spread the ethylene

[99] Source: Interview with OCAB and several producers, September 2003.

unevenly over the fruit, or even onto unripe pineapples, resulting in heterogeneous fruit coloration and lower sugar content.

According to a number of the medium and large-scale producers, different European markets demand different pineapple sizes: in general, northern European countries prefer smaller pineapples, while southern European countries prefer larger pineapples. These market wishes are incorporated into the cultivation strategies of the medium and large-scale producers. The timing of ethylene application is important because it can influence the size of the fruit. To do this, ethylene is applied at specific points in the production cycle, in this manner forcing the production of flowers; basically, the earlier ethylene is applied the smaller the size of the fruit (see also Paull and Chen, 2003).

Most small-scale producers, however, do not apply this strategy, in part this is because they are not aware of the specific technique but it is also due to lack of awareness regarding preferences for particular pineapple sizes in different markets. Because of this they usually harvest their entire pineapple crop at once, irrespective of its destination. When discussing this issue with small-scale producers, they complained that they are not supported by the export organizations, who fail to inform them about market requirements or production techniques. The producers are, therefore, not aware of where these pineapples are transported to, and what the specific market demands are. As one producer stated "*the market deals are made in the offices in Abidjan. We just produce the fruit*".

In July 2001, the maximum residue level (MRL) for ethylene in pineapples was set at 0,5 mg/kg by the European Union. Many small-scale producers failed to match this low level of ethylene, either because they were not aware of the new regulation, or because they did not realize the consequences of disregarding the regulation. As a result products were refused during inspections at European borders. However, as a result of negotiations between OCAB and the EU, the MRL was raised to a level of 2 mg/kg in 2002, corresponding to the level set by Codex (Commission Directive 2002/05 CE of 30 January 2002).[100]

[100] The Codex Alimentarius Commission was created in 1963 by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop food standards, guidelines and related texts such as codes of practices under the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Program. Currently, 171 countries are members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Source: Hwww.codexalimentarius.orgH).

Harvesting and post-harvest handling: whole, crushed or bruised fruit

Harvesting practices and post-harvest handling also influences fruit quality. Pineapples are harvested with a large knife. In most cases this is a man's job, since it is tough work. Once the fruit are cut they are either placed on the ground or in a bag, or they may be placed straight into a cardboard box. When placed on the ground someone else collects them for packaging. If they are not packed in the field, they are transported to the export organization's packing station; this is primarily the case for small-scale producers.

A lot of fruit damage is due to harvesting and post-harvesting practices. I have watched how small-scale producers put their pineapples in a car on top of each other without the use of boxes to protect them from being crushed; many of these pineapples were damaged at arrival at the packing house and some were likely to show spots of shock later in time. When pineapples are transported in cardboard boxes, these boxes are often damaged due to weather conditions, rough handling, and rough transport over dirt roads to the packing station. Two medium-scale producers from Central America, Pedro and Michel, argued that the pineapples should be picked and softly brushed in the field and then put directly into cardboard boxes. Apparently, this prevents the fruit from being handled too often, ensuring better quality. I have spoken to many producers who prefer to pack their fruit in the field. However, a large-scale producer explained that he prefers to transport his fruit by tractor to one of his packing stations to pack the pineapples into cardboard boxes, so that a quality control team can examine them before they are packed and placed on pallets. Most of the large-scale producers indicated to use the latter procedure.

4.6 The notion of quality: a clash of realities

Quality is a key factor in the identity of agricultural commodities. The quality of a product embeds different aspects such as colour, shape, taste, smell, freshness, nature and safety (free of contamination and residues). The medium and large-scale producers, traders and the overall export organization OCAB have realized that a good quality product is a pre-requisite for successful operation in the increasingly competitive international pineapple market; this realization has stirred these actors and agents to improve the quality of the Ivorian pineapple.

As may be concluded from the previous section, the objective of quality improvement is not easy to achieve, as most small-scale producers do not adequately comprehend the requirements of the international market, nor the reason behind specific practices required to construct the desired product. These producers consequently base their

actions and practices on a more local reality than on what is required at distant locations. They may, for example, translate local preferences (a large fruit) to the global level without considering possibilities for different consumers' wishes and demands. One could call this situation a genuine 'clash of realities'.

Although, many of the medium and large-scale producers assist the small-scale producers with the cultivation of their fruit, and although OCAB has organized a number of activities to improve understanding of the need for fruit quality (training sessions and demonstrations), a large number of small-scale producers still apply their own practices. Also, spin-offs of training sessions and other capacity building activities often take time and do not always bring direct results. Such activities may be an efficient tool for larger producers and international corporations, but small-scale producers may find it difficult to incorporate the information into their local practices. In this regard, one reason why some of the advice given through training sessions or by larger producers is often not implemented by small-scale producers could relate to the uncertain situation of land: a large number of producers do not own land and are therefore reluctant to invest in increasing land quality and technology.

Difficulties in fulfilling the quality demands of the international market imply that fruit produced by small-scale producers is generally of lower quality and consequently also of lower market value. Failure to improve the quality could even have more serious consequences for small-scale producers, as this could lead to medium and large-scale producers deciding to stop collaborating with them. This decision was also made by the largest pineapple producer in Ivory Coast, the company SCB. Until 1998, SCB contracted around 100 small-scale producers for the cultivation of pineapples. However, the transnational corporation Dole holds shares in the pineapple plantation of SCB, and SCB was therefore under much pressure to comply with Dole's high quality and safety standards. To guarantee this, SCB provided their contract farmers with all required inputs and followed up on all activities in the field. The Company even organized training sessions to improve the practices of the producers. The producers were paid in cash after SCB had checked the quality of the pineapples in their packing station. In 1998, however, SCB's decided to stop its contract-farming relations. This decision should be seen within the context of the inability of their sub-contracted producers, despite these measures, to cultivate fruit of sufficiently high quality and homogeneity.

In an interview, the Director of SCB explained that although the Company had trained and supported producers in all aspects of the production process, they were still not able to meet the Company demands. Indeed, for some employees it was almost a daily task to solve the problems generated by small-scale producers. For example, on some

occasions the Company discovered that several small-scale producers had added pineapples from other producers to their harvest in order to match the agreed volume. As a consequence, the Company lost sight of the 'history' of these pineapples since they had not followed the production practices of the other producers and could therefore not guarantee the quality of these pineapples. All in all, these considerations led to SCB's decision to rely solely on their own plantations.

According to the Director, SCB invested a lot of time and effort in these small-scale producers with poor results.[101] Nevertheless, the Company has not been able to 'control' these small-scale producers. SCB's efforts to, as Marsden and Arce (1995:1271) explain in another context, "enrol them socially in the process of constructing quality" has clearly failed. The example of SCB demonstrates the complications involved in engaging small-scale producers from disconnected regions in supply chains operating at the international level. Largely, such complications are related to the cultural distance between small-scale producers and the market, and the consequent 'clash of realities' that transpires.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the field of social action in the pineapple production space in Ivory Coast. It may be concluded that the French colonists created the pineapple production space when they introduced the fruit at the beginning of 1900, with the aim to supply their home market. The introduction of the pineapple was paralled by the emergency of a large-scale plantation economy of various other commodities. This development consequently induced a flow of labour; migrants from other parts of Ivory Coast and from neighbouring countries were attracted to the southern region of Ivory Coast in search of employment. The arrival of these newcomers, and a subsequent pressure on land, transformed village organization, with a new pattern of social relations emerging from power struggles for local control over land.

The chapter has provided insight in the development of the pineapple production space and has shed light on the struggles and difficulties of actors therein. Particular issues shaping the realities of such actors relate to access to land, labour, information and knowledge. As follows from the analysis presented in this chapter, these issues influence the relationships between actors, an influence that often goes as far as determining and controlling the final quality and value of the pineapple.

[101] Source: Interview with the Director of SCB, November 1999.

The cases and people's experiences presented in this chapter also illustrate how certain trends and types of development in the global pineapple market are internalized and responded to by local actors. An example is landlords, who acknowledged the profitability of the pineapple business due to a large increase in demand from European markets, and have acted upon this knowledge by increasing the price of land. Also, the scarcity of land has allowed them to categorize tenants according to who they prefer to rent land to, which can relate to ethnic divisions. The analysis furthermore shows how small-scale producers, who in most cases are not directly connected to the international pineapple market, have particular perspectives on market demands, shaped by their local knowledge and life-worlds. Many believe, for example, that European consumers prefer large fruit because they have observed this preference in local markets. They consequently undertake practices to produce such large fruit, neglecting key consumer preferences for sweet, well-coloured fruit.

The field of social action described in this chapter is influenced by institutional arrangements in the pineapple sector. Chapter 5 outlines the institutional development of the Ivorian pineapple sector, and analyses how various actors within the intermediary space have and are responding to ongoing competition and developments within the international market. As will become clear, quite a number of activities and practices described in Chapter 4 are related to the actions of such intermediary actors.

CHAPTER 5

INTERMEDIARIES AND INSTITUTIONAL SPACE

CONNECTING LOCAL AND GLOBAL ACTORS

5.1 Introduction: the rise and fall of local pineapple organizations

As shown in the previous chapter, the Ivorian pineapple sector is characterized by a heterogeneous group of producers. However, from the early years, an institutional framework has encompassed the sector. From the start of the pineapple business, organizations such as cooperatives and associations were established to support pineapple producers and exporters. Furthermore, extension agents, quality control services, and supportive companies for the organization of sea transport were created to facilitate the export of pineapples to European markets.

This chapter focuses on the intermediary space, as defined in Chapter 2, and provides an overview of processes of 'institutional framing' by the Ivorian pineapple sector. The chapter furthermore describes how different institutional entities (such as the sector-wide organization OCAB and the French freight forwarding agent Léon Vincent) define the rules and practices that pineapple producers should follow and set the boundaries of the institutional domains of such entities. Within these different domains, processes of social organization and grouping take place, as actors pursue specific goals and seek to generate influence within a larger field of social interaction. This section begins with a historical overview of the rise and fall of local pineapple organizations. The information is primarily based on interviews with OCAB, producers, and several representatives of export organizations, since little documented material is available.

Section 4.1 of Chapter 4 describes the introduction of the pineapple production into the southern region of Ivory Coast by the French colonists, and the subsequent adaptation of the pineapple culture by local producers. The potential market opportunities for tropical fruit (like bananas and pineapples) in France and other countries in Europe encouraged the French colonizers to create an enabling environment for the production and export of these commodities to their home market. They introduced an administrative system based on the French model to control activities in Ivory Coast, set up a communication network, and constructed roads and a harbour to transport

agricultural commodities such as cocoa, coffee, timber and fruit from inland areas to their home country (Sawadogo, 1977).[102] In fact, one could say that the French controlled all activities in the supply chain from production to marketing, in a vertically integrated manner.

In the early years, the main destination for pineapples was the preservation industry, managed by the French 'Société des Ananas de la Côte d'Ivoire (SALCI)'. This Company produced about half of the required pineapple production on their own plantations, with hired labour, and about half by individual African producers, who received technical assistance from the Company (Due, 1969). Later, two additional pineapple producing companies (SAFCO and SIACA) were established, also oriented towards the preservation industry and depending for part of their production on contracts with local growers (see Box 5.1). Contract agreements were made verbally, and the companies provided inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, and advised local growers through their own extension agents.

Box 5.1: The pineapple processing factory, SAFCO.

The Frenchman, Mr. Braastad, established the company SAFCO (Société Africain de Conservation) in 1949. This Company started a pineapple preservation factory in the town of Tiassalé where it produced pineapple slices and juice for export to Europe, mainly to France, Italy, Spain and Germany. Under the name Tiafruit, SAFCO established a pineapple plantation – around 200 ha of cultivated land – for the production of pineapples for this factory. Tiafruit also (sub)contracted around 30-40 small-scale producers in the region of Tiassalé for additional production. Extension agents of Tiafruit assisted these producers to cultivate pineapples. In 1960, Tiafruit started to export fresh pineapples to the European market, since the production of preserved pineapples was not profitable anymore. In 1983 the preservation factory had to close due to competition from South-East Asia. Devaluation of the West-African Franc (CFA), and consequent lower production costs, meant the factory was able to restart operations in 1984, but eventually closed down in 1998, due to declining market prices. After this, Tiafruit continued to export fresh pineapples (Source: Interview with the Director of Tiafruit, December 1999).

In 1948, French colonists established 'la Fédération des Assocations Bananières de Côte d'Ivoire (FASBACI)' an association for the production and export of bananas. This association, however, appeared unsustainable, and slowly petered out in the early 1950s. The need for a cooperative mechanism, however, remained, and in 1953 several French producers of bananas and pineapples grouped together and established the

[102] In 1900, the French initiated a policy of economic self-sufficiency for its colonies. Each colony was responsible for raising the funds for its own administration and defence, while France was to offer assistance only when needed (den Tuinder, 1978).

producers' cooperative, 'La Coopérative Bananière et Fruitière de la Côte d'Ívoire (COBAFRUIT)'. Extension agents were employed by the cooperative to assists their members, although it mainly served the interests of the French producers – in most cases large-scale producers – and largely neglected the interests of the – mainly small-scale – African producers.

After Independence, the Ivorian Ministry of Agriculture supported the creation of a communal cooperative for producers, abandoning the old (French dominated) system. A new cooperative system was established in 1966, namely 'la Coopération Fruitière de Côte d'Ivoire (COFRUCI)', with the majority of members being Ivorians, and having an Ivorian president and French vice-president. During its nine years in existence, the export of pineapples increased significantly: from 6,800 tons in 1966 to 70,700 tons in 1975 (OCAB, 2003:65). In 1968, the Ivorian government furthermore established an agricultural credit bank and created the government agent 'Société pour le Développement des Fruit et des Légumes (SODEFEL)' to further assist producers in the production, in close cooperation with COFRUCI. The government also collaborated closely with French research institutes for experiments with different pineapple varieties and research on diseases and plant fertilization.

In the early 1970s, the cultivation of fresh pineapples for the European export market expanded rapidly, largely through the advancement of technological developments in sea transport. At the time, production was mainly for the processing industry, with export of fresh produce being limited. The pineapple processing industry, though, faced tough competition from South-East Asian countries. Consequently, producers started to cultivate pineapples for the fresh export market due to rising demand. The cultivation of fresh pineapples differs from cultivation for the processing industry, because for fresh fruit special attention must be given to aspects such as size, taste and coloration of the fruit, aspects which were not of great importance for the processing industry. The extension agents of SODEFEL and of the private companies had therefore to focus more on quality aspects then before. Because of these stricter quality requirements, the number of rejects increased. Pineapples that could not be exported were rejected and processed or sold in urban markets. As a consequence, a diversification in quality started to appear.

COFRUCI was dissolved in 1975 to make place for the national organization 'Société Ivoirienne pour la Commercialisation des Fruits et Légumes (SICOFREL)'. This governmental organization survived for only 3 years, after which a new cooperative, called 'La Coopérative de Producteurs pour la Commercialisation des Fruits et Légumes de la Côte d'Ivoire (COFRUITEL)', was created. The export of fresh pineapples increased significantly under the supervision of this new cooperative,

resulting in a 95% European market share of Ivorian pineapples by 1986, at a peak export level of 193,775 tons (OCAB, 2003:65). By this time, most pineapple processing factories had closed down due to competition from South-East Asia.

Due to management problems, COFRUITEL was dissolved in 1986, followed by the resurrection, by the Government, of an alternative export organization, 'Comité Interprofessionel d'Ananas et Bananes (CIAB)'. However, in 1991 this organization also failed as a result of managerial problems. CIAB was superseded by the 'Comité Régional d'Ananas et Bananes (CRAB)', which survived for only 3 months. Eventually, in September 1991, a new sector-wide organization, the 9th in line, was established, the 'Organisation Centrale des Producteurs - Exportateurs d'Ananas et de Bananes (OCAB)'. It is promising to see that, up to the present day (2006), OCAB has remained in operation and has managed to organize the sector in such a way that it is still a major player in the global pineapple market.

OCAB's mandate is to facilitate the trade process by organizing production, sea transport, harbour activities, quality inspections – both in Abidjan and at destination – and the disembarkment of merchandise and administrative handling at the European ports of destination. OCAB is furthermore involved in promotional activities concerning the Ivorian pineapple. The organization has a representative in France to protect the interest of the Ivorian exporters, and who conducts studies in the European market and maintains close contact with the European importers.

OCAB only deals with formally registered export organizations[103] for the export of pineapples, bananas and, since 1995, mangos. Therefore, producers who are not members, but would still like to make use of OCAB's infrastructure, have to export their produce through one of the export organizations that constitute OCAB's membership (see also Section 5.4.1). Since there are no regular alternative shipping lines operating between Ivory Coast and Europe, most producers export their bananas and pineapples through one of the member organizations of OCAB. The number of export organizations that are members of OCAB has changed over the years, indeed it is common that an organization becomes a member but remains inactive so stops its activities after a couple of years. In 1999, 19 organizations exported their pineapples through OCAB.

The 'Assemblée Générale' (or 'General Assembly') of OCAB is composed of representatives of all formally registered export organizations. The 'Assemblée

[103] Legally, an export organization can be a cooperative, a limited liability company or a civil agricultural society.

Générale' decides[104] on the activities and investments of OCAB. The representatives of thirteen of these organizations represent the 'Conseil d'Administration' (Administrative Council).[105] The 'Bureau de Conseil' consists of 5 members (representatives of 5 producers' organizations), namely the president, 2 vice-presidents (one each for the pineapple and banana sectors), a secretary general, and a treasurer.[106] A 'Secrétariat Exécutif'[107] executes the decisions made by the 'Conseil d'Administration' and manages the sea-freight, administration and secretarial sections of OCAB, as well as different committees. With regard to the latter, a number of committees have been established over the last few years, to study potential options for development and to investigate opportunities for the Ivorian pineapple, banana and mango sectors. The following committees have been established:

Comité Technique[108] – This committee is responsible for the preparation of the overall annual export plan, which facilitates the reservation of adequate cargo space in the reefer boats[109]. The committee also conducts market research and examines emerging ideas for sectoral improvement.

Comité Technique Bananas – This committee is responsible for the development of a strategy for the Ivorian banana sector, including specific projects and financial support.

Comité Transport[110] – Deals with all issues of sea transport. This includes the preparation of the reefer boat program (date, name of the reefer boat and harbour time in Abidjan). This program is provided to all export organizations. The committee furthermore holds close ties with the forwarding agent in France (Léon Vincent) with regard to the contracting of reefer boats.

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[104] The Assemblée can bring in 100 votes. Each member is assigned two votes. The remaining votes are divided amongst the members according to their respective export volume over the past 12 months. No member can, however, hold more than 15 votes (OCAB, 2003).

[105] The following export organizations constitute the 'Conseil d'Administration': BANADOR, CFA, CFC, COFAB, COFRUIDOR, DAM, FDL, KATOPE, SCAB, SCB, SELECTIMA, SOCOFRUIT, and TIAFRUIT (OCAB, 2003).

[106] The following export organizations constitute the 'Bureau de Conseil': SOCOFRUIT: president; CFC: vice-president pineapples; SCB: vice-president bananas; CFA: secretary general; BANADOR: treasurer (OCAB, 2003).

[107] The 'Secrétariat Exécutif', or 'Executive Secretary' is a former employee of the Ministry of Agriculture and was appointed at the time of establishment of OCAB.

[108] Constituted by the export organizations CFC, SOCOFRUIT, SCB, FDL and COFRUIDOR (OCAB, 2003).

[109] A reefer boat refers to a boat which is specialized in refrigerated transport of pallets of fresh agricultural commodities.

[110] Constituted by the export organizations BANADOR, CFC and SOCOFRUIT (OCAB, 2003).

Commission Qualité[111] – Follows all issues related to fruit quality. The committee observes the practices of the export organizations and assists them with regard to quality control inspections, as appropriate.

Commission Comptes de Ventes[112] – Examines revenue overviews of the exported pineapples to Europe, including the results per export organizations (export volume, revenue obtained, etc.).

From this information it may be concluded that state support for the pineapple sector has contributed to its leading position in the pineapple market since the 1980s. This support has been through a number of elements: development of an institutional framework, the mobilization of international financial support (e.g. investment and research), cheap labour facilitated by the state through its 'open-door' immigration policy, and land policy captured by the phrase the 'land belongs to those who cultivate it', an issue discussed in Chapter 4. After Independence, the Ivorian government realized that the country's economic potential could be further developed by encouraging a combination of local and foreign support for production. In this respect, the rapid economic growth of Ivory Coast during the 1950s was mainly a result of foreign technical and managerial expertise, foreign investors (mainly French) and local labourers (Lubeck, 1987; den Tuinder, 1978). In light of such economic interest, Europeans and local labourers from neighbouring African countries were encouraged to stay after Independence; while in the rest of Africa Europeans were largely driven out following Independence, in Ivory Coast they poured in.[113]

Contrary to many newly independent developing countries that followed inward-oriented strategies to promote economic growth during the 1950s and the 1960s, the Government of Ivory Coast continued to encourage the outward-oriented export agricultural sector. Houphouët-Boigny, the first president of Independent Ivory Coast, understood the need to diversify agricultural production to avoid relying excessively on timber, cocoa and coffee. The government therefore stimulated the introduction and expansion of crops such as pineapples, bananas, coconuts and rice, concentrating its attention on the south, where ecological conditions were most favourable for the cultivation of these products.[114]

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[111] Constituted by the export organizations BANADOR, CFC and TIAFRUIT (OCAB, 2003).

[112] Constituted by the export organizations CFA and TIAFRUIT (OCAB, 2003).

[113] Authors such as Duruflé (1989), argue that the substantial role of foreign resources (capital, technological know-how and personnel) has in fact been the main pillar of sustained growth of Ivory Coast until the end of the 1970s.

[114] Lubeck (1987) points out that the extensive production practices had, however, devastating impact on the tropical rain forest in the southern region of Ivory Coast.

The remainder of this chapter analyses the different global and local dynamics as faced by the Ivorian pineapple sector before and during the 1990s, and in particular the internalization processes and responses of the various actors to such dynamics. The increasing global competition of mainly transnational corporations with strong global brand names, such as Dole and Del Monte, the introduction of the new pineapple variety MD-2 by Del Monte and the stringent food quality and safety demands, required producers and exporters to gain more control over production and export processes. They had to become more efficient in order to lower costs, while at the same time guaranteeing high quality products and transparency of the supply chain. Although the state is involved in some developments, OCAB is definitely playing a major role in internalizing of and responding to these global trends and developments to enhance the performance of the Ivorian pineapple sector, as is shown in the following sections.

5.2 The battle at sea

Scene 1: The struggle to lower freight costs

Sea transport has always been the main means to transport pineapples from Ivory Coast to Europe (mainly France). During the colonial period, French colonists established a good road infrastructure that enabled transportation of agricultural commodities from production areas to ports in Abidjan and Sassandra, in South-West Ivory Coast. The ports handled large volumes of commodities for the export to France. The French furthermore set up regular shipping lines to guarantee a continuous flow of commodities between the French colonies and their homeland. Originally, the French shipping company, Delmas, was in charge of sea transport. In 1968, however, the Ivorian government created SITRAM ('la Société Ivoirienne de Transport Maritime'), which effectively broke up the French monopoly in the sea transport sector. SITRAM acted as a freight company and was responsible for all activities in the harbour, made sure the correct export papers were obtained, and arranged the contracts with the shipping agency. For a long time, SITRAM and Delmas were the only companies involved in the export of bananas and pineapples and therefore held a monopoly position. Both companies only dealt with export organizations for the export of fruit.

During this time, sea freight costs were high, at US$ 118 per pallet, including charges for insurance and for daily shipping reports on conditions in the cool rooms. Producers and export organizations complained about the monopoly position of the shipping company and the high transportation costs. However, the export organizations did not manage to lower costs, nor did they manage to break up through the monopoly position. It was not until 1990, after more then 30 years, that complaints regarding high

freight costs were taken seriously. Just before the peak export season of 1990, producers dropped their pineapples at the quay in the port to demonstrate against high freight costs and the large quantity of fruit that was damaged while at sea. A study by OCAB, executed in 1991, demonstrated that sea freight costs could be as low as US$ 72 per pallet, causing considerable concern amongst producers (Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998).

In 1993, under the guidance of OCAB, producers filed a complaint at the 'Office Ivoirien des Chargeurs'. This led, through arbitration by an inter-ministerial committee (agriculture, commerce, finances and transport), to government intervention, which included: (i) a fixed price of US$ 90 per pallet, and (ii) instructions to refurbish Delmas' and SITRAM's fleets. With the latter, the committee acknowledged complaints by the sector regarding poor facilities on the vessels (speed, age, refrigeration, etc.), a shortage of vessels (30% shortcoming in tonnage, in 1993), and the late arrival of vessels in the ports of Abidjan and Marseille. As a consequence, Delmas decided to stop operations and to sell their old boats, which had become too expensive to operate.

In October 1994, after extensive negotiations with the government, OCAB was able to break through the monopoly over sea transport by obtaining the right to contract its own transport companies. Initially, only 50% of sea transport was liberalized for a trial period of 10 months, the remaining still under exclusive arrangement with SITRAM.[115] Immediately, the price difference became clear: export through commercial reefer companies, facilitated by OCAB, cost US$ 72 per pallet, in comparison to US$ 90 (for the port in Marseille; the northern ports were more expensive) charged by SITRAM. By the end of 1994, OCAB continued to use commercial vessels for northern ports in France whereas SITRAM served the southern line (Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998; OCAB, 1996).

In March 1996, the Ivorian government fully liberalized sea transport, ending the monopoly of SITRAM, a decision taken after SITRAM was liquidated in 1995. Consequently, through the active intervention of OCAB, the average sea freight costs were lowered, first to US$ 95 per pallet, and, in February 1999, to US$ 80 for Marseille and US$ 89 per pallet to Dieppe.[116] Although the original estimate of US$ 72 per pallet was not feasible, the liberalization of sea transport led to a substantial decrease in transport costs.

[115] As specified by Government Decree No. 94-569 of 14 October 1994.

[116] Source: Interview with OCAB, August 1999.

With the newly obtained right to contract its own transport companies, OCAB decided to work on a preferential basis with the French freight forwarding company Léon Vincent, for fruit handling at French ports. OCAB and Léon Vincent agreed that the latter should pay freight costs in advance and collect these costs from European importers. This system gave producers the opportunity to pay for their transport costs from the revenue they obtained, thus meeting a specific bottleneck in the supply chain, given that many of the producers lacked the capital to pay such costs in advance.

In 1995, OCAB created the independent company, Sitrocab ('Société Ivoirienne pour le Transport Maritime Réfrigéré de l'OCAB'), which was responsible for negotiations with reefer companies. This Company was created because OCAB did not want to get involved in export operations. At first Sitrocab depended almost completely on Léon Vincent to make arrangements and sign contracts with the reefer companies. At this time Sitrocab's operations were not very transparent, which raised many questions from producers. In interviews, producers argued that OCAB and Léon Vincent had made deals concerning the sea freight, of which 'particular persons' profited. They believed that this so-called independent company Sitrocab was a cover for lucrative deals. The very limited reports received by the producers, namely a cost index of total revenues and expenses, with no details on actual freight costs, strengthened their suspicions. Certain producers also suggested that OCAB was trying to hide the fact that it had given away a very lucrative contract to the French forwarding agent, which as a result became a powerful actor, while pretending that Ivorians were in charge.

It was not until 2000 that Léon Vincent was officially recognized as the 'Agent Général Maritime' of OCAB, establishing its role and responsibilities in organizing contracts with the shipping agents. It also became clear that the role of Sitrocab was to inform Léon Vincent of the total amount of pallets for a particular export date so that the latter could organize the right size cargo for particular export dates, with the reefer companies.[117] In 1998, OCAB established the company Ivoire Logistique, which was to be responsible for port safely issues and for ensuring that the boats arrive at the right quay. Ivoire Logistique also works with Léon Vincent to ensure pallets are sent to the importers in Europe for whom the pallets are destined.

Many producers face a negative financial balance because their costs are higher than their revenues, particularly when market prices are low. Also, the cost of cardboard boxes, chemicals and other inputs, and of sea-freight are very high. Although Léon Vincent does not deal with individual producers, the freight forwarding agent is sometimes willing to assist them by offering certain arrangements for the repayment of

[117] The main reefer companies were the Danish and Swedish companies, Lauritzen and Cool Carriers.

debts. Such arrangements are made through the organization that exports the producer's products. In this context, the export organization provides a guarantee on behalf of the producer, consequently creating a dependency relation with the producer. Furthermore, Léon Vincent offers certain inputs on a credit basis, under flexible payback conditions.

Many producers are unhappy with the influential monopoly held by Léon Vincent. As one man argued "*Léon Vincent is the only freight forwarding agent we can deal with, since there are no other regular reefer shipping lines. As a consequence a situation has developed wherein producers and even export organizations are becoming very dependent on this agent, not only for sea-transport, but also for the import of certain inputs (especially cardboard boxes). Many of us have become particularly dependent on Léon Vincent as a result of credits for inputs. It is very difficult for a producer or an export organization to get away from this situation and to start exporting on its own, especially because of the lack of regular reefer boats between Ivory Coast and Europe*".

It is unclear whether this criticism is specific or is due to wider concerns regarding the former colonizer, France. Nevertheless, it is apparent that a limited number of key agents have control over others. This concerns, in first instance, OCAB itself, and with it, also Léon Vincent. Together the two agents largely control the export process for Ivorian pineapples, with very limited opportunity for others, including individual export organizations and producers, to bypass this monopoly. The credit and debt relief schemes offered by Léon Vincent, as necessary as they are to support the sector, importantly contribute to this situation of dependency.

Scene 2: The fight against monopolization

When the Ivorian government decided to liberalize sea transport in 1996, this was not without a conflict. Until that time producers were officially obliged to export their fruit through OCAB. However, after liberalization in 1996, certain organizations decided to start exporting on their own, mainly out of dissatisfaction with OCAB's high freight tariffs. Of course only export organizations with a large volume of fruit were in a position to make this shift.

In 1996, Marexport was the first export organization to abandon OCAB's freight services. Marexport is one of the largest export organizations in Ivory Coast and at the time had already reserved 500 pallets worth of cargo space with OCAB for the following 3 months. As a result of Marexport's decision, OCAB was confronted by real problems in trying to fill up the reserved space, but did manage to overcome the

potential loss by increasing the cost of the pallets for a short period. In 1997, a second major export organization, SCB, abandoned OCAB's services. Marexport and SCB were able to export their pineapples (and bananas) with ships owned by Dole (which holds shares in both companies), that transport pineapples and bananas from Cameroon and Ghana to Europe, passing through the port of Abidjan on their way. While exporting fruit through Dole, both organizations remained members of OCAB. Indeed the Director of SCB was vice-president of OCAB's banana department at the time and retained this position, although it is not clear whether this was because of his strategic interests in the organization (being able to follow the developments of OCAB and its members), or whether it reflected the strategic interests of OCAB (of not completely loosing ties with the largest progressive producer), or indeed whether it was because he wished to maintain his socially important position in OCAB (respected largest producer).

The situation became serious; due to the pull-out by Marexport and SCB, a large part of OCAB's export volume disappeared. The freight cost of, at that time US$ 95 per pallet, was consequently very difficult to maintain. However, in 1998, Marexport and SCB became a joint venture (under the name SCB) and rejoined OCAB. This decision was prompted by the fact that Dole's boats only sailed on an irregular basis due to a decrease in production in Cameroon and Ghana. SCB was consequently forced to return to their original base at OCAB. Since early 1999, the arrangement has been that SCB ships their produce using Dole's boats, but falls back on the services of OCAB when necessary. It has also been reported that, on a few occasions, OCAB itself has made use of Dole's boats in return for this arrangement.[118]

The experience with Marexport and SCB made OCAB to realize that it had to improve its services. On the 21st of February 1999, OCAB therefore lowered the sea freight costs to US$ 80 per pallet for transport to Marseilles and US$ 89 per pallet to Dieppe. Since then, none of the other export organizations has quit OCAB's services, although this is probably due to a lack of volume with which to organize their own regular sea transport. During interviews, however, some export organizations indicated that they would like to export on their own, because in their opinion OCAB – and in particular some people within key positions in the organization – has obtained a too powerful position. Nevertheless, all interviewed export organizations acknowledged that OCAB has brought a number of profitable assets to the sector, such as lowering sea freight costs, assurance of regular reefer lines, and the elimination of the need for advance payments for sea transport through the engagement of Léon Vincent.

[118] Source: Interview with SMPA, September 2003.

Box 5.2: Frequent reefer transport from Ivory Coast to Europe.

During the peak season for exports, from November to April, a reefer boat leaves the port of Abidjan for France on a daily basis, occasionally making stopovers in Spain and Italy, and continuing to Belgium and the United Kingdom. During the low season, a reefer boat leaves for France twice a week, once to Marseille and once to Dieppe. The trip to France is non-stop and takes 9-10 days (Marseille) and 11 days (Dieppe). Each reefer remains in the port of Abidjan for about 52 hours for loading. Since February 1999, OCAB included a scheduled stopover in Spain (at the port of Tarragona) on the route to Marseilles. In Spain, OCAB deals with the Spanish freight forwarding-agent, Fruport. Furthermore, since November 1999, a frequent stopover in Dakar (Senegal) was included for reefers sailing to Marseilles. At this port, only containers of bananas are unloaded, but OCAB hopes to also find a market for pineapples in the region. In Dakar, containers of fish, for the European market, are sometimes loaded. The development of combined reefers opens up the potential for new opportunities for Ivorian export organizations.

From a visit to Ivory Coast in 2003, I learned that nowadays reefer boats leave the port of Abidjan on a daily basis, all year round. The OCAB boats sails to the harbours in Dieppe and Marseilles and the Dole boats to the ports of Antwerp (Belgium), Port Vendre (France) and Dover. Some boats still make a stopover in Senegal. However, the once regular stopover in Spain on the way to Marseilles has become more irregular.

Scene 3: The emergence of container transportation

Until 2000, pineapples from Ivory Coast were rarely transported in containers, because OCAB did not handle container transport. Before this, producers who wished to export their fruit in containers had to organize this directly with specialized shipping agents, without the intervention of OCAB. An advantage of container transportation is that the pineapples can be placed in the container at the farm-gate and subsequently transported to the destination in Europe in a constantly refrigerated environment. An important disadvantage was that there were no regular direct container lines to Europe. It was therefore uncertain when a container would arrive, since some container boats would make many stop-overs on their way.

In 2000, OCAB started to transport containers on the decks of reefer boats because of the growing demand for container shipments. When the distance between harbours in France and the final product destination is large container transport is preferred, in particular for cooling reasons. With this decision, the container business started to emerge. In 2000, OCAB established the organization EURAMA, which rents containers to producers. With the design of a new fruit quay in Abidjan opened in 2002, facilities for container handling were integrated, including 60 refrigeration points. The containers, fitted with generators, are transported to the farms by truck

where they are filled with loaded pallets. SMPA[119], purchased machines to lift the containers onto the reefer boats. The empty containers are transported back to Ivory Coast as reefer boats return from France.[120] The development of container transport has provided some producers with an opportunity to set up a cold chain from farm-gate to market-door. However, due to the limited capacity of the reefer boats for container transport, and probably also due to the prevalence of established agricultural practices, most pineapples are still transported in refrigerated reefer boats.

Scene 4: A Unique Case?

The Ivorian case, whereby the private sector is organized in such a way that one (non-governmental) sector-wide organization represents virtually all producers and exporters in the banana, pineapple, and more recently mango, sectors, is unique. This is even more remarkable when taking the Ivorian setting into account, which is determined by a large number of small-scale producers, making Ivory Coast's centralized approach to fruit production and export a complex undertaking. In comparison, other countries in the region, such as Ghana, have attempted to centralize the organization of the pineapple sector thus-far have not been very successful.[121] Consequently, such countries loose competitiveness due to lack of efficiency; similar situations prevail in the fresh vegetable and flower sectors in Kenya and Tanzania, where far more individualized situations exist.

The merits of a centralized approach may be obvious, mainly within the light of the rather complex organization of the export of fresh produce, particularly in view of the large number of small-scale producers, as well as the related benefits in efficiency, consolidation and cost reduction of a coordinated approach. Nevertheless, it may be concluded that many local forces act against the monopolistic position of OCAB and its partners, such as Léon Vincent. The sustenance of the organization should, therefore, be seen within the historical perspective of a centralized government controlled system, which has provided sufficient agency to OCAB and its predecessors to sustain its competitive advantage and position of power and control, particularly over smaller actors in the commodity network.

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[119] SMPA stands for 'la Société de Manutention des Productions Agricoles', created by OCAB in 1992 to conduct all handling at the fruit port in Abidjan.

[120] Source: Interviews with OCAB and SMPA, September 2003.

[121] It must be said though that the pineapple sector in Ghana is rather new, as it only started to emerge in the 1990s. However, since 2000 the sector has been developing very quickly with the support of several international donor organizations and NGOs; consequently, exports have rapidly increased.

The situation in Ivory Coast can, however, to a certain extent be compared to Senegal, where two main export organizations presently organize the export of fresh produce – mainly French beans, green runner beans, cherry tomatoes and mangoes – to Europe, namely the organization SEPAS ('Sénégalaise d'Exportation de Produits Agricoles et de Services', founded in 1994) primarily covering small and medium size producers, and the organization ONAPES ('Organisation Nationale des Producteurs Exportateur de Fruit et Légumes du Sénégal', founded in 1999), which is dealing with three large-scale producers, as well as their contract-farmers. Also, the central position taken by companies such as Dole (in different countries), Agrexco (Israel) and Capespan (South Africa) may, from an organizational perspective, be compared to the role of OCAB in Ivory Coast. Such companies use a large number of producers for the production of high quality fresh produce (that meets the international market demands), in a way that is similar to the set-up of the Ivorian pineapple sector. To achieve this, the companies coordinate and integrate all activities and operations in vertical integrated supply chains.

5.3 The complexity of export planning

Besides reducing the cost of sea freight, members of OCAB understood that the export process needed to be better organized, in order to become more effective and efficient. The next sections provide insight into the complexity of export planning in the Ivory Coast. Special attention is paid to processes of interpretation and internalization by producers and organizations, of European consumer preferences, and the consequent actions and practices by these producers with regard to how they plan the export schedule for their pineapple crops to Europe.

5.3.1 Predicted versus actual harvested product volume

To minimize the sea freight costs, a good estimate of the export volume is required, in order to book the right sized boat. Under-capacity is directly translated into a higher price per pallet. The 'Comité Transport' of OCAB therefore puts considerable effort into estimating the correct number of pallets to be transported on any particular date. To coordinate the date pineapples are exported, regular meetings are held with the representatives of the export organizations. The export organizations, in turn, are responsible for the collection of data on harvested volumes for particular dates from their producers. Analyses of previous export years are used to detect trends in the export volume, in order to better anticipate seasonal variation for the forthcoming season.

A first, rough indication of the anticipated number of pallets is made by each export organization at the beginning of each export year; during the yearly meeting of OCAB,

each organization presents the total amount of production they expect to export, based upon data from their members (and also non-members). On the basis of these estimates, an annual export plan is prepared. A more detailed export plan is made each month, presenting detailed data per week, for the next three month period. The 'Comité Transport', in turn, presents this information to the agencies responsible for organization of the reefer boats and for port activities (Sitrocab, SMPA and Ivoire Logistique). In practice, the estimated number of pallets, and hence the reserved space, may change, as long as the order for a particular cargo boat has not been finalized.

Meetings are also conducted on the day boat's arrive in Abidjan. By then, each export organization knows exactly how many pallets they will export. Problems arise if this amount differs from that which has been indicated. However, generally a solution is found: for example, if export organization A states that they will export 6 pallets, but has only 4 pallets, for whatever reason, while export organization B has 5 pallets instead of 3, the two organizations may exchange their cargo space. However, when there are no such opportunities, the export organization failing to meet its obligations has to pay the cost of left-over cargo space. Generally, this export organization would in turn charge these costs to the producer remaining in default on its export plan (also called '*faux fret*').

On the other hand, in case an export organization's actual volume exceeds the reserved space, OCAB requests SMPA to check whether there is remaining cargo space available. If not, the export organization concerned will not be able to ship its additional pallets in a particular shipment, and producers may need to preserve their produce in cooling cells so they can ship them with the next cargo. Fortunately, due to the large export volume of pineapples and bananas (and in recent years mangos), reefer boats sail on a very regular basis (see also Box 5.2) and remaining pallets can usually be fitted in on a more or less appropriate shipment. If there are no cooling facilities available close to the harbour, the pallets are sent back to the producer. Sometimes, these pineapples are sold in local markets.

As an example, Annex IV compares the predicted and actual realized export volumes per export organization for the year 2002. The comparison demonstrates that the different export organizations are able to fairly accurately estimate the total export volume needed.

As producers are held responsible for the estimates they make of their anticipated harvest, and may actually loose out if they remain in default, or to a lesser extent in the case of over-production, they are encouraged to make good estimates. Most export organizations therefore assist producers, in particular small-scale farmers, in the

preparation of their export plan. Benié, a small-scale producer, explained that he finds it difficult to estimate the exact number of pallets he will harvest. Although he knows the harvested volume of previous seasons, he is hesitant to translate this into new estimates, in view of the negative consequences of any failure to meet these estimates. He therefore asks the export organization through which he exports to assist him with the preparation of his export plan. Like many other small-scale producers, Benié harvests all his fruit in one go. Since the export organization has extensive experience in assessing achievable yield per acre, and 'knows' the quality of Benié's harvest, they assist him to make reliable estimates. The export organization also supervises Benié during the production cycle to make sure that he achieves the predicted volume at the predicted harvest time.

In the case of contract-farming relations, the contracting producers or intermediaries monitor the production by their contracted producers and actually take responsibility for calculation of the quantities harvested, as well as the period of harvesting. These contracting producers or intermediaries actually often conduct particular practices in the field to ensure fruit is harvested at the right time and is of appropriate quality and size. This transfer of responsibility should be seen within the context of an attempt by intermediaries to gain control over the production process in order to reduce risk. Also, this practice is often based upon experience of the way farmers may neglect to follow prescribed procedures, often due to capital or technological constraints or limitations in local knowledge (understanding).

5.3.2 Local interpretations of consumer behaviour

As mentioned in Chapter 4, small-scale producers mostly harvest and export their pineapples in one or two shipments, often just before Christmas. After interviewing many small-scale producers, I realized that the majority prefer to export their pineapples to Europe around the 20th of the month. It became clear that this was related to their perception and interpretation of market demands in Europe. The rationale behind this is illustrated by the following case:

> When asking producers why they prefer to export around the 20th of the month, producers explained that if they export on this date their produce will arrive in Europe at the beginning of the next month. According to them this is when people receive their salaries and are therefore able to buy pineapples. The first time I heard this explanation I told the producers that I did not understand this logic. However, they looked at me and responded "*you should look around during the beginning of the month; you will see long rows of people waiting in front of the banks to withdraw their money from their bank accounts*". And they continued by explaining that "*these people spend their money during the first two week of the month and as a result of that they do not have enough money for the rest of the month, until they receive their next salary*". At that point, I

made a link to the long rows of people I had seen in front of banks in Abidjan during the first week of the month. The producers continued "*as producers we want to avoid this situation. Therefore, by exporting our pineapples around the 20th of the month, the pineapples will arrive in Europe in the first or second week of the month, when the Europeans are spending their monthly salary*".

This case illustrates how small-scale producers are aware of the fact that pineapples take around 10 days to arrive in Europe and understand that it is far away. From their understanding of people's social behaviour they know that at the beginning of the month everyone collects their salary from the bank. Subsequently, they project their local knowledge onto the situation in Europe, in this way shaping their reality: small-scale producers prefer to export pineapples around the 20th of the month because, according to their understanding, Europeans are in a position to buy their produce once it arrives.

Medium and large-scale producers export pineapples throughout the month to Europe. They base their export strategy much more on actual market information, rather than on a perceived understanding of European consumer behaviour. Nevertheless, they also make reference to the importance of the 20th day of the calendar month but for a completely different reason. Namely, the export calendar of these producers and export organizations is synchronized with the time boats arrive in Europe: it takes 9 days to reach Marseilles (southern France), and 11 days to reach the port of Dieppe (northern France). These ports are the main European locations for off-loading Ivorian pineapples. When, for instance, a boat leaves Abidjan around the 20th of the month it will arrive around the first day of the next month in Europe. The export organizations therefore register the 20th of the month (when the boat leaves), as the first week in their administrative books because this is the produce that will be sold in Europe during the first week of the following month. This notion of time-schedule held by export organizations and medium and large-scale pineapple producers is more related to book-keeping than anything else. Thus it is apparent that the interpretations of medium and large-scale producers and representatives of export organizations are based on market information and a better understanding of European consumer behaviour, in particular that Europeans have different consumption practices than Ivorians.

This example illustrates the difference in reality between (most) small-scale producers, on the one hand, and medium and large-scale producers, on the other hand. Consequently, these categories of farmers internalize and respond to the international market situation in a different manner, largely due to a lack of information or insight into the actual market situation in Europe. The small-scale producers are not aware of the relevance given by export organizations of the seemingly important day of the 20th

of the month; they only know that it is an important date, and overlay this knowledge with their own reality, imbuing it with specific local meanings.

Consequently, it may be concluded that small-scale producers with their own understanding how European consumers act in relation to the pineapple provide a local representation of the international market in which they operate. In this sense, small-scale producers generate their own view of the world and the global pineapple market in order to participate in economic and social processes.

5.4 Practices, services and diversity between the export organizations

As discussed in the previous section, producers wanting to make use of OCAB's reefer services need to export through a formally registered export organization.[122] The export organizations play an important role as intermediaries between producers, OCAB, and European importers; their role, function and activities are therefore described in more detail in this section.

5.4.1 Diversity between the export organizations

The number of export organizations has been changing over the years. Some were established as early as the 1940s, when the pineapple business began to flourish; others were created in the 1980s when the success of fresh pineapple exports on European markets stimulated production. Over this period, many new export organizations were created, typically being founded by a group of producers, or by an individual medium or large-scale producer, or an independent businessman. Some managers of the export organizations are elected in a democratic way by their members, while others have placed themselves at the top of an organization they have personally established. Many of these managers are Ivorian, but those managers of export organizations dealing with medium and large-scale producers are mainly of non-African nationality.

The organizations that have evolved are as a consequence considerably differentiated in terms of the number of members, type of producers, export volume, services provided, relationships and arrangements with European importers, and legal form. Table 5.1 lists the names of each export organization registered with OCAB in 1998, including the number of associated producers. The table furthermore shows the total quantity of

[122] Although, as noted earlier, a number of small-scale producers (of which the exact number is not known) do not export their harvest through such an export organization, but instead sell their fruit to other producers or local traders.

pineapples exported by each organization from October 1997 to September 1998, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of total exports.[123]

Table 5.1: Pineapple export organizations, their respective number of related producers, and the total exported volume between October 1997 and September 1998.

Export Organization	Number of producers	Total exported produce (tonnes)	% of total export
BANADOR	91*	17,747	11.21
CFA	4	3,713	2.35
CFC	326	20,711	13.08
COFAB	41	5,014	3.17
COFEX-CI	22	6,441	4.07
COFUIBO	-	3	0.00
COFRUIDOR	109	9,910	6.26
DAM	1	1,087	0.69
EITIMA	6	191	0.12
FDL	259	22,956	14.50
KATOPE	16	8,005	5.06
IBANEMA	1	2,042	1.29
SAVEUR DU SUD	27	317	0.20
SCADA	4	2	0.00
SCB	1	26,092	16.48
SELECTIMA	27	3,969	2.51
SOCOFRUIT	14	9,046	5.71
SOFEL-CI	16	222	0.14
TIAFRUIT	1	7,763	4.90
SIGA	1	13,072	8.26
Total	967	158,306	100.00

* Including 83 producers of the related export organization Interagri.
Source: OCAB, 1999:4; Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998:141.

Over the past few years, some export organizations have increased the export of pineapples, whereas others have declined or, in some cases, even stopped pineapple exports. For instance, in 2002, SCB accounted for just under 25% of total pineapple exports from Ivory Coast, while TIAFRUIT dropped its share to 0.57% in the same year (see also Annex V).

The reasons why producers choose to become a member of a particular export organization can vary. During interviews, some explained that the location of the field offices and packing stations was important. Others argued that their fellow producers recommended a particular organization on the basis of good experiences. Still others

[123] It should be noted that these figures only represent pineapples, while the main export commodity of a number of export organizations is actually bananas.

based their choice on the services offered. One medium-scale producer argued that he had chosen to joint a particular organization because of the relationship it holds with a particular importer in Europe. Another medium-scale producer mentioned that he exports pineapples through three different export organizations in order to be able to deal with more importers.

Consequently, and as follows from Table 5.1, the number of producers per organization differs significantly. To become a member of an export organization, producers have to meet certain criteria, as specified per individual organization. However, most export organizations have similar criteria, which are along the following lines:

Pineapples must have been produced on a regular basis for at least one year.

The pineapples that are produced must be of good quality.

The producer must have the potential to export at least 100 tons of pineapples each year.

The producer must have supplied pineapples to the same export organization for at least 3 years as a non-member.

Producers that do not fit these criteria may still export their pineapples through this export organization, but only as non-members.[124] Although they can still export pineapples through the organization as non-members, they miss out on services such as credit guarantees and the provision of advice and inputs. Most of small-scale producers appreciate such services; therefore, they generally become members of an export organization (if they can meet the membership criteria). Medium and large-scale producers are all either members of an export organization or have established their own export organization.

In 1998, five producers – SCB, DAM, IBANEMA, TIAFRUIT and SIGA – were registered as export organizations in their own right, without exporting pineapples from other producers.[125] The majority of export organizations, however, work with small-scale producers, although some – e.g. BANADOR, CFA, KATOPE, SAVEUR DU SUD, SELECTIMA and SOCOFRUIT – also cater for medium and large-scale producers. In such cases, a small number of producers tend to account for the largest proportion of the export volume. Examples include:

[124] In case a producer is not a member of an export organization, he/she can ask the organization to export his/her pineapples. As discussed in Section 5.3.1, at the beginning of the production cycle the export organization needs to know the predicted number of pallets harvested in order to reserve cargo space on the boat to Europe. Therefore, non-members have to make a request to the export organization in time.

[125] As discussed in Chapter 4, until 1998, SCB worked with a large number of sub-contracted small-scale producers, however it decided that its quality requirements could not be met, and subsequently focused on its own plantations.

BANADOR:	1 producer cultivates 80.6% of the total production area.
CFA:	1 producer cultivates 62.0% of the total production area.
KATOPE:	2 producers cultivate 65.6 % of the total production area.
SOCOFRUIT:	5 producers cultivate 83.3% of the total production area.

(Source: Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998:141).

The head office of most export organizations is in Abidjan – often located near OCAB's headquarters – where the managers/directors of the organizations keep office. The manager of each export organization is represented in OCAB (see also Section 5.1). On behalf of their members, they make decisions related to export and marketing. Those organizations which cater for medium and large-scale producers and consequently only have a few members, typically discuss issues with their members before a final decision is taken. Many small-scale producers, on the other hand, complain that decisions are often taken in Abidjan without consulting them.

There are only few medium-scale producers who do not export their pineapples through the OCAB export system, and as a consequence are outside the network of export organizations. These producers export their pineapples directly, either by plane or by container on regular container boats. The number of medium-scale producers exporting pineapples in this way is not exactly known but is held to be low (according to OCAB less then 5). Although the company, SIGA, exported pineapples through OCAB during the 1997-1998 export season, they usually transport their fruit by container or plane.[126] However, export with container boats is, as argued in Section 5.2, generally not desirable since these boats stop in many harbours on their way to Europe, the consequent longer transport time affecting the quality of the pineapples. Also, although fast, export by plane is expensive and can only be profitable in the case of sale to exclusive shops or restaurants, because these pineapples are only harvested when they are very ripe and need to be consumed within a few days.

[126] The company SIGA mainly exported pineapples independently to the European market by container and plane between 1996 and 2000. SIGA is a Swiss-owned company that cultivated pineapples and bought pineapples from small and medium-scale producers at the time of harvesting without a contract. SIGA exported pineapples by plane through the cargo company CargoLux to Luxembourg once a week. The air-freight originally cost 540 FCFA/kilo (around 80 Euro cents/kg), but was later dropped to 460 FCFA/kilo (around 70 Euro cents/kg) in 1999 due to competition from the Belgian cargo company Dasair. In 2000, SIGA stopped its activities due to financial problems.

5.4.2 Services offered by the export organizations

The services offered by the export organizations are described below; most charge a small fee for these services (this is often 7 FCFA/kg or 1 Euro cent/kg exported fruit; in 1999). The export organizations have offices and packing stations at the production sites. These field offices are in direct contact with the producers.

Planning, reporting and advice

Field office employees inform producers of the exact arrival and departure dates of the reefer boats. These dates are often written down on black boards on the wall outside the office. A week before the export date, export organizations typically consult both members and non-members regarding whether their pineapple crop is ready to harvest, usually they do this by sending someone into the fields to check whether the fruit are ripe. If a producer is not able to export his or her predicted number of pallets, the export organization tries to solve this problem by permitting other producers to export more pallets.

After each shipment, the export organization informs its producers of the revenues they have accrued from their individual exports. The French forwarding agent, Léon Vincent, sends a breakdown of the cost of shipping and handling the pineapple exports to the importers, who in turn deduct these costs from the amount paid for the pineapples. The importers send a list of costs and revenues to the export organizations, which distribute a brief list with details of revenues to producers. Many producers complain that this revenue report (also called '*compte de vente*') does not provide adequate insight into the cost of individual services by the different intermediaries; also, no information is provided on the number of rejected pineapples.

Another compliant relates to the category designated as 'other costs' on the list of revenues: neither the producers, nor the export organizations understand what these expenses, amounting in most cases to 10% of the sea freight costs, are for. In view of these complaints, the 'Commission Comptes de Ventes' of OCAB has insisted that export organizations send a more detailed list to producers, specifying revenues according to pineapple size and detailing the costs of the services provided by actors such as Veritas, OCAB, SMPA, Sitrocab, Ivoire Logistique, the export organization, and Léon Vincent. Annex VI provides an overview of the cost structure of pineapple production and export, which shows that for 1998 the average total direct cost per kg pineapple was 332 FCFA, or 50 Euro cent (Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998:165). At the same time the average import price in the European market was 380 FCFA, or 60 Euro cent, per kg (OCAB, 1999:5).

If required, producers can visit the field office of their export organization to consult extension agents. A small-scale producer named Joseph, for instance, explained that he likes to pass the field office to talk with fellow producers about the pineapple business. They exchange information on cultivation and market prices. When a problem like the appearance of a fungus appears on his fruit, he takes the pineapple to show the extension agent, or asks him to visit his field.

The limited number of agricultural extension agents is, however, insufficient to assist all small-scale farmers. Many therefore rely on their own knowledge and experience and on the support and advice of medium and large-scale producers, fellow producers and even some landowners. Many argue that as long as small-scale producers do not get sufficient help from extension agents, the overall quality of the exported pineapples will not improve. Some large-scale producers even predict that if small-scale producers cannot improve the quality and safety (referring to the use of chemicals) of their products, they will be eliminated from the increasingly competitive international market.

Quality check and palletizing

Export organizations dealing with small-scale producers conduct a quality check when the fruit are brought to the packing station. As discussed earlier, the pineapples are either packed in the field or at the packing station by employees of the export organization. When they are packed in the field, the producer or his labourers check the quality before placing them in cardboard boxes. However, they tend to pack as many pineapples together as possible, often without sufficient regard for quality, since they want to export most of their harvest. At the packing station, employees therefore conduct a second quality check.

If the export organization packs the pineapples, the producer transports the fruit to the packing station by car (cost of transport was around 5 FCFA per kilo pineapple or less than 1 Eurocent per kg in 1999) in plastic carts or piled on top of one another. Because of the bad condition of the dirt roads, many pineapples suffer from internal and/or external bruises. At the packing station the pineapples are washed or brushed and the quality is checked, then they are packed in cardboard boxes according to their calibre size and stage of maturity. Around 80% of exported pineapples are calibre size A or B (see Section 5.6.1). Small-scale producers however tend to mix fruit of different sizes or stages of maturity together. One medium-scale producer stated "*as long as we are unable to provide the international market with a homogeneous product, we will not be able to compete with Central American companies on European markets. Our*

producers have to start selecting and packing fruit of the right size and stage of maturity in each individual box".

The cardboard boxes are palletized on wooden pallets according to calibre and stage of maturity. Each pallet contains 65 or 70 cardboard boxes. The net weight of each pallet is around 800 kilos. A person from the packing station lists how many boxes per calibre and stage of maturity have passed the quality check. This list is then sent to the manager of the export organization, who uses it to determine payments given to individual producers. The pallets are then transported by truck to the port in Abidjan. Most trucks are, however, very old and they often break down. When this occurs, repairs may take a day or more, with pineapples remaining in the truck where temperatures can rise considerably. This dramatically affects the quality of fruit.

5.5 The organization of the import

Until 1995, export organizations dealt directly with European importers, without OCAB's intervention. Increasing competition within the European pineapple market and lack of information on market outlets and price fluctuations, led OCAB to search for ways to increase their control over market developments in Europe. After considering many options, in 1995 the organizations decided to create the import panel 'Association Européenne des Importateurs d'Ananas de Côte d'Ivoire (ASEIMPAC)'. Its main purpose was to limit the number of importers buying pineapples from Ivory Coast, in order to be in a better position to monitor and control the marketing activities of these importers. However, producers frequently complain that this predominantly French controlled import panel favoured importers with a particular interest in the Ivorian pineapple business (share-holders of plantations, etc.). ASEIMPAC was eventually dissolved in 2000. This following section assesses how producers perceived the establishment of ASEIMPAC.

In 1998, the ASEIMPAC import panel consisted of 23 European importers, 12 of them located in France, 4 in Germany, 2 in Belgium, 3 in Spain, 1 in Italy and 1 in Switzerland (OCAB, 1998). Almost half of these importers had a particular interest in the Ivorian pineapple business, often being shareholders of a plantation, with some having had ties with Ivory Coast since the colonial period. The key principle of ASEIMPAC was that an importer had to be accepted by OCAB before it could trade with an export organization. OCAB would examine the marketing strategy and market outlets of the importer in order to assure adequate market diversification and a large geographical spread within Europe, in order to avoid situations in which Ivorian pineapples competed with one another in European markets, resulting in lower prices. Nevertheless, a French dominance in the import sector prevailed, with French

importers accounting for 83% of the total imported pineapple volume in 1997 (see Figure 5.1a). However, part of the imported produce is re-exported to other European countries such as the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United Kingdom (see Figure 5.1b).

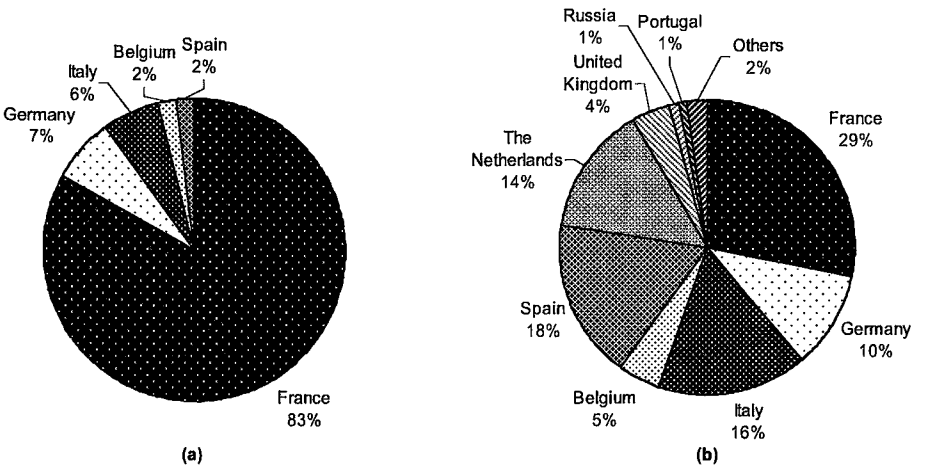

Figure 5.1: Share of imported volume of pineapples (a) per nationality of importer (note: all importers are member of the OCAB import panel) and (b) per country of final destination, in 1997 (Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998:159-160).

Each individual export organization typically dealt with 2 or 3 different importers, all members of ASEIMPAC. This had some implications for producers, as one medium-scale producer explained "*I became a member of two different export organizations because I wanted to send my pineapples to two different importers who deal with different export organizations. I had made direct contacts with these importers, but I could only deal with them through a single export organization. Also, since I am virtually obliged to make use of the reefer boats organized by OCAB, and since OCAB only deals with formally registered export organizations, I had to become a member of both organizations. For me it is rather inconvenient to deal with two export organizations but there is no other way*". Some export organizations indicated that although the members of ASEIMPAC were supposed to deal with different markets, and assure adequate market diversification and geographically spread, it was often the case that importers market the pineapples wherever they could.

A well-heard criticism by producers on the import panel was therefore that its principles of the panel did not reflect the commercial characteristics of a liberalized marketing system. These producers disapproved of the fact that the constitution of the panel was primarily based on historical ties. Producers also complained about the power of members of the import panel. Becoming a member was not easy and took

time, because OCAB insisted upon a thorough examination of the importer's market strategy. Sitting members (importers) of the import panel therefore had a preferential position. For example, these importers would sell their produce to other importers in Europe, resulting in, as pointed out by one producer, additional costly links in the supply chain that could be avoided when dealing with a free market system. OCAB was furthermore criticised for the fact that, despite the preferential status of import panel members, they never managed to agree on a minimum price with these importers.

Also, information exchange between importers and export organizations was in some cases not optimal. Since some importers were aware of the limited competition, there was little incentive for open communication about their marketing strategy. For example, one export organization found out that their importer had made a deal with a retailer on a special price action. However, the export organization was not informed of this and discovered only later that the revenues were much lower than expected. It was only after the export organization had compared the revenues with that of other importers that it became clear that the importer must have made a deal with his client. A similar story is shown below:

> Jacques, from Belgium, worked for a French importer from 1986 to 1994. This French importer holds shares in a large-scale plantation in Ivory Coast and sells 60% of its imported pineapples to French retailers and the remainder to retailers, fruit stores and importers from other European countries. Jacques was responsible for the import of pineapples and bananas from Ivory Coast. He lived in Marseilles and would be at the port on the day of arrival of boats from Ivory Coast. He would check the quality of the fruit, organize the import papers, and made sure that their clients, who came to the harbour, obtained the right number of boxes. After some years, the French importer asked him to work at the plantation in Ivory Coast to assist the plantation to improve fruit quality. The French importer argued that the quality of the fruit should improve (in particular the homogeneity of size, colour and taste) and that it was necessary to send one of their employees to the plantation to check and follow-up on this.
>
> During his time at the plantation in Ivory Coast, Jacques worked with the head of the plantation, his personal assistants, and the field supervisors. He would accompany the personal assistants in the field and would try to solve any problem that arose. He also attended meetings with the head of the plantation and his personal assistants in which they discussed new investments and measurements to improve the quality of their products. Slowly, he started to realize how complicated the management of such a large plantation is and that unexpected events and problems were frequent. He noticed how hard people at the plantation worked to make sure that the quality of their fruit was of high standard. By travelling with the trucks to the port, he realized how the quality of the fruit could easily deteriorate, due to bad road conditions and traffic problems, or when fruit pallets had to stay onshore for many hours before being loaded into the reefer.

During his period in Marseille he had not understood the difficulties and complexities of the cultivation of pineapples and bananas.

Jacques stayed on as a staff member of the plantation and was impressed by the tough and difficult work. However, he remained in close contact with the French importer and regularly briefed him. During his period in Ivory Coast, he saw which information the French importer sends to the plantation: on revenues, the market situation in Europe, quality, and other trade related information. Jacques understood, from his new perspective, that the plantation is not always adequately informed of the market situation in Europe and that the French importer often neglects to provide relevant trade information. He started to feel uneasy with this as his sympathy for the plantation people had grown.

In France, Jacques had experienced, for instance, that whenever the French importer had a particular problem with an important client, he tended to sell its products for a lower price then agreed in order to favour this client. The French importer would inform the plantation of this price, but instead of stating the true reason, would for example mention that the market price had been very low or that the pineapples were not of a good quality. Jacques realized that in these situations, the French importer would in fact misuse his powerful position to disfavour the plantation owner to his own benefit. According to Jacques, the French importer was not operating in a transparent way. He saw that the head of the plantation worked very hard and invested a lot in the plantations in order to improve the quality of the fruit in an attempt to gain a better price. The head of the plantation, on the other hand, lived under the impression that his partner in France could be trusted, since they had a large share in the plantation. Apparently, however, this was not always the case. Realizing this, Jacques decided to quit his job with the French importer. He did not return to Europe, but got involved in another business in Ivory Coast.

In view of such dissatisfaction, more and more producers and export organizations lost their confidence in the function of the import panel and urged OCAB to dissolve ASEIMPAC; this happened in the year 2000. Today, producers can export their fruit to an importer of their choice. However, in 2002, only 23 European importers who imported pineapples directly from Ivory Coast were counted by OCAB. These importers are nearly all former members of ASEIMPAC, the difference being that two 'new' French importers and one Italian have become involved, with three previous importers (a Spanish, a Swiss and an Italian) no longer involved (OCAB, 2003). It may therefore be concluded that most of the export organizations continued to collaborate with the importers with whom they had established long-term trade relations.

Once a year, OCAB organizes a meeting between importers and export organizations in Ivory Coast to discuss and agree on marketing strategies. These meetings are meant to strengthen trade relations between importers and export organizations. Most importers

visit producers to discuss mainly trade issues. However, during interviews, many small-scale producers complained that the importers only talk to managers of export organizations and with some medium and large-scale producers and that they were not adequately informed about the results of the meeting. Others were not even aware of the existence of the meetings as their export organizations would take care of all export and market arrangements.

OCAB also has an office at the fruit and vegetable wholesale market in Rungis, Paris. The office is operated by a French manager and two staff members; if serious problems arise, for example at a French port or at the importer's place, these representatives of OCAB will examine the problem and report it to OCAB's headquarters in Ivory Coast. The Paris office also promotes Ivorian pineapples and conducts market research and analysis. OCAB deducts 9.5 FCFA/kg (or 1.4 Euro cent/kg in 1999) from its exports to finance its operations in Paris).[127] However, many are not to be satisfied with the performance of this office and do not see its added value. They argue that the office reacts slowly to problems and has not been able to promote the Ivorian pineapple in an effective way.

Figure 5.2: Example of promotion material for the Ivorian pineapple.

The OCAB offices in Abidjan and Paris prepare promotional material on the Ivorian pineapple (see for example Figure 5.2). According to Loeillet (2003), Ivory Coast was the first country to introduce a country of origin logo for the pineapple, an elephant with a pineapple as its body. Nowadays, companies worldwide have developed their own brand logo, although it is not common to have a logo for a country of origin.

5.6 Quality assurance: a desperate necessity

In response to the increasing competition in the European market, and under the overall guidance of OCAB, several actions have been undertaken by the sector to improve pineapple quality and homogeneity: declining exports in Ivory Coast at the beginning of the 1990s worried members of OCAB and they understood that to retain their European market share and be able to compete with pineapples from Central America, the quality of the Ivorian pineapple had to improve, in particular as regards fruit homogeneity – size, shape, colour and taste. Small-scale producers receive particular attention in order to help improve the quality of their produce to help them compete with the high quality homogeneous pineapples of companies such as Dole and Del

[127] Source: Interview with OCAB, January 1999.

Monte. Because almost 50% of total Ivorian pineapple exports come from these small-scale producers, OCAB decided that this group deserves particular attention, acknowledging that they are often disconnected from the international market due to limited access to information, technology and capital. The following sections describe actions taken by OCAB to increase quality performance mainly for small-scale producers, and in this way improve the image (and value) of the Ivorian pineapple.

5.6.1 Establishment of an independent quality control organization

In 1991, in response to the need for better quality assurance, the export organizations decided to contract Veritas, an independent international quality control organization, to conduct quality control activities at the port and at some packing stations. In close collaboration with OCAB, Veritas started to work in the pineapple and banana sector in Ivory Coast from November 1991. Since this date, all producers exporting through OCAB have been obliged to collaborate with Veritas. In order to allow producers to get used to having quality examinations (and in particular the consequences when a product does not comply with quality requirements), Veritas introduced its quality control program in three stages.

The first stage was only an inspection of packing box presentation. The second stage, introduced in 1993, included a quality check on the external condition of the fruit: size, shape, colour and skin spots. The third stage, launched in 1995, included an inspection of the internal condition of the fruit: sugar content, odour and spots. Whenever Veritas detected fruit or packing material (cardboard boxes) that did not meet quality requirements, the fruit or cardboard boxes were taken out and the export organization would inform the member producer responsible. In 1996, OCAB decided that Veritas could fail a producer's complete shipment whenever quality requirements were not met.

In agreement between OCAB and Veritas, it was initially decided that 20% of a producer's pallets would be inspected; these were randomly selected and the quality of 5 randomly chooses boxes per pallet would be inspected. In case of quality problems, more pallets would be checked. In October 1999, OCAB decided to increase the quality inspection to a 100% check, implying that each and every pallet would be inspected. This decision was taken due to low market prices in Europe, in combination with an observed decrease in pineapple quality, which importers had complained about. OCAB argued that because it was the peak season (November-April), producers were trying to export whatever they harvested and therefore also put low quality fruit into their boxes. Also, packing houses were doing over-time and quality inspections were often less thorough. Veritas worked 24 hours a day to live up to this demand; as a result of these

quality controls, total exports dropped by 20%, but the price paid in Europe rose slightly.[128] The story of Felix illustrates these issues:

> Felix works at one of the packing stations of an export organization and conducts quality inspections on the fruit of small-scale producers. He argues that quality control is a routine job and in the off-season it can be boring because not many producers export at this time. During the peak season, however, he has to work long days and has to speed up quality inspections to make sure that all boxes can be transported to the port in time.
>
> According to Felix, during the peak season more accurate quality control measures are necessary, because producers tend to be less careful, for example packing pineapples of lower quality and different sizes in a box. It is therefore important to inspect more boxes then is recommended by the export structure and to take sufficient time for the inspection.

During my visit to Ivory Coast in 2003, I was informed that Veritas continued the 100% quality control inspections. According to Veritas, this practice has resulted in a higher overall fruit quality because producers are now much more aware of the importance of quality and are better prepared for the intensive quality control procedures. Besides this, Veritas also conducts quality inspections on arrival at the ports of Dieppe and Marseilles; a report of these inspections is sent to the export organizations. An overview of present-day quality inspection criteria as applied by Veritas is presented in Box 5.3.

Once a producer's shipment has been examined and has been demonstrated to comply with the quality requirements of Veritas, a Veritas quality label is placed on the pallet. This independent quality label is recognized internationally. Veritas also fills in a paper with all the results of the quality inspection and submits a list of results to OCAB and the relevant export organization. In case the shipment of a particular producer is rejected, it is returned and Veritas sends a rejection form – 'Attestation de Non Conformité' – to OCAB. Since March 2003, the quality control results have been linked to the bar code of the pallet by means of a scanner. As an example, Annex VII provides an overview of the results of the quality controls by Veritas in 2002. The average number of rejected pallets of the total export in 2002 was 3.26% (OCAB, 2003:126). Phyto-sanitary controls are conducted by employees of the Ministry of Agriculture at the Port of Abidjan, as well as, in case of detected problems, in the field. The results of these inspections are sent to the forwarding agent of the export organization who handles the remaining administrative procedures.

[128] Source: Interview with OCAB, December 1999.

Box 5.3: Overview of the quality inspection criteria of Veritas.

Weight: if 50% or more of the examined pineapples do not correspond to the indicated calibre category on the box, the producer's total shipment is rejected. The permitted range in grams per calibre category is: A6 calibre - 1800/2300 grams; A8 calibre - 1500/1800 grams; B9 calibre - 1300/1500 grams; B10 calibre - 1100/1300 grams; C12 calibre - 900/1100 grams.

Maturity/Colour: pineapple maturity is divided between three colour categories namely, M1 (greenish), M2 (greenish-yellowish), and M3 (yellowish). If 25% of more of the examined pineapples are too greenish (M0) or too yellowish (M4), the producer's total shipment is rejected.

Internal condition: when 15% or more of the pineapples have spots (bruises or rotten) from the inside, the total shipment of a producer is rejected (if a pineapple is rotten from the inside its odour is bad).

Sugar content: the pineapples should have a sugar-level of 13; no sanctions are implemented (yet) in case the sugar-content is too low or too high.

External condition: when 50% or more of the pineapples are deformed, the total shipment of the producer is rejected.

Organization of the pallet: pallet presentation is checked to see whether the boxes are well piled up, are not damaged, and the etiquette is clear and at the left side of the pallets. Since March 2003, Veritas has verified whether a bar code is placed on each side of the pallet; if the bar code is missing, the pallet is rejected.

Source: Interview with employees of Veritas, January 1999 & September 2003.

When SCB abandoned OCAB's reefer services, it decided to conduct its own quality inspections at its packing stations, attaching its own quality label stickers to the pallets. At the fruit quay in Abidjan Port a special area is reserved for SCB, on which their pallets are placed. In addition to checks at the packing house, SCB inspectors conduct a second quality check of 5% of the export volume at the port itself. Furthermore, the Company has entered into an agreement with Veritas to inspect 25% of their total harvest at the port, as an extra independent check.[129]

From the foregoing, it may be concluded that Veritas plays a very important role with respect to marketing opportunities for Ivorian producers in the international market. This independent quality control mechanism provides a quality guarantee to importers as well as to producers. Furthermore, a quality label is attached to the produce, which is a very important indication for traders and consumers in the European markets. Producers are also happy with this system since it assures them that their produce is of good quality and that the inspections are conducted by an independent organization,

[129] Source: Interviews with SMPA and Veritas, September 2003.

even though it does cost them a little money.[130] The introduction of Veritas can be seen as an example of how the sector has responded to global market developments (increasing competition). The introduction of Veritas has restructured local practices by conducting extensive quality control practices in the harbour. Producers have become aware that they can not send pineapple of low quality as these pineapples will be eliminated from the shipment.

5.6.2 Capacity building and awareness-raising for small-scale producers

In addition to quality control measures, OCAB has initiated various programs to improve product quality for small-scale producers. An overview of these programs is presented in this section.

It should also be noted that the pineapple sector is supported by several international organizations such as the European Union, the Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP), and the French research institute 'Centre de Coopération Internationale et Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD)'. These organizations implement programs focussing particularly on the small-scale producer; while they are important they are not described in detail here. However, where appropriate, examples of such initiatives are referred to in this and other chapters of this thesis. A key example is the EU fertilizer program described in Section 5.6.3.

As noted earlier, for many small-scale producers the international market exists at a distance – geographically as well as culturally – so they do not fully grasp market developments and demands. This is particularly the case for producers who are not members of export organizations, whose access to market information is extremely limited and therefore their knowledge is heavily influenced by the perceptions of others surrounding them. Most of these producers sell their products to other producers, or to intermediaries, and have little insight into how the product is later handled or sold. In addition, local buyers of these products are rarely interested in enlightening or assisting these producers.

On the other hand, medium and large-scale producers and export organizations, acknowledge that pineapples produced by those small-scale producers who act without adequate knowledge of market requirements, harm the image of the Ivorian pineapple in the international market because the fruit can be of heterogeneous quality. In response, some of export organizations employ extension agents who visit and advise small-scale producers (although only their members). However, the number of

[130] In 1998, producers paid 1,21 FCFA/Kg (± 0.2 Euro cent/kg) for Veritas services (Source: Interview with OCAB, August 1998).

extension agents is limited and, in interviews with small-scale producers their skills were often questioned (including by the management of OCAB). In 2000, a total of only 9 extension agents were employed by the different export organizations, although this number rose to 14 in 2002 (OCAB, 2003:32).

In addition to the efforts of export organizations, OCAB has employed one pineapple expert – a former government employee – who visits producers, as well as field offices of the export organizations, on a regular basis. The pineapple expert sometimes organizes meetings in the different regions to discuss topics such as quality, post-harvest handling, and the application of chemicals and fertilizers. I have attended some of the extension sessions. The agent used different extension materials such as slides, overhead sheets, large plastic sheets with pictures and booklets to discuss the different topics. [131] These extension materials are well designed and show simple pictures, with only a few words, and all relate well to the African situation. However, it should be noted that one pineapple expert can hardly be considered enough on the scale of the small-scale pineapple producer sector in Ivory Coast.

From the sessions I attended, it became clear that some producers did not understand, or misinterpreted, certain figures. For instance, the agent used a lot of figures which showed undesired and incorrect practices, which were, in my opinion, very easy for a layman to understand. However, when asked to explain what was wrong with a certain representation – for instance a drawing of someone spraying chemicals on a plant while the sun shines very brightly – this defeated many producers. It became apparent that most producers are not educated and are not used to interpret figures in this way. The agent, however, paid little attention.

> Quality issues were a topic during one of OCAB's extension sessions which I attended. Forty-nine members (only men) of a certain export organization attended this meeting. They all came in their working clothes and some even brought equipment with them, which shows that they came directly from the field. The agent started the meeting by introducing himself and introducing me as a researcher from Holland; he did not mention whether I was doing research for a company, an institute or for my thesis. His first question to the producers was whether they know where their pineapples are going after they leave Abidjan. One producer answered "*to the 'Pays des Blanches'*". Since I was the only white person in the room, everybody looked at me when this person gave his answer. The agent responded "*indeed, the pineapples are going to the 'Pays des Blanches', one of the countries where our pineapples are sold is Holland, the country where this lady comes from*". During the rest of the meeting, Europe was referred to as

[131] The material is developed upon the request of OCAB by CIRAD and COLEACP. OCAB has also prepared several videotapes made by local comedians on different topics related to the pineapple sector.

the '*Pays des Blanches*'. It seemed that everybody understood what was meant by this expression.

The agent explained the route which the boats make before reaching the ports in Marseilles and Dieppe. He made use of a map of Africa and Europe. He also explained how many days it takes for the boats to reach these ports. He continued to indicate that the pineapples were, in most cases, transported to different places in France and in Europe, which takes more time, often even days. He also told the audience that whenever a retailer has bought the fruit, this retailer has to redistribute these to his clients. On a blackboard, the agent indicated the complete route that the fruit has to make from the harbour in Abidjan until the market place in Europe (in most cases a supermarket). He concluded that in some cases the fruit is sold 20 to 25 days after the pineapples had left Abidjan. Most producers were surprised as they had not thought that it takes so long for the pineapples to be sold. The agent emphasized that if the pineapples arrive on a Monday, some fruits will remain on the supermarket shelves until Thursday or Friday, since most '*Blanches*' tend to buy pineapples for the weekend.

The agent continued his session with pictures of activities that could reduce the quality of the pineapples, such as not applying enough fertilizer to the plants, wrong harvesting practices, rough handling and exposure of fruit to the sun. At each picture, the agent asked the producers to explain what was wrong and why. The producers participated actively. After one hour, the agent brought the producers to the packing station of the cooperative and showed pineapples that were rejected for export. He asked the producers why these pineapples were rejected. When someone answered, the agent would ask the employees of the packing station to agree or disagree with this person. If the employees disagreed they would explain why they had rejected this fruit. At one point, the agent asked three producers to conduct a quality check at the packing station. The employees of the packing station supervised these three producers and reacted whenever the producer made a mistake, explaining the error. The session took three hours and I had the impression that the producers enjoyed it and understood most of the points made by the agent.

Medium and large-scale producers dealing with small-scale producers employ their own extension agents to assist these producers, and in this manner build up the necessary awareness and capacity. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, in many cases, the most important activities are conducted by employees of the larger producer.

5.6.3 Establishment of a fertilizer program

Working with the Ivorian government, OCAB approached the European Union to raise the need for a credit support program. In January 1995, the EU started the credit support program ('Programme d'appui à la filière ananas en Côte d'Ivoire'). The budget for this program was 6.4 million Euro of which approximately 63% was for credit and the remaining for professional supporting staff, over a 4 year implementation

period (OCAB, 1998:9). The overall aim was to increase total pineapple production and enhance the quality performance by small-scale producers. To reach this aim, the Program offered the opportunity to obtain agricultural inputs such as chemicals and fertilizers at a reduced price and with a pay-back period of 6 months; it did not lend cash to producers. The Program also provides credits to export organizations, for example for the rehabilitation, improvement, and establishment of packing stations (EU, 1998).

The Program collaborated with producers exclusively through the export organizations. If a producer wishes to purchase fertilizer or chemicals, he or she could make a request to an export organization, which in turn, transmitted such requests to the Program. Employees of the Program examined the request and, together with the producer, prepared a production plan which indicated at what points in the production cycle the producer needed to apply particular inputs. Participating producers needed to adhere to the fertilizer formula prescribed by the Program (15 grams of NPKMg/plant), and use recommended chemicals. Producers paid a 7% interest over the total credit, to be paid back over an agreed period of time. Contracts were signed between the Program and the export organizations, which guaranteed pay-back by the producer. The export organization would, in turn, automatically deduct the payback from the revenues of the producer, at the agreed rate of return.

Extension agents of the export organizations visited the producers on a regular basis in order to ensure that fertilizers and chemicals were applied according to the agreed production plan. The pineapple expert of OCAB also worked for the EU credit support program and would regularly meet agents of the export organization in the field to discuss potential problems; sometimes combined visits were made to producers.

Implementation of the Program was not without problems: for example, where producers would sell (part of) their inputs to others and subsequently not apply the prescribed amount of fertilizer or chemicals. In such cases, the producers were excluded from future participation in the credit program. One medium-scale producer, displeased with the organization of the Program, complained "*some producers have difficulties obtaining credit because they do not have good relations with the export organization. Others are hesitant to participate, because they are afraid that they will not be able to pay back. Producers who are not a member of an export organization can in most cases not benefit from the program at all since the export organization does not want to provide the necessary guarantee for them. These are often poor farmers who consequently miss out on this opportunity and the quality of their products therefore remains low*".

Up to December 1998, 605 producers had benefited from the EU credit support program, covering a total of 4,742 hectares. According to the EU program, the average production per hectare of small-scale producers who joined the credit program had increased from 25 tons/ha to 40 tons/ha (EU, 1998:8). In view of this success, the fertilizer credit program was extended for another 4 years (by an additional 6.4 million Euro), until the end of September 2002.[132]

5.6.4 Branding the Ivorian pineapple

Triggered by increasing international competition, OCAB initiated a discussion with its members on the development of an Ivorian pineapple brand. Although, Ivory Coast has developed a country of origin logo for its pineapples which is attached to the cardboard boxes, the Ivorian pineapple is sold under many different brand names, often connected to individual importers. Also, a few – mainly medium and large-scale producers – export their pineapples under their own brand name. Certain larger producers, such as SCB, even use multiple brand names (see also Box 5.4). Even though there is a country logo, OCAB acknowledged that because of the large number of brand names used by the sector, and because these brands are not well known by the European consumer, there is no consumer loyalty to these brands. OCAB therefore started to introduce a new pineapple brand under the name "Ivoria", which was presented to the sector in April 1999.

Box 5.4: The multiple brands of a large-scale pineapple producer.

Société de Culture Bananière (SCB), founded in 1959 by a Frenchman, is the largest banana and pineapple producer in Ivory Coast. For its first 35 years, SCB cultivated only bananas. Since 1995, SCB has also been involved in pineapple cultivation. In 1997, SCB was sold to 'Group Compagnie Fruitière', in which Dole has a share. The Company trades its pineapples under four different brand names: first grade pineapples are traded under the brand names Dole and SCB; second grades are traded under the names Ryna and Délice (Source: Interview with the Director of SCB, November 1999).

On the stickers and labels that are attached to its pineapples and bananas, SCB includes its website address (www.bananes.com). This attractive website informs consumers about the production sites, quality control practices, research activities, their labels, overall information about pineapples and bananas, and provides some tips on keeping fruit fresh, as well as recipes for pineapples and bananas. In 2006, the SCB website became the Compagnie Fruitière website.

It is OCAB's objective for small-scale producers to make use of the new brand name, mainly because it has been met with a lukewarm response by medium and large-scale producers who say they do not see a need to change their brand name. Also, some

[132] Source: Interviews with OCAB and SMPA, September 2003.

argue that their importer would not allow them to change the name, while others fear that the quality of the pineapples marketed under this new brand name would not be able to match the quality of their produce, consequently damaging their reputation.

Nevertheless, six export organizations of small-scale producers reacted positively to the introduction of the new brand name, namely CFC, FDL, Cofex-ci, Cofruidor, Socofruit and Entagri (Banador). It was agreed that "Ivoria" should only represent high quality pineapples, and OCAB therefore insisted that export organizations wanting to export under the name "Ivoria" undertake extra quality control practices in their packing stations, including a 100% check on pallets. The participating packing stations have appointed one or more of their employees as "Ivoria" agents. Some of provide advice to producers on cultivation practices, whereas others conduct the required quality inspections. To build up the required capacity, OCAB organizes training sessions for such agents, particularly in relation to quality control practices.

OCAB also evaluated the situation at the different packing stations in order to advise the export organizations on adaptations to be made, including equipment required. The earlier-described EU program offered credit facilities to these export organizations to support the packing stations in upgrading their packing stations. With financial support of the same EU program, OCAB designed special cardboard boxes carrying the new brand name. It took until February 2000 for the first "Ivoria" pineapples to be exported to Europe. At the time, the only export organization that managed to negotiate with their importer to export a number of pineapples of high quality under the new brand name, was FDL.[133] In 2001, FDL exported 4,000 pallets of pineapples under the name "Ivoria". FDL indicated that the price of the "Ivoria" pineapple was on average 50 FCFA/kg (7.5 Euro cent/kg) higher than the price of pineapples exported under their regular brand name, thanks to the higher fruit quality (OCAB, 2003:35).

A number of small-scale producers and export organizations have, however, reacted sceptically to the concept of the "Ivoria" brand. Their main fear is that this brand name will represent a second grade pineapple, in comparison to the higher quality and homogeneity of pineapples of the medium and large-scale producers. OCAB, nonetheless, firmly believes in the positive effect of the Ivorian brand name on international markets; the future will tell.

[133] Source: Interview with OCAB, December 1999.

5.6.5 Research activities

Since 1976, the research station Idefor-DFA[134] in Anguededou (close to Abidjan) is the only national research institute involved in research on pineapples in Ivory Coast. The research institute has 4 ha of land available for trial fields, as well as 70 ha of land for the production of pineapples for export. A production capacity has been established to ensure sustainability of the institute. Many producers, however, complain that Idefor-DFA is mainly involved in the export of pineapples and neglects serious research activities. Also, the actual impact of Idefor-DFA on the sector's development is questionable, due to its limited outreach work. For example, the institute does not offer demonstrations to pineapple producers and producers have to pay for its services, which automatically excludes many small-scale farmers due financial reasons, whereas larger-scale producers often opt for in-house research programs.

As a result of the absence of a good research program, some pineapple producers started their own research activities, for example by setting up a few trial fields with other pineapple varieties or by collaborating with international research institutes, such as CIRAD in France. Also, many medium and large-scale producers send samples of their soil, water, plants and fruit to accredited laboratories in Europe on a regular basis, for investigation and advice. One producer even stated that when serious problems appear, they fly experts in from Europe investigate the problem. Larger companies, such as SCB, have established their own laboratories.

In 2000, OCAB, upon the request of its members, collaborated with the private research institute 'Le Centre Techniques Interprofessionnel des Fruits et Légumes (CIFEL)' in Abidjan after realizing that it had to respond to three important trends. The first was the declining quality of the pineapple variety, Cayenne Lisse, whose vegetative material had degenerated since the 1940s, and an increase in soil-born diseases that affected the planted shoots. The second was, as discussed in Chapter 3, the growing interest of the international market in the new pineapple variety "Del Monte Gold" (MD-2), which was developed by Del Monte and launched on the international market in 1996. The third trend was the increasing concern over food safety by the European Union. As a result, the EU adjusted the maximum residue level of particular pesticides as well as the allowed level of ethylene.

These three trends had been neglected for a number of years. However, when the EU detected high levels of ethylene on the Ivorian pineapples, which were consequently refused (see also Chapter 4), the quality of the Cayenne Lisse continued to decline and the MD-2 variety proved to be a very popular variety in the European markets, OCAB

[134] Idefor-DFA is part of the 'Centre National la Recherche Agronomique' (CNRA) of the Ministry of Research and Science.

and its members understood that it was about time that the Ivorian pineapple sector responded to these developments. Upon OCAB's request, CIFEL therefore started trial fields to evaluate the cultivation of different pineapple varieties, including Queen Victoria, Columbus, Rondon, MD-2, and a new Cayenne Lisse variety. Also, a program was initiated, in collaboration with COLEACP's 'Pesticide Initiative Program (PIP)', to reduce the use of pesticides and ethylene, in order to meet new requirements with regard to the maximum residue level of pesticides and ethylene and the traceability of these products. Furthermore, CIFEL collaborated with CIRAD to develop and introduce new cultivation practices to improve the production of the Cayenne Lisse and in-vitro methods for the MD-2 variety[135] through training programs.

5.6.6 Implementation of a tracking and tracing system

Driven in particular by the new demands for quality and safety assurance, the wish to follow the products from farm to fork has increased over the past years. Due to food scandals (such as BSE and dioxin problems) in Europe in the late 1980s and 1990s, amongst other factors, and to consequent consumer concerns, retailers, importers, export organizations and therefore also many producers increasingly wanted to track and trace their products in order to know the exact circulation of the products, who had handled the products and what was the quality level at different stages in the process.

In response to these developments, OCAB took the decision in 1999 to set up a comprehensive tracking and tracing system. The system was fully operational only in April 2003, and OCAB's presumption that tracking and tracing would become a key element in the international trade of fresh produce has meanwhile proven to be correct. With the implementation of the General Food Law in January 2005, the EU now obliges tracking and tracing in food supply chains. Box 5.5 provides a description of the new tracking and tracing system, demonstrating its complexity.

[135] The large-scale producer SCB was the first producer to start with the cultivation of the new pineapple variety MD-2. Experts of Dole and of agricultural institutes abroad supported SCB in the introduction of this (expensive) new variety. The reproduction of the MD-2 variety is obtained by in-vitro technology. At the time of the initial field research, no other Ivorian producer was cultivating the MD-2 variety. However, during a visit to Ivory Coast in 2003, OCAB reported that a number of medium and large-scale producers have started to grow the new variety. Because of the high costs of the MD-2 variety, however, small-scale producers will not be able to switch over easily (Source: Interview with OCAB, September 2003).

Box 5.5: Complexity of the OCAB tracking and tracing system.

At the packing station level, information scanned to be linked to the bar code is manually inserted into the scanner. This includes: the destination code, producer's code, importer's code, number of the plot, brand name, size of the pallet (65 or 70 boxes, product calibre and colorization stage. Subsequently, this information is attached to a kind of credit card (at a cost of 3,000 FCFA, or 4.5 Euro, each in 2003). Each time new info is scanned, the date and time of scanning are registered on the card. The credit card is handed over to the driver who transports the pineapples to the harbour. When the truck arrives in the harbour the credit card is inserted into a machine that transmits all the information to a computer.

Upon arrival at the port, information on the date and time of arrival of the truck in the harbour, the number of pallets in the truck, weight of the truck, code of the boat, number of the truck and the number of the quay where the pallets are to be unloaded is added to the computer system. After unloading all bar codes on the pallets are scanned. New information is added, including date, time and name of the person who scanned the pallets while unloading.

During quality control measures Veritas scans each bar code and adds information on the quality inspection, including the Veritas person conducting the inspection, date and time of inspection, whether the pallet has been approved or rejected, and the reason for rejection. Once inspected and approved, SMPA is responsible for loading the pallets onto the boat. Again, an SMPA employee scans the bar code and adds information, including his personal code, date and time of loading, and the zone where the pallet is placed in the boat. All added information by the different agents is send to the server of SMPA. SMPA subsequently sends the information to the export organizations and to Léon Vincent and Veritas in Marseilles and Dieppe. During the boat trip, information on climatic conditions in the reefer boat is regularly added to the system. At arrival in Europe, Léon Vincent and Veritas add their information to the system, including date and time of arrival and handling. SMPA and Léon Vincent subsequently transfer the information to an intranet that can be accessed by all actors involved. Producers, for example, are thus able to follow their pallets from packing station to the harbour in France.

Until November 2003, information on the production process (such as usage of pesticides, ethylene, and fertilizers) was not included in the system, since importers had not demanded such information; also, because small-scale producers were not registering their production practices, such registration practices would be difficult to implement.

The EU supported OCAB in the design and implementation of the tracking and tracing system, which uses bar codes and applies scanning machines to link information to theses codes; all packing stations, the port operators, Veritas, Léon Vincent and most of the importers that have long-term relations with the export organizations, have a

scanning machine.[136] These TP (Terminal Portable) scanners were paid for by these actors (at 1 million FCFA each, or 1,520 Euro, in 2003). The export organizations obtained credit from the EU credit support program to purchase a TP scanner.

The tracking and tracing system provides all actors with the opportunity to follow the flow of the fruit. A producer can, for instance, log onto the Intranet to check where the products are and whether they have already been unloaded from the ship. However, for many small-scale producers, access to and interpretation of this information is not easy. Most of these producers live in remote areas, have no means to obtain Internet access, and do not have the education to analyse the information.

During my visit to Ivory Coast in 2003, I spoke to a producer who was wondering why all this 'fuzz' was needed just for some pineapples. From his perspective it did not make sense to build such a complex system around the pineapple as there have never been many problems with the fruit. According to him, the system was designed purely to provide OCAB, Léon Vincent and the importers with a strong control mechanism. He believed that these actors would benefit most from it. When we started to talk about the rising consumers concerns in Europe about the use of chemicals, he argued "*European consumers should not worry too much about this as they have to peel the skin from the pineapple anyway before they can eat the fruit*". It appears, therefore, that although a sophisticate 'expert management system', as introduced by OCAB, may seems a very valuable marketing tool, many of the producers operating through OCAB may not see the relevance of it as they are not aware of developments in the international market that warrant such system.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how different actors, in particular intermediaries, in the Ivorian pineapple sector have responded to the different developments and trends at the local level as well as at the international pineapple market level, in order to first gain and later maintain their position as the major pineapple supplier of the European market. The centralized production, export and import coordination system, based upon far-reaching institutional framing of the sector, has resulted in a fairly unique case in which producers, exporters and importers are associated in one organization: OCAB. OCAB is a striking example of a sector in which individual actors, who are in fact competitors of each other, collaborate for the benefit of the group. The consequent framework for

[136] According to OCAB, the EU invested 532,000 Euro in the development of the tracking and tracing system, 2 million Euro in cooling facilities for the new fruit quay in Abidjan, and 16 million Euro in the construction of the new fruit quay, which became operational in 2003 (Source: Interviews with OCAB and SMPA, September 2003).

cooperation is, however, not excluded from social tension between the actors involved. As this chapter has shown, power relations as an outcome of social interactions play an important role, and a number of actors such as Léon Vincent, have obtained particular agency over others by creating a dependency relation. However, as argued by many different actors, the Ivorian pineapple sector could not have achieved what it has today and managed to compete in the 'big league' without such a concerted approach.

CHAPTER 6

FINAL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters have provided empirical information on the field of social action of local actors in the Ivorian pineapple sector, and the manner in which these actors have responded to a number of key trends and developments in the global pineapple commodity network. The information presented in the foregoing chapters has sought to shed light on the way in which local actors internalize global processes in their actions, practices and social relations, and how these actions, practices and relations are reordered, over time and space. As apparent from this study, actors observe, understand and translate wider developments differently, in accordance with their own life-world experiences and local knowledge.

The research presented in this thesis analyses the struggles, negotiations and power relations of different actors operating in and connected to the pineapple commodity network. To comprehend the specific scenarios and circumstances in which such actors manoeuvre for space, an actor-oriented approach has been applied, with a particular focus on the life-worlds and the local experience and knowledge of these actors. The personal stories presented in the text have sought to enhance our understanding of the conditions in which local actors operate, highlighting the complex network interactions involved in shaping of such conditions.

In this final chapter, I synthesise the central insights arising from this research, as well as further analyse a number of key globalization processes which have, and remain, important in shaping the field of social action in the Ivorian pineapple sector. The discussions and analyses presented in the following sections highlight the relevance of such processes within this context, including the expansion of production territories and de-territorialization of products, the influence of technological developments, the demand for production capacity, the trend towards fully coordinated supply chain activities and the related consolidation of companies, and increased market orientation and consumer awareness.

6.2 The 'de-territorialization' of pineapples

The pineapple is traditionally a local product. Originating from South and Central America, it was imported to Europe by early seafarers around 1500, from where it was distributed to tropical and sub-tropical European colonies in the West Indies, and later to colonies in Africa. The pineapple has thus evolved from a territorially specific product, to a commodity cultivated on a global basis. Similar developments have been seen with other agricultural products such as described in Chapter 2. This 'de-territorialization' of products was initially driven by a need to bring production 'closer to home' (Europe), since sourcing pineapples from distant territories was not feasible, due to the long travel time. Later on, developments in sea transport as well as technology (e.g. canning) made it possible to transfer pineapple production to territories (such as Ivory Coast) hosting cheap resources, such as land and labour, and favourable climatic conditions, which eliminated the need for expensive greenhouse production in less suitable environments, as was the case in the 17th century in Europe (Rohrbach et al., 2003).

At the beginning of the 20th century, in the early colonial period of Ivory Coast, French colonizers introduced the pineapple as a commercial commodity for their home market. These French colonists established well-organized administrative, production and distribution systems, as they sought to enhance the production and export of fruit. The subsequent efficient production, sourcing and distribution network, or 'control of space' as Hendrickson and Heffernan (2002) call it, led to the dominance of Ivorian fresh pineapples in the European market, peaking at a 95% European market share by the mid 1980s. This role of Ivory Coast as *the* pineapple production area for the European market in effect implied a virtual 're-territorialization' of pineapples.

Considering these developments, the question arises as to w*hat were the main effects of this 're-territorialization' of the pineapple on the field of social action of local inhabitants*? First of all, it should be noted that this 're-territorialization' of the pineapple as a commodity, which was paralled by the emergency of a large-scale plantation economy of various other commodities, induced a flow of labour, as immigrants flocked to Ivory Coast in search of employment, as shown in Chapter 4. This immigration process can be characterized as a process in which the 'de-territorialization' and 're-territorialization' of labour took place simultaneously (i.e. people came from surrounding countries such as Burkina Faso and Mali to settle in the southern region of Ivory Coast). The movement of labour into Ivory Coast had several consequences for the social fabric of the villages in southern Ivory Coast, especially since the influx of migrants and a consequent pressure on land in and around the villages provoked local ethnic tensions between 'native' inhabitants and migrants. As

documented in Chapter 4, access to land was traditionally relatively free, requiring no more than verbal agreement with the '*chef de terre*' of the village.[137] Apart from cases such as those described by Colin and Ayouz (2006), whereby village resistance to land control by outsiders arose quite early on, migrants were in most cases able to obtain a piece of land relatively easily. However, increasing demand resulted in land acquiring a 'market value'. Consequently, traditional control over land at the village level on a lineage basis changed into a multiplicity of individual and family appropriation rights, with newcomers having to rent land from 'native' individuals and families. Hence, a new pattern of social relations arose, giving increasing power to those actors who controlled access to land.

After Independency, the Ivorian government's land policy entailed usufruct rights to cultivation. This policy exacerbated pressure on land, since over time it became an increasingly scarce resource, giving rise to land disputes that in turn touched on ethnic tension sparking the generation of new social relations. In this context, the national land use policy lacked national-level mechanisms for settling disputes over landed property, which was left to arbitration at the village-level. This created a strong power-base for some village actors whose arbitration skills provided them with enough authority to exercise power over kin concerning the cultivation of agricultural commodities. In effect, a kind of dual-legal system was created that exposes a lack of integration between the official land use policy and the material base of agricultural production. Lockwood (1964) in a different but comparable context, contemplates on such incompatibility between the institutional system and its material base. He explains that when social groups fail to maintain the institutional order – in this case the village or lineage structure of land control – because of changes in the material base, e.g. pressure on land, then new patterns of social relations arise, often characterized by a lack of integration in the social system.

The new social formation associated with agricultural production and constituted by land 'ownership' and village conflict resolution established a powerful position for particular landowners. Alongside commercial benefits accrued from renting out land, many landowners became aware of the market opportunities that were associated with the pineapple business (alongside other commodities with a short production-cycle). Such landlords consequently initiated share-cropping agreements with their tenants, which allowed them a share in the profits of pineapple sales. As shown in Chapter 4, these landowners managed to obtain considerable leverage in determining the use and tenancy of their land. Their power position reflects, among others things, a tendency to

[137] Later on, this local system was institutionalized at a national level through the official policy of the newly established independent Ivorian government, which determined that 'land belongs to those who cultivate it' (or 'land use entails land rights').

'label' tenants on the basis of ethnicity, where different rules apply for different groups of people. For example, foreign migrants from other African nations are often disfavoured when seeking to obtain land tenancies. In many cases, racial mistrust of such tenants is translated into specific tenant agreements, such as a requirement to pay rent in advance.

6.3 Local interpretations of international consumer behaviour

As argued by Marsden (1996), consumption affects the way in which rural space is constructed and used. The influence of consumer behaviour on product specifications, and related production, distribution and marketing systems, is an issue taken up in much contemporary debate (e.g. Grievink et al., 2002; Gereffi et al., 2001; Marsden et al., 2000). The previous chapters have shown that in the context of this study, the international pineapple consumer has a considerable influence on the way in which local rural space is constructed and used in the southern region of Ivory Coast.

As shown in Chapters 4 and 5, most medium and large-scale producers, have good access to market information, which allows them to respond to market and consumption trends in an informed manner. In the case of Ivory Coast, many of these medium and large-scale producers are of European origin; as a consequence they have little difficulty in understanding European consumer behaviour. Indeed, one might say that in terms of cultural distance, producers of European origin are not far removed from consumers in Europe. In this respect, ethnic origin seems to enhance these producers understanding of the global pineapple consumer (although undoubtedly there is a group of well-educated, well-travelled people of African origin who do have a good understanding of European markets). By the same token, we may argue that producers who are not well connected to the European market or the European culture are at a disadvantage for understanding consumer behaviour in these markets. We also conclude that most small-scale producers are not directly linked to the international market and depend on intermediaries (brokers). These brokers include the export organizations, larger producers and local traders (buyers), and the sector-wide organization OCAB, that function as the main 'entities' (actors, organizations, institutions) constituting the field of pineapple trade in the international market, and also the pivot of market information in the Ivorian context.

A question that arises from this apparently limited access to market information is: *in what way do small-scale producers perceive, internalize and act upon international consumer behaviour?* During the field survey it became clear that, although most small-scale producers are indeed not well connected to the market, they do have a vision of consumer preference and behaviour in the '*Pays des Blanches*', as Europe is

referred to by local producers. Such a vision is shaped and internalized by these producers within the context of their own life-worlds and local knowledge. They create, that is, their own 'global reality' (Arce, 1997), which may determine a whole series of related courses of action *vis-à-vis* what Latour (1987) calls 'action at a distance'. This action is exercised via the deployment of social networks and relations, technology and local knowledge.

Chapters 4 and 5 provided a number of examples of how small-scale producers interpret consumer behaviour and preferences, internalizing and translating them into particular practices, to produce what in their perception is a 'global pineapple'. These examples illustrate how local perceptions of consumer behaviour may be shaped by what is locally observed; in this way local consumer behaviour is transposed to the global level. One expression of this is the way small-scale producers tend to export on a certain day of the month, based on observations of local behaviour and their imagining capacities of identical European consumers' buying behaviour. Another illustration is the practice of farmers to apply relatively large quantities of nitrogen and choose larger shoots in order to produce large pineapples, as are preferred in local markets (however, affecting with this practice the sugar content of the fruit). Again, these practices are based upon local consumer preference for large pineapples and demonstrate the small-scale producers' lack of knowledge concerning the importance of 'sweetness' of pineapples in the European market.

Chapter 4 also shows that, in the absence of close interaction with European consumers, changes in consumer demand are only internalized slowly. For example, most small-scale producers tend to export their harvest just before Christmas. This practice is based upon the fact that traditionally this has been the time of year when there is highest demand for pineapples in Europe. However, nowadays demand has more or less levelled out over the year. Despite the fact that export organizations and larger producers have attempted to explain this pattern of market demand, traditional practice still prevails among small-scale producers.

These examples suggest that small-scale pineapple producers are hampered in terms of access to information, with only limited knowledge of market requirements and trends, and a poor understanding of the culture in which European consumers live. These limitations show how lack of information and understanding of consumer behaviour also shapes producers actions and practices. Established practices, such as exporting pineapples around the 20th of the month, demonstrate that the market is organized through a different kind of rationality, and that the local 'reality' can provide an effective way of solving pragmatic issues such as the coordination of a small volume of pineapples for a large group of producers around a particular date.

Yet, despite these limitations, these producers appear – at least thus far – to be 'successfully' operating in the international market. Thus the question arises: *how are these small-scale producers able to participate in the global market, given their restricted local knowledge*? In answering this question, it should, first of all, be noted that many small-scale producers are actually quite experienced and knowledgeable when it comes to pineapple cultivation. Many started as labourers on plantations or by assisting relatives and friends before establishing their own production sites. Also, producers regularly meet and discuss issues related to pineapple cultivation; many even share the same labour force for field preparation, fertilization and spraying of ethylene. Furthermore, since most small-scale producers export their fruit at the same time of year, they are able to initiate collective activities in the field. Interpersonal networks and the exchange of information and know-how among fellow producers are therefore important sources of knowledge (see also Arce and Long, 1994).

Despite this local knowledge base, the examples presented in this thesis demonstrate how a lack of accurate market information can pose restrictions on small-scale producers. Chapters 4 and 5 showed that the main reason why small-scale producers are able to participate in the international market is that they operate within a strong institutional framework. This framework is constituted by a range of intermediaries: the overall sector-wide organization (OCAB) and related agents, export organizations, traders, and importers. In effect, these intermediaries act as transmitters of market trends and developments, by setting requirements for product specifications (size, colour and taste), undertaking quality assurance activities to assure that such requirements are met, and by providing knowledge on particular practices to meet these requirements. In some cases, interventions from intermediaries go as far as providing both inputs such as fertilizers, chemicals and packing materials, and qualified labour to conduct crucial activities in the field. At the same time, they take care of all distribution and marketing activities from the farm-gate onwards. In many cases, the relations between producers and intermediaries are formalized through contract-farming agreements. Latour (1993) explains that these intermediary agents in fact serve as emissaries of 'network lengthening'; or, as Whatmore and Thorne (1997) argues, they are mobilised to sustain a web of connections over greater distance.

While this institutional framework is undoubtedly instrumental in providing small-scale producers with the required modalities to operate in the international market, the same institutional framework can constrain them and limit their room for manoeuvre. The interventions of intermediaries in fact determine to a large extent the practices conducted by producers. Hence, they exhibit considerable agency – or power – over these producers. It may therefore be concluded that the operational space for small-scale producers is constrained by the way they are socialized into a framework of rules

and practices underpinned by power relations. While, on the one hand, this agency limits their room for manoeuvre, it presents at the same time a powerful and dynamic force for enlarging and creating spaces for these producers to participate in competitive international markets.

In this situation of international competition, pineapples thus become the object of reorganizing rural space and repositioning knowledge into practices which are functional to the trends and developments of commodity circulation in the global market. This reordering process can in theoretical terms be related to what Luckmann (1970) describes as a variety of 'worlds' (or spaces) that are connected to one another. This understanding of a global process sees actors in the intermediary space, as defined in Chapter 2, playing the function of transmitters (or translators) of information and knowledge from one space – the global market – to another – the local forms of production. At the same time, these intermediaries often set the 'rules of the game' (e.g. production guidelines, regulations) for producers to act upon. These practices generate social interactions leading to changes in both spaces, limiting the room for manoeuvre of local small-scale producers in Ivory Coast, while opening up opportunities in the global pineapple market.

Chapter 5 described how, over time, several producers' organizations were established in Ivory Coast. Of these organizations, OCAB, the 9th overall export organization since 1948, has evolved to become what appears to be the central intermediary organization in the coordination of the Ivorian pineapple sector. In this respect, OCAB is by far the most powerful body within the contemporary institutional framework of the sector. The powerful position and mechanisms of OCAB are described in the following section.

6.4 The powerful coordinative mechanism of OCAB

The existence of OCAB as a producers' and exporters' association representing all export organizations and the large majority of large, medium and small-scale producers, provides the Ivorian pineapple sector with a powerful mechanism for collective action, and an effective tool for constructing order in this highly diverse sector. In trying to understand the mechanics of collective action and the way in which order is constructed, we should not take for granted the coordinating mechanisms but instead explore how such power, norms and organizational practices are generated through social interaction (see Law, 1992 and Lockwood, 1964). We should question, for example, how such interactions were established and came into being and how the social organizations involved have overcome resistance.

To understand the current position of OCAB, we first have to recognize the historical context of its evolution. As described in Chapter 4, French colonizers established a strong administrative system in order to support and stimulate the development of the pineapple sector; in effect they generated a framework for creating an efficient production, distribution and marketing system. Later on, this administrative system gave rise to the creation of a sector-wide organization which consisted of producers' local organizations and a central coordinating body. The latter, in time, evolved through several cycles involving the rise and fall of sector-wide organizations, which eventually led to the establishment of OCAB in 1991.

The establishment of this centralized approach initially stemmed from a need to consolidate export volumes for transport by sea, as well as a general demand to control processes in the pineapple sector. Later on, aspects such as quality assurance, research and development, marketing, and tracking and tracing became important functions of the organization. Nevertheless, even today, the facilitative function of OCAB in organizing sea transport is still the backbone of the central coordinating body. The mechanism put in place by OCAB – or more precisely, by its members, the local export organizations – and its predecessors, for this purpose, is based upon a system whereby producers can only export through one of its member export organizations, at least if they want to make use of its regular boat lines. From OCAB's perspective, this organizational set-up is important in order to be able to efficiently plan export volumes and related sea transport, and thus lower transport costs, the highest cost factor in the production-export process. Since OCAB is the only organization large enough to contract its own reefer boats on a regular basis, producers do not have a choice other than to export their fruit through OCAB, and therefore to obey to its rules and regulations.

Chapter 5 illustrates how OCAB has responded to global trends by creating mechanisms for the coordination and control of the Ivorian pineapple supply chain. First of all, in relation to the above, and in order to achieve an accurate export prediction system, OCAB's members have established a functional system whereby producers have to predict, in advance, the expected number of pallets to be exported for any particular date; failure to comply with such predicted export volume may result in producers paying for non-used volume. Secondly, in response to increasing international competition, an advanced quality control system has been put in place. Also, a highly sophisticated tracking and tracing system has been established, in response to European buyers' new demands for food safety assurance. All of these mechanisms can be held to represent disciplinary systems of control. As Foucault (1977) points out in a very different context, such schemes of discipline generate forms of social power – in this case, a power exercised over producers – that becomes a basis

for the order required to participate competitively in the global pineapple market (see also Clegg and Wilson, 1991). The above developments have therefore provided a new facilitative mandate for OCAB, which, in turn, has further strengthened the power-base of the central coordinated organization. Producers – in particular small-scale producers – increasingly depend on OCAB for reacting strategically to developments in the global markets.

It has become apparent that over the years OCAB has become a very influential agent in the Ivorian pineapple sector; in fact, one could argue that OCAB's responses to globalization trends have led to a restructuring of the Ivorian pineapple sector. As argued above, in understanding OCAB's power-base, it is important to identify the mechanics of such power in terms of the social interactions that take place between the actors involved, including aspects of economic functionality and social resistance. This is important to understand because OCAB is not just shaping the Ivorian pineapple sector without any challenge from the rank and file that make up the backbone of the organization. To stress this consideration we might have to recall *who in fact is OCAB*?

Although in theory most actors in the pineapple sector are directly or indirectly represented within OCAB's membership, some of these actors have obtained a powerful position in the organization. In particular, larger producers, who in many cases also head some related export organization, have a strong voice in the decisions taken by OCAB. Some of these producers have been involved in the pineapple sector for a long time – indeed some since colonial times – and have established strong relations with well-established importers, mainly, in France. These actors use OCAB to promote their interests or, as van der Ploeg (2003) and Long (2003) put it, to develop their own individual 'projects' by applying their power over other actors in the group to mobilise and enrol others in the achievement of their goals. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that from a producer's perspective (whether small or large), the dominant orientation that drives the organization is in fact a common goal: to generate enough volume to transport the fruit overseas. Consequently, the strategic practices and disciplines embedded in OCAB are largely directed towards achieving this collective interest.

Next to the larger producers, other dominant agents and actors within the context of OCAB are the French freight forwarding company Léon Vincent, European importers, and the independent international quality control organization, Veritas. Although not actually members of OCAB, they all have a particular mandate, which they have been given by OCAB, through which they are able to influence the rules of the Ivorian pineapple business. For example, Léon Vincent, as the nominated freight forwarding company of OCAB, is basically responsible for contracting reefer boats and for making

the necessary logistical and administrative arrangements for the transport and importation of the produce. However, at the same time, the Company assures supply of inputs such as fertilizers, chemicals and packing materials, and pre-financed freight costs. The latter in particular creates a situation of dependency, especially for small-scale producers: while the pre-financing arrangement is desperately needed it puts these producers in debt to the Company. As elucidated in Chapter 2, this relationship of constant dependency has power implications for small-scale producers who are not able to quit this system but are obliged to deal with the freight forwarding company to repay their debts.

Similarly, as shown in Chapter 5, the European importers and Veritas have, through their gatekeeper position in the market, gained leverage based upon such a dependency relationship. The importers ensure access to markets, while Veritas provides the validation of product quality, a prerequisite for competitive operation in European markets. In the case of the importers, 'trust' plays an important role, since the relations with importers are often based upon a long history of cooperation, built on the confidence that OCAB's members will operate fair and in a transparent way through market arrangements. However, this trust is not always justified. This was demonstrated by the case of Jacques in Section 5.5, who was transferred by his employer, a French import company, to a plantation in Ivory Coast in which the importer had shares. After working on the plantation for some time Jacques realized that the import company misused its powerful position, benefiting from deals that were not in the plantation owner's best interests. For example, when the importer faced problems with an important client, the importer tended to sell its products for a lower price then agreed with the plantation owner to favour the client, while the plantation owner lived under the impression that his partner in France could be trusted to protect their common interests.

It could thus be argued that OCAB is constructed by a large number of actors and agents, each with their own specific roles and interests. The overall picture is therefore of a highly complex network of actors and agents, operating within overlapping and interacting spaces, and influencing the network through various forms and levels of agency. The relationships, discourses and negotiations between these actors and agents determine the way in which OCAB as a sector-wide organization functions, including the strategies that are applied and actions that are taken. Hence, it may be concluded that the power-base and influence of OCAB, following authors such as Law (1994) and Latour (1986), are the outcome of network relationships rather than merely the property of an individual actor.

By participating in this sector-wide organization, certain less powerful actors may be unaware of some of the strategic decisions taken on their behalf by the more powerful ones. These more powerful actors are, as Latour (1986:273) argues, "able to define or redefine certain collective actions and practices". As Lukes (1974) observes, the less powerful actors may fail to recognise that their interests are at risk and consequently make no attempt to defend them. An example of this is the establishment of the import panel ASEIMPAC in 1995, described in Section 5.5. The members of ASEIMPAC consisted of selected European importers which had exclusivity rights to import pineapples from members of OCAB. During interviews, certain medium-scale producers pointed out that the constitution of the import panel was mainly based on historical ties, often deriving from the colonial era, and not on liberal market principles. Yet, all pineapple producers exporting through OCAB were forced to deal exclusively with members (importers) of ASEIMPAC, limiting their freedom of choice and room for manoeuvre to export. Nevertheless the majority of small-scale producers were unaware of the functioning, and often even of the existence, of the import panel. Although their interests were affected by this system, they did not give the issue much consideration. It was eventually thanks to resistance by mainly medium-scale producers, that ASEIMPAC was dissolved in 2000.

This example shows that inadequate awareness and understanding, in this case concerning the import panel, may limit the ability of some producers to respond to and internalize certain developments which affect them. Such a lack of knowledge may also result in resistance where this is not necessarily warranted. For example, producers often complain about the dominance of powerful agents. Arguments for resistance, however, are not always based on clear insights, but are often driven by feelings of being 'ruled' by others. This is illustrated by the critique made by producers of the monopoly position of OCAB in respect to sea transport, which overlooks the fact that without such a mechanism the sector would not be able to operate competitively on international markets.

Within the same context, one might question *whether, without the powerful mechanisms of OCAB, small-scale producers could participate in the global market?* Cases from other parts of the world (e.g. Humphrey and Schmitz, 2001; Dolan and Humphrey, 2000; Raynolds, 1997; Murray, 1997) show that the small-scale producers of fresh agricultural products tend to lose out in international markets. Given strong competition from TNCs, if acting alone, small-scale producers would be unable to meet the pre-requisites of efficiency, quality, safety and transparency required to operate on international markets. In this context, the way exports are organized is important. Outside the coordinating framework of an organization such as OCAB, the organization of sea transport alone would be beyond the capacity of most small-scale

producers. As argued earlier, the case of the Ivorian pineapple sector is quite unique in that OCAB operates on a sector-wide scale, covering both small and larger-scale producers. The share of total export volumes represented by small-scale producers – a little less than 50% – is however considerable. Thus in order to meet the requirements of this large group of small-scale producers, OCAB directs specific activities towards them (such as a fertilizer program, training, and quality control practices) in order to retain competitiveness in the European pineapple market.

It is questionable whether the same strategies could be applied if OCAB were a commercial company instead of an association of export organizations. The case of the company SCB, which was described in Section 4.6, would probably lead us to answer this with a 'no'. As was shown earlier, the company SCB decided to stop collaborating with small-scale producers because of the time-consuming coordinating activities of the agents of SCB to guide the small-scale producers with their production and because of low achievements in product quality and homogeneity of these small-scale producers, influencing the profits of the Company. Whereas SCB initially complemented its plantation-based production by contract-farming arrangements with over 100 small-scale farmers, the Company therefore eventually decided to focus only on their own farm production.

The organizational set-up of OCAB leaves individual producers with many choices and decisions, such as which export organization to deal with, or what type of contract agreement to engage in (share-cropping, contract-farming, or none). These decisions include what production practices to use and when to export fruit. Learning from the experience of SCB, it is highly unlikely that the same room for manoeuvre in terms of decision-making and negotiation could be offered by OCAB if it operated as a commercial company solely oriented towards profit and efficiency. One could therefore conclude that the organization of OCAB provides producers with a degree of freedom even though interventions by intermediaries constrain certain producer practices, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Undoubtedly, the central coordination of the Ivorian pineapple sector has been a key factor in ensuring the success of the pineapple sector, as a lead-supplier to the European fresh pineapple market in the 1980s. However, from the early 1990s, this position has been challenged by TNCs such as Dole and Del Monte, though OCAB still plays an important role in retaining a significant market share. The next section further elaborates on this aspect.

6.5 Facing the competition

Increased competition by pineapples from Central and South America, led by Dole and Del Monte, resulted in a considerable loss of market share by Ivorian pineapple producers and a drop in market prices in the early 1990s. OCAB's members realized that the sector had to make drastic changes in order to prevent further loss of market share. They decided, through OCAB, to tackle two major issues that affected, in their view, the competitive position of the Ivorian pineapple over pineapples from Central and South America; namely, the lowering of sea transport costs (and thus significantly reducing the total cost of fruit in the market), and an increase in the quality and homogeneity.

However, OCAB and its members did not sufficiently recognize two other important trends that boosted success by the TNCs which were in fact increased consumer awareness concerning food safety and identity, and the on-going consolidation and related power position of a few large-scale retail companies that have increasingly dictated the rules by which the European fresh produce sector operates (see Hendrickson and Heffernan, 2002; Gereffi et al., 2001; Marsden et al., 2000). As argued in Chapter 3, thanks to their technological and organizational advancement, the TNCs were able to effectively respond to these trends by offering a full package of services, including quality and safety assurance systems, added value products, promotional campaigns and technological developments that would meet market demands, by implication making the TNCs powerful actors in the global pineapple business. At the same time, Del Monte developed and introduced a new pineapple variety, the MD-2, which fulfilled demand for a very sweet and yellow pineapple. It was probably a combination of the introduction of this new variety, plus the fact that the TNCs were able to convince retailers of their capacity to respond quickly to consumer concerns, and the extra services offered by the TNCs – such as promotional campaigns and a global distribution network – that caused retailers to develop a preference for their pineapples. Since these pineapples are largely produced and sourced from Central and South America, this has impacted on the market for Ivorian pineapples.

Despite these developments in the international market, OCAB has been able to remain an important player in the European market. However, it could be questioned whether members of OCAB could have achieved a better market position in today's market by paying more attention to the dynamics in the local field of social action of producers and other local actors. As may be concluded from Chapter 5, OCAB is a very functionally oriented organization which does not intervene in the local struggles and tensions of their predominantly small-scale members. The organization has not, for

instance, attempted to homogenize contractual arrangements between producers and local traders and landlords, nor does it provide a 'code of practice' or guidelines for the production of pineapples. Furthermore, its advisory support services (extension agents) are very limited; OCAB's single extension agent provides advice on an ad-hoc basis only. Important issues such as the reported ethnic tension between producers and landlords have not been picked up. By deliberately deciding not to intervene in such local struggles and by accepting the local social setting in which producers operate, OCAB probably misses out on opportunities to enhance production practices by the numerous small-scale producers.

Chapter 3 explored the question of *to what extent do consumers actually play a role in the success rate of the new pineapple variety*? This question closely relates to Lockie's comments that query whether "discourses of 'consumer demand' merely obfuscate the manipulation of consumers by producers, retailers and others in the pursuit of accumulation (2002:278)?". Chapter 3 sought to answer this question by indicating that consumers do not show a clear preference for the new pineapple variety and that the success of the introduction of the new pineapple variety is probably explained by the strong market position of large-scale suppliers, mainly TNCs, and the retail sector. This conforms to the conclusions of other research, such as Dixon (1999) who, in an analysis of the domestic chicken-meat sector in Australia, concludes that effective control lies mostly with supermarket retailers. In a later text she argues that consumers seem willing to cede authority to retailers to negotiate transactions on their behalf (Dixon, 2002). This thus may indicate that consumers increasingly provide agency to retailers by depending on or trusting them to act as their 'watchdog' as it concerns product value (quality, safety, freshness, price, etc.). While this might be the case for the bulk of consumption, which is served by large retailers, it may also be concluded that the demand for alternative supply chains (e.g. fair trade, regional-specific products) is also on the rise (Renting et al., 2003; de Roest and Menghi, 2000; Marsden et al., 2000b; Whatmore and Thorne, 1997).

Within the context of this debate, it should be noted that consumers are largely unaware of the complexity of choices made by retailers or whether the criteria used for such choices match the consumer's interests. In the case of pineapples, it is evident from different studies (e.g. Sefa-Dedeh, 2005; Leyden, 2003), and also confirmed in an interview with the importer Bakker Barendrecht (Section 3.2), that the price, taste and other product characteristics associated with consumer interest are not always the most important reasons for retailers to shift to a large-scale supplier. Rather, their choice is often based on the prime interests of these retailers, such as efficiency, added-value services (e.g. promotion), and reliability of supply and quality. In this respect, it is particularly interesting to note that, despite the fact that the MD-2 variety was, at least

initially, more expensive than traditional pineapple varieties, the new variety has been able to penetrate the market. Much of this may be related to the fact that supermarkets mostly offer only a single variety of pineapple, and consumer awareness of price difference is consequently low.

In light of the growing competition from the new pineapple variety, the question arises as to *how actors in the Ivorian pineapple sector, in this case mainly the intermediaries (most importantly OCAB), have responded to the introduction of the MD-2 variety?* Well, first of all, the reaction has been very slow. This is remarkable considering the speed at which the new variety penetrated the market and given the initially higher sales prices obtained by the new variety as opposed to the traditional pineapple varieties. Part of the reason for the late reaction relates to the comfortable position in which the Ivorian pineapple sector has operated since the late 1990s, namely facing limited external competition. The Ivorian sector has relied entirely on the Cayenne Lisse variety, which is well adapted to the climatic and soil conditions of the southern region of Ivory Coast and is well-appreciated in European markets. The earlier failure of the introduction of the green pineapple variety 'Champaka' by Dole and Del Monte in the early 1990s, probably further strengthened this confidence in the Cayenne Lisse pineapple. Besides, in view of its high price, most medium and large-scale producers did not attach the prospect of a 'long commercial life' to the MD-2 variety in the global market. To a certain extent, ignorance may also have played a role, since for a long time most small-scale producers were not aware of the existence of the MD-2 variety as it was not cultivated in Ivory Coast and market information hardly flows to these producers.

Consequently, the interest of Ivorian producers in the new variety arose only towards the end of the 1990s, triggered by a number of global and local developments. First of all, at the global level, the MD-2 variety proved to be very successful; the 'extra-sweet and golden' Central and South American pineapples continued to gain more share of the European market. Moreover, at the local level, soil-born diseases in the production areas of Ivory Coast started to occur more frequently, which among others caused the quality of the cultivar Cayenne Lisse to decline over the past years. In reaction to these developments, research activities aimed at examining the performance of new varieties in Ivory Coast, including the MD-2, are now underway. However, so far only producers with adequate access to capital to invest have been able to convert their production to MD-2 pineapples. Because of the related investment costs and the technological requirements involved, other producers are forced to either continue with the production of the Cayenne Lisse pineapple, or shift to other less demanding varieties.

The success of the MD-2 pineapple variety clearly opened the eyes of OCAB's members, as they faced important loss of market share, prompting them to respond more effectively to trends and developments in the international market. In addition to the issues already discussed, the 'branding' of products has increasingly become a key aspect of international competition, and the following section shows how the Ivorian pineapple sector has responded to this trend.

6.6 Branding the Ivorian pineapple

During the past two decades, branding of products is an important trend. These brands often embed certain values (such as quality, safety, trust, and fairness) and a particular 'experience', like the association with an exotic tropical location. As shown in Chapters 2 and 3, TNCs such as Dole and Del Monte hold strong global brands. These companies source their products worldwide and are therefore not restricted to particular territories. Their brand names are internationally respected in terms of a guarantee for high quality and safe products. Yet, despite this globalization of brand names, many are still linked to specific territories. Examples are the fresh produce from Israel marketed under the 'Carmel' label of the company Agrexco, and fresh produce from South-Africa coined with the label 'Cape' of the company Capespan. In the latter case, however, Capespan has recently decided to source fresh produce from countries all over the world, in order to meet retail demand for the year-round supply of a large variety of fresh products. In fact, products sold by Capespan are no longer connected to the South African territory *per se*, and the Company's marketing strategy states that it no longer wishes to be seen as exclusively South African but instead strives to be a global company.[138]

Traditionally, Ivorian pineapples were labelled as 'Ananas de Côte d'Ivoire', and even today retain their territory-specific label. Nevertheless, the Ivorian pineapple has never obtained the same strong commodity identity as other well-established brand-names such as Dole, Del Monte, Cape and Carmel. In answering the question why this is not the case, we need to take into account the historical development of the pineapple sector in Ivory Coast. As mentioned earlier, the French colonists and later the Ivorian government had organized the sector into a production and distribution system which consisted of a central ('national') organizational set-up under which operated many individual producers and their export organizations. In this structure, these producers and organizations maintained a large degree of independence with regard to marketing strategies, and over time developed their own individual labels. The collective use of the territory-specific label 'Ananas de Côte d'Ivoire' (marked by an elephant with a

[138] Source: Hwww.capespan.comH, 2006.

pineapple as its body) is the only visual indication of the establishment of the origin of the Ivorian pineapple, within a labyrinth of 'de-territorialized' brand names of different European importers used by the Ivorian exporters. The irony of this territorial mark is that the label is generally only printed on the cardboard boxes which consumers, in most cases, do not see.

Producers in Ivory Coast thus accept the brands of different importers (middlemen, brokers) as their market label, adopting therefore the commodity identity of the European broker. Characteristics of the fruit itself become the symbol of the importer rather than a representation of the commodity identity of the Ivorian pineapple producers; in effect this process of commodity identity levelling thus makes invisible the specific territorial and social characteristics of the Ivorian pineapple. In addition, through the process of generic branding, producers become positioned to sell pineapples as a generic commodity to international buyers. The added value of quality is mainly controlled by the branding practices of European importers (this can be done in Europe or in Ivory Coast) and remains largely out of the control of Ivorian producers. In this sense the territory-specific label 'Ananas de Cote d'Ivoire' does not adequately enable Ivorian producers to distinguish themselves and benefit from the added value of their produce. Consequently, consumers do not distinguish the Ivorian pineapple from other types.

Up until the end of the 1990s, OCAB was not overly concerned about the existence of a cacophony of brand names that represented the Ivorian pineapple. However, increasing competition and the global trend towards product branding has made some actors aware of this shortcoming. As a consequence, in 1999 a number of export organizations, in particular those dealing with small-scale producers, decided to introduce the new brand name "Ivoria". The launch of this brand name has, however, not yet been successful, for a number of reasons. The first reason relates to the fact that most producers traditionally use the brand names of their importers and are not allowed to change this practice. Most of these importers have established a strong (company-related) brand name and have little interest in changing to the new 'Ivoria' brand, since this would virtually mean that they have to re-establish their position in the market. Another reason is that many medium and large-scale producers fear that the general quality of the pineapples marketed under the new brand name would not be able to match the required quality of their own produce in the demanding contemporary consumer market, and consequently, would result in a loss of their existing share of their pineapple market value. Finally, concerning small-scale producers, one could say that they are not sufficiently aware of the importance of specific 'branding' (versus generic branding) within present-day international markets. Currently, many small-scale producers do not know under which brand name their fruit are sold, since their

export organization chooses with which European importer it will trade. In this sense, one can argue that this ignorance of the importance of a specific brand leads to a situation in which producers become dependent on the market strategies of importers.

The process of introducing this new label ("Ivoria"), could in fact be considered as 're-territorialization' process. The "Ivoria" brand is a representation of the contemporary Ivorian pineapple; a pineapple produced by small-scale producers that carries the value of their natural features (taste, colour and freshness) and the embedded social identity of the producers. This strategy to embed the local characteristics into a brand is also proposed by Murdoch et al. (2000:111) who confirm that an "effective method of attaching locality to commodity is through the fabrication of brand names or trademarks". So far, however, only one export organization (FDL) has managed to successfully introduce the new label "Ivoria". The bulk of the sector has thus not succeeded in branding the Ivorian pineapple as a unique product that conveys a specific experience or portrays the pineapple within its social and traditional territory-specific context. In effect, producers therefore fail to latch onto the social awareness (pineapples produced by small-scale producers) and the 'experiential' shopping behaviour (exotics of Ivory Coast) of today's consumers. The contention is that if consumers could be better connected to the specificities of the Ivorian pineapple (not just in terms of cost but also concerning issues of pineapple and producer diversity) then they may choose and prefer the Ivorian pineapple produced by predominately small-scale operations as against those supported by transnationals such as the MD-2 variety.

6.7 In conclusion: unravelling the research objective

The central research objective of this study, as defined in Chapter 2, was:

> to analyse how local actors respond to globalization trends and developments according to their own 'realities' (i.e. their life-worlds and local knowledge) and how they internalize these trends and developments in their actions, practices and relationships.

Three interconnected spaces were crucial in the present study: firstly, the production space (e.g. producers and their families and community, landlords, input suppliers and wage labourers); secondly, the intermediary space (e.g. local traders, exporters, producers' groups, freight-forwarding and quality-control agencies); and thirdly, the global market space (e.g. global buyers, retailers and consumers). The boundaries between these spaces are nevertheless diffuse, since the same actors may operate across the different spaces at the same time.

Furthermore, within these spaces, the study identified groups of actors with distinct social and cultural repertoires. For example, in the production space, the heterogeneity of producers can be observed in two large categories: the first is a large group of small-scale farmers and the second is a small group of medium and large-scale producers. It is through comparison of these two groups that one can assess the differential influence of local knowledge and life-worlds on the processes of internalizing and responding to global trends and developments. On the one hand, medium and large-scale producers operate closely *vis-à-vis* the global market, and therefore work from an 'informed' position in regard to new trends and developments within the pineapple market; on the other hand, small-scale farmers are largely disconnected from this market. Lack of information available to small-scale producers limits their ability to respond adequately to the events and situations that affect them. Consequently, the way in which these producers interpret market behaviour is shaped by their local life-worlds, which in effect are projected onto the global level, and thereby act as a guideline that orients their actions.

The empirical data presented in this thesis demonstrates that larger producers are more responsive to global market trends, although their responses are also shaped by positioning and reorganization processes in the Ivorian pineapple sector and the social relationships in which they are embedded. For example, as reiterated above, the reaction of larger producers to increasing competition from TNCs was very slow. This can be explained by a number of factors. First of all, historically, the Ivorian pineapple had never before faced serious competition. Second, the institutional framework in which producers operate is traditionally oriented towards production for the colonial 'home' market. Even today, OCAB and its structure of export organizations focus largely on production and export organizational components, whereby actors in the global market space, such as importers, determine the market focus. Unlike companies such as Agrexco, Capespan, Dole and Del Monte, each of which has extensive marketing operations, OCAB has only one very small representative office in Europe. This shortcoming is reflected in the fact that OCAB's initial response to increasing competition was to focus on cost reduction and quality improvement, both production and export factors, but it did not anticipate an increase in consumer awareness concerning food safety and identity, nor the way the retail sector has consolidated around the fresh produce sector.

A further point concerns the fact that producers do not work independently. The collective organization of sea transport is the major element of dependence of producers on OCAB's organizational framework. Because of this dependence, only a few very large producers are able to bypass OCAB's framework. However, it can be noted that over the years OCAB's services have extended in many directions to assure

other important marketing facets such as quality assurance, by contracting the international independent quality control organization Veritas and by implementing a modern tracking and tracing system, as well as by developing research activities (in collaboration with international institutes), training programs, and organizing inputs needed by producers. As useful and needed as these services are, this has further enhanced dependency by local actors on the structure of OCAB. Decisions and responses within the organizational framework of OCAB are negotiated between actors at a sector-wide level and are consequently highly influenced by ongoing discourses, power relations and struggles between such actors. Such decisions are consequently based on more than one form of reasoning and are influenced by power relations. The outcome of deliberations leading to decisions is often determined by a small number of powerful actors exercising political influence over others in a context that we can characterize as the constant creation of different states of dependency. The room for manoeuvre and space for negotiation of less powerful individual actors in this organizational setting is therefore limited.

At the level of small-scale producers, it is obvious that the responses and internalization processes of these actors are affected by formal and informal arrangements such as contract-farming relationships with larger producers and share-cropping relationships with landlords. These contractual relationships are often embedded in diverse forms of dependency based on access to land, knowledge, information and inputs, such as capital and supplies. Furthermore, the life-worlds and local knowledge of these farmers is constituted by their connections to other producers, which may be represented, for example, by 'copycat' types of behaviour, in which producers replicate actions and practices of fellow producers. Finally, a large element of influence concerns their relationship with intermediaries representing the export organizations, traders and OCAB. The interventions of this group of actors are directed towards shaping, and often dictating the specific production practices of producers, in an attempt to ensure that the produce of these farmers meets the requirements of the international market.

In summary, one might conclude that the struggles, discourses and negotiations between local actors in the Ivorian pineapple sector are shaped by relationships of power, control and dependency. In particular, the position of the small-scale farmers in such struggles is dominated by their dependency on various other actors. This leads to the question which frequently appears in recent debates: *will small-scale producers (in this case, pineapple producers in Ivory Coast) be able to continue participating in the international market*?

On the basis of this study, my answer to this question would be 'yes' if they are properly supported by an institutional set-up such as OCAB, and 'no' if they are left to operate on their own. Hence it is possible that an organization like OCAB can provide small-scale producers with adequate support to operate within the complexity of today's global markets. The organization must provide these producers with a mechanism for the internalization of global trends and developments; this includes following changes to buyer's and consumers' demands and also understanding the significance of new international rules and regulations concerning food safety and quality. This monitoring of new quality demands and international rules and regulations is of utmost importance for survival in today's competitive international fresh produce markets. It should be noted, however, that this cannot be assured without limiting the room for manoeuvre of small-scale producers. This means insisting on the adoption of certain practices which need to be fulfilled in order to meet the requirements of the global market. However, even though OCAB has such clear need to regulate producers, it still offers them some space for negotiation and decision making in their daily work, probably more than would be the case with a transnational enterprises.

Pineapples in this study have been identified as a window for looking at the discourses of the global fresh produce market. These discourses constitute an important 'mode of ordering' (see Law, 1994) within the commodity network, representing trends and developments which are leading to changes in the organizational framework and in the network of the fresh fruit itself. Within the context of the Ivorian pineapple sector, the way in which such ordering takes place depends not simply on a number of key actors but also on the totality of actors' actions and realities within the pineapple network. The struggles, negotiations and discourses of these actors, as well as their interrelationships, dependencies and power positions, determine the eventual outcome of such ordering and reshaping of the local social space. Such processes and relations between actors are inherently dynamic in nature, and follow trends and developments which trigger important changes and reposition people, organizations and commodities. This process of constant re-ordering assumes the characteristics of an uncertain process which will never remain the same forever.

It is through the use of an actor oriented perspective to analyse local actors' actions, responses, knowledge and related realities that insights have been obtained from the empirical research presented in this thesis that hopefully will prove to be valuable for understanding the field of social action of local actors in global commodity networks. It should, however, be understood that realities at different production locations in the world are diverse, due to the different local social processes occurring in these locations. In this respect, the Ivorian reality is probably very different from the reality

in pineapple production locations in for example Costa Rica or Honduras. It are these differences that give identity to the product: a pineapple is not just a pineapple, but a fruit that is composed of numerous social, technical, natural, cultural, political and economic processes, which may differ from case to case. Nevertheless, I believe that the study adds an important dimension to our critical understanding and appraisal of, what I referred to in Chapter 2 as, 'rational' perspectives on globalization. The insights gained through this study on the relevance of the conflicts, negotiations and discourses that take place within the field of social action of actors has provided important understanding of the ways in which ordering processes in globalized commodity networks take place, and how actions and practices of actors within such networks are socially constructed.

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ANNEXES

Annex I: Checklist of topics for the interviews

Production

- Production, availability and usage of reproduction material.
- Production location (characteristics).
- Length of a production cycle.
- Activities in the field during a production cycle.
- Practices/techniques to assurance the quality of the fruit.
- Availability of inputs (i.e. chemicals, fertilizers) and water.
- Labour (i.e. family labour, employees, temporary labour force, shared labour force).
- Land ownership or land tenancy arrangements.
- Contract-farming arrangements.
- Production costs.
- Support from other actors or agents with the production of the pineapple.

Harvesting, sorting, packaging

- Harvest period (arrangement of harvest schedule).
- Harvest practices/techniques.
- Packing and sorting practices.
- Packing material (i.e. availability, brand name, costs).
- Location of packing houses.
- Support from other actors or agents with harvesting of the fruit.
- Harvesting, sorting and packaging costs.

Transport

- Way of transporting the fruit from the field to the packing house.
- Organization of the transport from the packing station to the harbour in Abidjan.
- Transport cost.

Harbour and export activities

- Quality control practices in the harbour.
- Storage of pallets.
- Loading of the pallets into the reefer boats.
- Organization of the sea transport.
- Shipping lines, shipping route, duration of the export.
- Actors and agents engaged in the harbour and export activities.
- Costs of the harbour and export activities.

Marketing

- Services, functioning and role of the export organizations.
- Services, functioning and role of the European importers.
- Relationship between producers and the export organizations and importers.
- Marketing strategies of producers, export organizations, OCAB and European importers.
- Brand names.
- Promotion campaigns.

OCAB

- Services, functioning and role of OCAB.
- Organizational set-up of OCAB.
- Relationship between OCAB and producers.
- Actors and agents closely related to OCAB.
- Costs of services of OCAB and related agents.

Support from third parties

- Type of support from the government (i.e. training, research, extension services, credit).
- Type of support from non-governmental organizations, international organizations and research institutes.

Annex II: Import and export of pineapples

Table 1: Import volume (tons) of pineapples by the main European countries over the period 1996 to 2002.

Import Country	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
France	132,804	131,402	125,061	154,929	136,959	154,082	143,261
Belg/Lux	74,371	73,954	65,341	80,032	78,913	96,729	105,804
Italy	19,486	23,110	23,613	43,602	41,038	35,526	28,905
United Kingdom	17,029	23,080	21,897	23,173	20,031	23,259	25,207
Spain	7,489	9,295	6,016	9,298	13,733	26,058	24,373
Portugal	43	859	1,866	3,435	6,445	9,784	23,487
The Netherlands	11,650	6,602	7,105	5,626	7,886	13,395	13,309
Germany	11,227	12,265	11,916	12,709	12,667	6,316	3,792
Denmark	25	96	47	34	25	146	330
Sweden	71	32	45	62	45	55	66
Finland	8	5	13	4	0	0	24
Austria	255	197	227	121	86	54	21
Ireland	221	0	0	20	0	0	20
Greece	13	2	40	0	10	1	3
Total	**274,692**	**280,899**	**263,187**	**333,045**	**317,838**	**365,405**	**368,602**

Source: EUROSTAT, elaborated by COLEACP, 2002.

Table 2: Export volume (tons) of pineapples to the European market by the main pineapple export countries over the period 1996 to 2002.

Export Country	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Costa Rica	64,314	82,971	79,022	106,404	112,931	135,580	139,129
Côte d'Ivoire	153,692	154,277	141,572	177,818	157,696	173,432	159,308
Ghana	22,199	23,793	18,964	25,749	29,153	31,652	36,142
Honduras	10,308	10,105	9,601	6,532	5,175	9,117	13,385
Ecuador	134	16	440	1,233	348	3,565	7,823
South Africa	2,466	2,462	3,041	3,535	4,645	4,970	5,324
Cameroon	3,156	3,575	5,747	5,711	2,975	2,100	2,000
Thailand	536	556	747	1,406	1,139	846	1,625
Dominican Rep	9,528	1,708	1,750	1,794	892	1,034	726
Benin	861	320	342	357	616	676	898
Guatemala	0	0	0	0	0	74	471
Guinea	395	397	476	589	1,000	824	381
Togo	164	101	359	383	252	350	375
Mauritius	215	246	339	596	362	396	335
Brazil	128	18	107	54	46	115	230
China	0	0	0	0	0	20	121
Sri Lanka	7	46	15	31	33	73	70
Uganda	0	0	8	25	49	105	60
Colombia	0	0	0	0	0	44	33
Malaysia	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
Colombia	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
India	3	1	37	29	9	21	20
USA	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
Kenya	0	0	0	0	0	27	10
Total	**268,106**	**280,592**	**262,567**	**332,246**	**317,321**	**365,021**	**368,551**

Source: EUROSTAT, elaborated by COLEACP, 2002.

Annex III: Overview of export of pineapples from Ivory Coast, for the period 1960-2002

Year	Exported tons (brute weight)	Year	Exported tons (brute weight)
1960	1,800	1982	100,506
1961	2,100	1983	99,431
1962	2,300	1984	126,176
1063	2,800	1985	188,223
1964	4,200	1986	193,775
1965	4,600	1987	189,662
1966	6,800	1988	163,964
1967	10,000	1989	140,876
1968	13,900	1990	150,358
1969	12,600	1991	135,186
1970	16,500	1992	130,553
1971	22,100	1993	133,389
1972	39,400	1994	143,427
1973	45,000	1995	146,744
1974	63,100	1996	175,481
1975	70,700	1997	186,346
1976	67,700	1998	163,448
1977	66,000	1999	213,620
1978	99,000	2000	187,737
1979	95,600	2001	199,376
1980	99,672	2002	190,341
1981	108,250		

Source:OCAB,2003:65.

Annex IV: Difference between predicted and realized export volume per export organization in 2002

Export organization	Predicted export volume (pallets)	Realized export volume (pallets)	Difference (%)
Banador	14,931	13,333	89.30
Ca de Ru	225	271	120.44
CFA	7,894	9,501	120.36
CFC	32,949	32,591	98.91
COFAB	5,952	5,923	99.51
COFEX-CI	5,620	6,409	114.04
COFRUIBO	2,173	901	41.46
COFRUIDOR	15,954	15,443	96.80
DAM	5,872	5,141	87.55
FDL	27,975	29,971	107.13
IBANEMA	2,272	3,690	162.41
KATOPE	9,111	7,776	85.35
SCAB	2,537	2,293	90.38
SCADI	90	124	137.78
SCB	52,300	51,267	98.02
SELECTIMA	9,775	9,457	96.75
SOCOFRUIT	14,086	16,596	117.82
TIAFRUIT	1,183	1,208	102.11
Total	**210,899**	**211,895**	**100.47**

Source: OCAB, 2003:86.

Annex V: Number of pallets exported per export organization in 2002

Export organization	Jan	Febr	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	% of total
BANADOR	1,127	1,351	1,373	964	617	567	423	421	888	659	1,479	3,464	13,333	6.29
CA DE RU	42	89	55	39	13	11	14	8	0	0	0	0	271	0.13
CFA	549	575	507	733	696	354	253	452	861	578	961	2,982	9,501	4.48
CFC	4,061	4,665	4,683	4,405	1,946	875	509	1,021	1,261	1,096	1,490	6,579	32,591	15.38
COFAB	616	918	721	713	453	226	156	190	324	177	105	1,324	5,923	2.80
COFEX-CI	697	855	928	826	538	177	89	214	223	191	244	1,427	6,409	3.02
COFRUIBO	92	165	265	143	41	61	18	116	0	0	0	0	901	0.43
COFRUIDOR	1,609	1,764	1,667	2,018	1,195	717	497	453	747	619	908	3,249	15,443	7.29
DAM	445	664	713	600	279	293	226	180	207	257	628	649	5,141	2.43
FDL	2,741	3,877	3,924	3,069	1,376	517	200	629	1,214	872	1,454	10,098	29,971	14.14
IBANEMA	332	626	555	155	43	55	33	98	292	268	176	1,057	3,690	1.74
KATOPE	818	843	698	647	481	424	86	135	509	502	727	1,906	7,776	3.67
SCAB	167	219	196	214	274	195	89	107	101	120	162	449	2,293	1.08
SCADI	29	28	22	27	13	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	124	0.06
SCB	3,878	4,251	4,849	4,211	4,069	3,539	3,575	2,804	3,444	3,603	5,174	7,870	51,267	24.19
SELECTIMA	717	841	1,006	973	883	739	406	395	509	792	1,033	1,163	9,457	4.46
SOCOFRUIT	1,249	1,958	1,434	1,457	1,353	597	559	526	1,245	1,249	1,821	3,148	16,596	7.83
TIAFRUIT	197	141	139	207	188	161	85	90	0	0	0	0	1,208	0.57
Total	**19,366**	**23,830**	**23,735**	**21,401**	**14,458**	**9,513**	**7,218**	**7,839**	**11,825**	**10,983**	**16,362**	**45,365**	**211,895**	**100.00**

Source: OCAB, 2003:90.

Annex VI: Overview of direct costs related to production and export of 1 kg of pineapple from smallholders to Europe in 1998

Activities	Costs (FCFA/Kg)*
Ivory Coast	
Production costs	57.40
Transport to packing station	5.00
Packing station	27.60
Cardboard boxes	56.00
Transport to port	4.00
Harbour handling	15.00
Freight forward company	1.60
Services of OCAB	1.25
Quality check by Veritas	1.21
Fee for export organization	7.00
Promotion costs	9.50
Total costs Ivory Coast	**185.56**
France	
Sea transport	110.00
Freight forward company	34.00
Insurance	2.60
Total costs France	**146.60**
Total cost:	**332.16**

* 1000 FCFA is equivalent to 1.52 EURO.

Source: Jexco Queyrane Conseil, 1998:165; Interviews with OCAB and producers, 1999.

Annex VII: Overview of results of quality control by Veritas in 2002

Export Organization*	Number of examined pallets	Number of rejected pallets	% rejected pallets
BANADOR	13,170	257	1.95
CADERU	289	12	4.15
CFA	9,414	239	2.54
CFC	34,424	1,629	4.73
COFAB	6,392	233	3.65
COFEX-CI	7,601	257	3.38
COFRUIBO	1,304	33	2.53
COFUIDOR	15,346	398	2.59
DAM	4,589	187	4.07
FDL	30,350	1,112	3.66
IBANEMA	3,747	113	3.02
KATOPE	7,918	316	3.99
SCAB	2,348	26	1.11
SCADI	163	14	8.59
SELECTIMA	8,878	71	0.80
SOCOFRUIT	15,762	381	2.42
TIAFRUIT	1,267	25	1.97
Total	**162,962**	**5,303**	**3.26**

* The company SCB conducts its own quality control practices.

Source: OCAB, 2003:126.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sabine Willems was born in Doetinchem, the Netherlands, in 1972. She attended the 'Cals College' in Nieuwegein and graduated from the International Agricultural College Larenstein Deventer in the area of Tropical Agriculture (B.Sc.) with specialization in Rural Development, in 1995. In January 1997, she graduated from Wageningen University in Management of Agricultural Knowledge Systems (M.Sc.).

Since the early 1990s, she has been interested in agriculture practices in developing countries and related trade operations. As a student she gained practical experiences in different agricultural sectors in the Netherlands (dairy), Australia (fruits, vegetables and dairy), France (vegetables), Tanzania (flowers) and the Palestinian Territories (flowers and strawberries).

Over the past 10 years, she has obtained working experience in various positions and projects in Africa, the Middle East and Eastern and Western Europe. From 1996 to 1998, she was based in the Palestinian Territories where she worked as a consultant in the field of agricultural trade and research for the local NGO Palestinian Trade Promotion Organization and the United Nations Program of Assistance to the Palestinian People. During 1998 and 1999, she was engaged as a part-time program manager of small-scale development projects of the Belgium Foreign Cooperation in Ivory Coast. During this period, she also conducted field research for this Ph.D. thesis. From 2000 to 2004, she was employed as a project manager of international supply chain projects at the Agri Chain Competence Centre in the Netherlands, focussing on creating public-private partnerships and knowledge networks between developing and developed countries.

In 2004, she started a consultancy firm 'AgriGlobe', through which she is currently working as a consultant on international supply chain development, agri-business development, public-private partnerships and food safety and quality. She works for different international agencies such as the World Bank and the FAO, for producers' organizations and for the private sector, mainly in Africa and Eastern Europe. She is furthermore engaged as an environmental auditor of flower farms in East Africa, for the Dutch certification organization MPS (Milieu Project Sierteelt). Since 2005, her office is based in Nairobi, Kenya.