



**Integrating agroecology
with the downstream:
food value chains**



**AGRI
Innovation** summit 2019

EIP AGRI Focus Group

Innovative Short Food Supply Chain management

Subject of the Focus Group

How to stimulate growth of short food supply chains in Europe, both in terms of numbers of producers involved and volumes traded, to increase farm income?

Context for the Focus Group

The group analysed the different short food supply chain models in Europe. The discussions focused on finding those models that substantially improve farmers' income, and have potential for scaling up.

Key Questions

The group agreed that whilst it is not currently possible to identify a single model which is most appropriate for scaling up, the idea of collaborative SFCs offers the most potential. The group defined collaborative activities broadly as those in which more than one farmer, food producer, organisation or individual agree to work together for the following mutual benefits:

- improved product range available to consumers
- resource sharing amongst producers and processors
- maintaining local food chain infrastructure (such as abattoirs)
- increased negotiating power for groups of producers
- reduced competition between small producers
- mutual support to combat isolation and stress

Main Findings

On the basis of their practical experience, the group looked for factors that hamper scaling up and decided to address four major "challenge areas" faced by collaborative SFCs, namely:

- Setting up and getting support
- Product development
- Access to markets and consumers
- Infrastructure and logistics

Ideas for Operational Groups

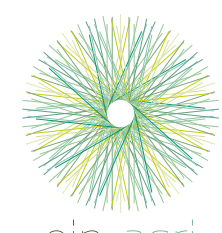
- Securing finance to invest in new technology or equipment for product innovation or testing.
- Matching business needs with technology providers or to investigate how existing technological innovations could be better adapted to the needs of the SFC sector (through for example, down-sizing, simplifying or soft technologies).
- Setting up territorial guarantee schemes suitable for small-scale farmers and producers operating within SFCs.
- Setting up territorial food hubs or one stop shops which enable groups of farmers and producers to collaborate to serve the needs of large customers.
- Setting up collaborative logistics and distribution solutions and identifying the most efficient routes and opportunities for back-filling and joint deliveries.

Research needs from practice

- Funding models for collaborative SFCs like crowd-funding, peer to peer lending and venture capital.
- Barriers to new entrants like access to land and credit and subsequent business models.
- Barriers to the uptake and adoption of technical innovations to support collaborative SFCs.
- Concepts, tools and methods for evaluating the impact of SFCs in a given territory.
- Role and contribution of SFCs in sustaining the social and economic viability of remote rural communities.
- SFCs and their role (now and in the future) to create better access to affordable, healthy food for the most vulnerable groups in society.
- Role of SFCs to reduce food loss and food waste.



All findings from the Focus Group and more ideas for Operational Groups and research needs are available in the final report on the EIP AGRI website: <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en>.



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