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Summaries from the SUFISA abstracts submitted for the IFSA symposium

Up-coming events
The 13th European IFSA Symposium will take place at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania (CIHEAM - MAICh), Greece from 01 to 05 July, 2018.

For more information: *http://www.ifsa2018.gr/en/*

Meetings
The next internal project meeting will be held on Wednesday, the 17th of January. On Thursday, the 18th of January, the expert board meeting will take place. All team members will participate and discuss the first results of the project and the work in progress. The meeting will be held at Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development.

Focus of the project work in 2018
All teams have launched the producer survey. The survey will examine regulatory and market conditions that primary producers face in their everyday activity as well as attitudes and preferences for risk–related instruments and other supply chain agreements.

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Lending to a Farmer: A Comparative Analysis of Frames Banks Use to Interpret Agriculture - Grivins et al.

The financial sector is an environment where certain knowledge, values, and visions persist. These categories shape the perception of agriculture in general and influence services financial sector will provide to farmers.

The paper analyses frames bankers adapt to interpret agricultural process and to interact with farmers. It compares evidence from four countries and raises two research questions. First, what differences can be observed between the different countries in terms of how banks interpret farmers? Second, how the claims about farming shape the services banks provide to farmers. Both agriculture in general and the dairy cattle sector in particular are considered.

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The Role of Local Natural and Structural Conditions in Influencing the Sustainability of Farming Systems and Strategies Across Europe: A Comparative Analysis - Muñoz-Rojas et al.

This paper examines the potential of local and natural structural conditions in improving the (economic) sustainability of farming systems and strategies across Europe. To achieve this, six case studies in different regions, comprising various agricultural commodities, were comparatively addressed. Findings show how such conditions are contingent to European regions and localities, directly impacting on the economic sustainability of farming strategies and systems. The geographic concepts of space, place and landscape were all found to play a key role in this process.

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Various Strategies for Different Sectors and Regions Concerning Agricultural Production: The Cases of Apples in Małopolska (Poland) - Nowak et al.

The paper gives an introduction of the national policy concerning apples with the special stress on important regional diversification of apple production in Poland. The strengthening of local apple processing and more intensive cooperation among individual producers improves the role of producers. In addition, the policy aims to improve the monitoring system for the cultivation of apples.

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Identifying Key Conditions that Shape Strategies and Institutional Arrangements in European Top Fruit Farming - Lievens et al.

In the SUFISA project, the marketing systems and strategies of apple and pear farmers have been studied in three different countries. The production systems and the organisational models for the marketing of apple and pear are highly similar in these countries, which allows for an assessment of the performance of these models with respect to some key market conditions that prevail in the whole of Europe.

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Strategies Farmers Use to Shape Supply Chain: A Comparative Analysis of Dairy and Grain Farmers in Latvia - Grivins et al.

Grain and milk are two of the most significant products of Latvia's agriculture. The development pathways of the two sectors share many similarities. Still they illustrate contrasting results in terms of global competitiveness. The importance of grain sector has been growing and it has in general been perceived as a success story. Meanwhile, the overall interpretation of dairy sector's competitiveness could be described as sceptical. In order to explain these differences, paper compares two structural aspects characterising the sectors: First, the structure of supply chains farmers operate in and second, the strategies farmers choose in order to solve the socio-organisational challenges sector poses.

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Increasing Costs for Land Use Challenge the International Competitiveness of European Arable Farming: Lessons Learned from SUFISA Case Studies in Three/Four Different Areas - von Münchhausen et al.

The paper analyses the role of land prices for the profitability and competitiveness of arable farming and the related sustainability aspects in Poland, France, Germany, and Belgium. For this, it will combine the approaches of SUFISA and the farm comparison network agri-benchmark as they provide complementary insights for the understanding of the impacts of land prices on competitiveness and sustainability of farming. In particular "hidden costs" and regional framework conditions have a lasting effect on land markets and on changes of farming systems.

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Integration and Coordination of the Value Chain - Biely et al.

The paper aims to identify and analyse the role of supply chain integration under changing policy and market conditions. The socio-economic analysis focuses on the agricultural structure and the (traditional) farming systems including the common sales channels for the harvest in the area. Two case studies serve as the basis for the analysis: sugar beet in Flanders/Belgium and oilseed rape in Hessen/Germany. It shows that integration and coordination are important tools to improve market power for commodity crop producers.

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Farming strategies in the continuously evolving European dairy market – a comparative case study of five different EU countries - Thorsøe et al.

In recent years a number of events have resulted in a volatile dairy market. The gradual reduction of the CAP and the recent abolition of the milk quota system, which had been installed in 1984 has resulted in an increasingly market-oriented sector. A significant task in agro-food studies is to understand how different farming systems respond to regulatory interventions and how regulatory interventions can be used to promote resiliency. In this paper we will explore how different European dairy farming systems have reacted to the recent milk crisis and which factors may explain the reaction.

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Framing Adaptive Arrangements of EU Small-Scale Fisheries in Different Geographical Contexts, Changing Markets and Regulatory Conditions - Prosperi et al.

Given the uncertain conditions fisheries are confronted with and considering that fishstocks are a typical example of "commons" generally managed by more than one state, this work aims at filling the research gap on the strategies implemented by fishers in such complex institutional landscape. Therefore, the connections between institutional arrangements and post-productivist strategies adopted by small-scale fishers in three different European contexts is analysed. In so doing, it identifies possible adaptive and transformation strategies of the decision-making processes that can help support the sustainability of the fisheries involved.

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Producer Strategies to Manage Market Uncertainty: Comparative Analysis and Critique - Maye et al.

As agri-food commodity markets increasingly move toward market-focused arrangements, there is a need to understand contracts and other tools and strategies that can enable producers to manage market uncertainty and price volatility. Against this context, the paper draws on case study data from 11 European countries across a range of commodities to examine and compare strategies within sectors and across regions. It also problematises what is meant by 'strategy', especially at a farm level, given the multi-level nature of institutional arrangements.

Partners

Dilshaad Bundhoo, University of Gloucestershire, United Kingdom

Dilshaad Bundhoo was trained as a chemist at the University of Pierre and Marie Curie in Paris and graduated in Sustainable Development specialising in Social and Political Sciences at the Paris Dauphine University. Her research interests focus mainly on the interpersonal resilience in conflict environments. She is a part-time PhD student at CCRI and is currently assisting on the EU Horizon 2020 funded SUFISA project.

Martin Hvarregaard Thorsøe, Aarhus University, Denmark

Martin Hvarregaard Thorsøe is a Postdoc in human geography at Aarhus University at the Department of Agroecology. Martins research interest lies in the interface between science, technology and society with a focus on issues associated with agriculture and farm-level decision making. Currently, his research activities focus on drivers behind changes in farm-level agricultural practices, finance, regulation, adoption of new innovative technologies and food quality, with an emphasis on stakeholder involvement in policy-making and value creation of niche products such as organics.

Katharina Biely, University of Hasselt , Belgium

Katharina Biely holds a magistra degree in International Development from University of Vienna. She is now doing her PhD at Hasselt University in the research group of Environmental Economics. She has a strong interdisciplinary research background with a focus on sustainability. Within the SUFISA project she is investigating market power and sustainability within the agricultural system, employing systems thinking methods.

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