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& ΜΕΛΕΤΩΝ (ΙΣΕΜ)

Title of abstract

How did you become a pluriactive farmer ?

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abstract : (max. 300 words)

Long criticized, pluriactivity is now perceived as an alternative agricultural strategy and it is becoming a subject of support policies in certain territories. But having an off-farm professional activity can generate significant work overload and organisational problems that might be complicated to manage in the long term. This study focuses on pluriactivity as a dynamic strategy that evolves over time due to family circumstances and job opportunities. We differentiate the initial project of pluriactivity and the strategies farmers use in order to manage overwork. We use an original qualitative approach and 30 interviews of pluriactive farmers in “Nord Pas de Calais” region located in northern France.

Our results indicate that pluriactivity is more sustainable when the farm has been designed and organised in order to complement the other activity and to reduce time constraints. The flexibility of the off-farm job and the good organisation of the farm around the pluriactivity contribute to the success of this strategy. However, the durability of the pluriactivity also depends on the possibility of hiring regular or even permanent workforce that will guarantee serenity for the farmer. Indeed, the presence of regular or even permanent labor force appears highly discriminating in terms of sustainability because it allows farmers to be less present on the farm that limits not only the workload but also the "competition" between jobs, generating stress (Keating, 1987). The "partial" presence of the farmer on the farm that is compensated by a non-family labor force necessarily raises the question of the identity of the pluriactive farmer, his managerial skills and his position as executive director (Legagneux and Salvagnac, 2017). Most of the farmers we interviewed consider themselves farmers-entrepreneurs, they often have investment projects, or even expansion plans, but their vision of the job is different from that of their parents and grandparents.

Keywords: (max. 5): Pluriactivity, agriculture, organisation, strategy