Entrepreneurial skills as strong stimuli for COFAMIs?

Some thoughts from the research project
*Developing entrepreneurial skills of farmers (ESoF)*

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Content of the presentation

- Connecting entrepreneurship with entrepreneurial skills and COFAMIs
- Comparing results of the two projects
  - Influencing factors
  - Interrelation of the two projects
- Conclusions
Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, COFAMIs

Entrepreneurship in farming:
› Finding (new) ways of doing business in a changing environment

Farm / farmer
• Individual
  • Personality Traits (entrepreneurial disposition)
  • Skills (entrepreneurship as learnable activity)

Groups / systems
• Clusters,
• Collective bodies,
• Regions,
• …
Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, COFAMIs

Complex, higher order skills:
Establishing, steering + developing a profitable business
(e.g. find a market for own products or develop a new product for existing markets)

Lower order skills:
“doing” agriculture
(e.g. milking a cow, financial management)

Source: Rudmann (forthcoming), adapted
Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, COFAMIs

- **Entrepreneurship in farming:**
  - Finding (new) ways of doing business in a changing environment

- **Entrepreneurial skills in farming:**
  - **Know how** to do **tasks** of establishing, steering and developing a profitable business in a changing environment

- **COFAMIs:**
  - Entrepreneurial strategies of marketing ("collective" entrepreneurship)
Influencing factors for entrepreneurial skills

Factors internal to the farmer - actor
- Personal features
- Experience
- Education / training
- Age (+Gender)

Factors external to the farmer - actor
- Features of the farm
- Tradition / culture of farmers
- Supply of education, services, projects
- Politico -economic issues

Relational factors
- Social relations: NETWORKS!

Changing of perspectives

Source: Vesala & Pyysiäinen (2008), adapted
Influencing factors in comparison

Contextual factors:
› Influencing factors more or less the same
› ESoF factors are experienced as enabling and limiting, depending on the (social, cultural) context

Internal factors
› Personal ⇔ organisational
  › Key initiators
  › Pre-existing networks
  › Reaction to changing environment
  › Learning / Creating learning environment
  › Internal communication
Entrepreneurial skills ↔ COFAMIs
Conclusions

- Entrepreneurial skills as stimuli for
  - Farmers’ generating ideas for initiating COFAMIs
  - Farmers’ recognition of a COFAMI as an entrepreneurial opportunity
  - Engaging in this opportunity
  - Adding to the success by bringing in personal
    - Communication skills, management skills, innovation skills, …
    - Networks
    - Ideas

- COFAMIs as an opportunity for learning / experiencing of
  - Change of perspectives
  - Entrepreneurial skills (networking, communication skills, realising opportunities, …)
  - Social/cultural aspects (sense of belonging, trust, regional identity, …)
Further information on specific aspects of the presentation
Skill categories for farmers

Entrepreneurial skill categories:

- **Recognising and realising business opportunities:**
  - Recognising business opportunities
  - Market and customer orientation
  - Awareness of threats
  - Innovation skills
  - Risk management skills

- **Developing and evaluating a business strategy:**
  - Skills in receiving and making use of feedback
  - Reflection skills
  - Monitoring and evaluation skills
  - Conceptual skills
  - Strategic planning skills
  - Strategic decision-making skills
  - Goal setting skills

- **Networking and utilising contacts:**
  - Skills in cooperating with other farmers and companies
  - Networking skills
  - Team-working skills
  - Leadership skills

*Source: de Wolf & Schoorlemmer (2007)*
Skill categories for farmers

Basic skill categories:

- **Professional skills:**
  - Plant or animal production skills
  - Technical skills

- **Management skills:**
  - Financial management and administration skills
  - Human resource management skills
  - Customer management skills
  - General planning skills

*Source: de Wolf & Schoorlemmer (2007)*
Support strategies for entrepreneurial skills

Education/extension/research:
- Experience exchange
- Change of perspectives
- Complex skill training (fictitious farms)
- research programmes which include farmers more as partners

Politics/economics:
- Foster rural development rather than “agriculture”
  - Regions rather than nations
  - Cross-sectoral strategies
  - Clusters (e.g. in the knowledge system)
References

