

Quarterly journal of the LEADER II European programme

# LEADER II magazine

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Summer 97 No. 15

**Agriculture  
and rural development**

Sweden

Carinthia

Cavan-Monaghan



# LEADER II

## in action

### SIERRA DE SEGURA



**Country:** Spain  
**Action carried out:** energy crops  
**Cost:** ECU 35 312  
**EU and other public funds:** ECU 23 542  
**Private:** ECU 11 770

*"The utilisation of waste from agriculture and forestry is a major concern in Sierra de Segura. A biomass energy plant is already reusing the residues from olive oil and timber and the lops left by the logging companies. LEADER is currently supporting the planting on fallow land of energy crops (colza and rye) that can be used to produce biodiesel. The project is being run by various partners: the local and regional authorities, the Centre for Agricultural Research of Cordoba (CIFA), the University of Jaén, the Electricity Company of Seville, the Organic Farming School of Sierra and an automobile manufacturer."*

**Luis Parra,**  
LEADER official

### NOORDWEST FRIESLAND



**Country:** Netherlands  
**Action carried out:** support for the cultivation of bulb plants  
**Cost:** ECU 283 500  
**EU:** ECU 40 500  
**Other public funds:** ECU 27 000  
**Private:** ECU 216 000

*"As part of its strategy to support agricultural diversification, the Noordwest Friesland LEADER group is encouraging the cultivation of bulb plants. This is in fact directly in line with the cycle of rotation of local crops, which enables the use of a much smaller amount of chemical inputs than in other Dutch regions. This activity, which is already a new source of income for some of the area's farms, has also led to the creation of local jobs downstream. LEADER is covering up to 20% of the purchase costs of the seed bulbs. By the end of 1997, some 20 farmers will have benefited from this measure which will enable an additional 10 ha or so of flowers to be cultivated."*

**Jan R. van Weperen,**  
LEADER coordinator

### BORNHOLM



**Country:** Denmark  
**Action carried out:** Centre for Development and Agricultural Innovation  
**Cost:** ECU 132 000  
**EU & national public funds:** ECU 66 000  
**Private:** ECU 66 000

*"The LUIC (Centre for Development and Agricultural Innovation) is the cornerstone of the LEADER programme of Bornholm. Staffed with a team of advisors, the Centre supports the creation and follow-up of new activities: introduction of farm tourism and grouping together of farmers concerned; valorisation of the island's culinary heritage (salmon, smoked herring and cheese) by setting up short distribution channels (collective organisation of producers, caterers and small businesses); valorisation of farmhouse products, particularly goat's meat, by setting up small slaughterhouses and points of sale on farms."*

**Niels Chresten Andersen,**  
LEADER coordinator

### PREALPES DRÔMOISES



**Country:** France  
**Action carried out:** "Olive Tree Trail"  
**Cost:** ECU 356 000  
**EU:** ECU 150 000  
**Other public funds:** ECU 104 000  
**Private:** ECU 102 000

*"This project, which combines agriculture, environment and tourism, has enabled improvements in the landscape in six communes, work to restore the heritage and improvement of the public facilities in seven oil presses in operation. The 'Olive Tree Trail' is now marked out, and a 'Guide of Olive Tree Trails' has been distributed throughout France. An intensive communication campaign has been given wide coverage in the press. The landscape improvement operation is continuing now in the framework of the agri-environmental measures of the CAP."*

**Gilberte Brémond,**  
LEADER official



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*LEADER European Observatory*

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*Bertrand Hervieu advocates an agriculture in line with the expectations and interests of European societies and areas as a whole. Three LEADER examples.*

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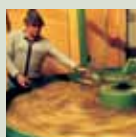
*The reinforced application of Community and national measures is essential to make it easier for young people to go into farming and to enable them to actively contribute to the development of their area.*

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*In these two border counties, a number of farmers have embarked on a second activity that in many cases is replacing the first. Some farms are thus turning into genuine artisanal enterprises. With LEADER to help them.*

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*The organisation of real "development sectors" with traditional but for many years underutilised local agricultural products is making it possible to reactivate the entire economy of the three areas of Carinthia concerned by LEADER.*

This 15th issue of LEADER Magazine is being devoted to the essential—and multi-faceted—role that farmers play in the development of the countryside, but also to the profound transformations that European agriculture is undergoing and the prospects facing rural areas today because of this.

Some of these transformations are dictated by the new expectations of consumers with regard to the quality and diversity of agri-food products. The development of demand for products of specific quality offer rural businesses and areas new opportunities. The latest seminar organised by the LEADER European Observatory was an opportunity to discuss this theme in the light of the specific mission that the local action groups have.

Convening in the small town of Kinsale (**West Cork LEADER** area, Ireland) from 11 to 15 June 1997, some 50 local groups from six Member States worked on the theme of the collective marketing of quality agri-food products in long distribution channels.

The aim was to illustrate various methodological approaches followed by small rural agri-food enterprises to sell their production outside of their town or region.

Agri-food products of specific quality can open up interesting prospects for farmers and rural processors. However, for reasons of insufficient production scale, product range, marketing expertise or because of difficult access to information, inter alia, many consider these new markets to be too difficult to tap into if not out of reach.

The six case studies analysed at this seminar painted a picture of the diversity of the initiatives taken by various rural actors in Ireland, Spain, France and Italy. They highlighted certain elements essential for the success of this type of action: creation of appropriate processing structures, quality of product, grouping of producers, sufficient volumes and ranges, steady supplies, high level of professionalism, efficient marketing organisation, etc.

The seminar also made it possible to define the missions of the LEADER groups: the closest to the population, they facilitate identification of the area's potential, can play a fundamental role in encouraging initiatives, in ensuring the training and networking of the producers concerned, in overseeing their project throughout its various phases.

Their role also consists in working with their various partners and specialised organisations to mobilise the specific expertise necessary for success, like for example research and development, the attention given to the design and packaging of products, the implementation of targeted marketing actions, etc.

It is in these conditions in particular that rural areas will be able to benefit from new activities that are competitive and vehicles of value added, i.e. jobs. It is in these conditions that they will be able to take advantage of their know-how and a range of resources too often not utilised, and offer consumers an increasingly diversified line of local products of Europe. <





The distances between and scattering of the population constitute two major constraints for the development of rural Sweden.

The north-south division of the population is proving decisive for Sweden's regional development and planning: the southern half of the country is home to most of the population, concentrated in three major urban centres and a number of small towns; the northern half is the largest "empty" space (2.2 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>) in the European Union, eligible under Objective 6 of the Structural Funds. Even if it forms a relatively homogeneous whole from the point of view of its handicaps (harsh climate in the south and north, long travelling distances to reach work and services) and from the point of view of its assets (high quality of life, well-preserved environment, strong voluntary movement, large autonomy of local authorities), rural Sweden can be divided into three major geo-economic areas:

- > the very sparsely populated northern regions have considerable mining and forestry resources, vital for the main exporting sectors of the Swedish economy: steel, metal-lurgy, paper and timber;
- > the south accounts for most of Sweden's agricultural production (especially livestock). It is also well endowed with forestry resources;

> the "Swedish archipelago", term referring to the Swedish islands as a whole, is an environment of its own with very attractive landscapes and architecture that offers a large range of recreational possibilities.

Urbanisation

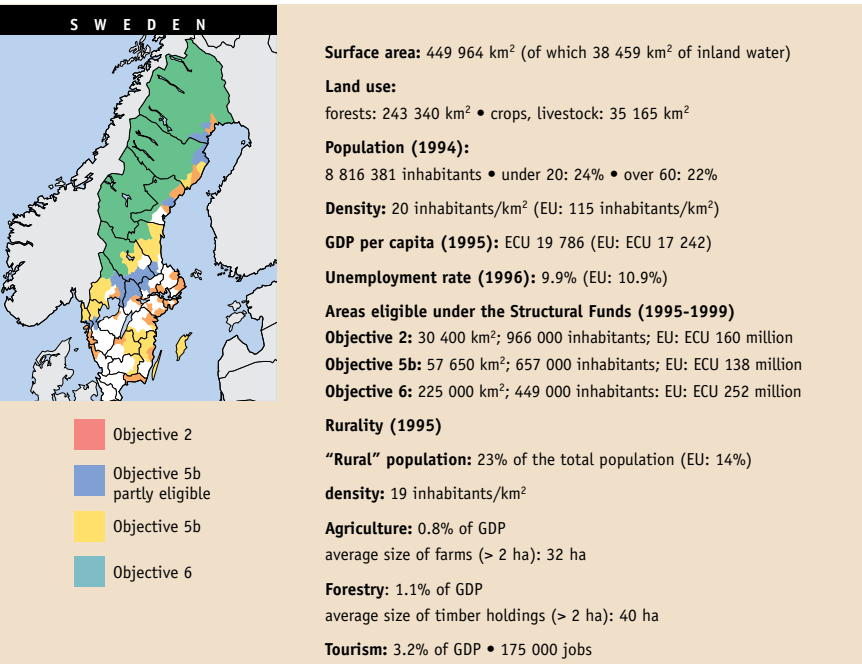
During the 1950s, rural Sweden underwent a profound socio-demographic transformation: the productivity gains induced by the modernisation of farms led to a sharp drop in jobs in agriculture and forestry, which caused a major rural exodus towards the country's three major conurbations: Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. The demographic decline of the countryside continued on into the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, but in a less widespread fashion. For the rural areas as a whole, the trend was reversed in the second half of the 1980s: for the first time in one hundred years, the rural population increased. But it was especially the relatively outlying areas that benefited from this, with the northern regions continuing to register losses but to a lesser extent.

"The whole of Sweden must live"

Since the 1960s, Sweden has incorporated in its regional policy specific measures in favour of rural areas. A genuine rural policy aimed at sustainable development, social cohesion and access to services of a level of quality comparable to urban areas was implemented in the mid-1970s: at national level, the Rural Policy Advisory Committee was created in 1977.

Two years later, a vast programme to diversify the rural economy was implemented with a view to developing non-agricultural activities by supporting the creation of small businesses.

The 1980s corresponded to the take-off of the "bottom-up" approach to development: more and more actors from all levels and all sectors became actively involved in a local development action. For the local population in particular it meant offsetting some of the negative consequences of the grouping together of municipalities which occurred in the 1960s and 1970s: of the 1 031 municipalities in 1960, 278 remained in 1974. However, the municipality has always played a very important role in social cohesion and the provision of services to the population (social security, primary and secondary education, culture, etc.).



Operation “Hela Sverige ska leva” (“The whole of Sweden must live”) is testimony of this takeover of development by the local population: carried out in 1988-89 as part of the campaign in favour of rural society initiated by the Council of Europe, this large-scale action to raise awareness of the problems of rural society led to the creation of 3 500 “local groups” at the service of development, united in a “People’s Movement Council” (“Folkrörelseradet”) whose primary mission is to coordinate local development by taking charge of a multitude of interventions in the social, cultural, economic field.

The year 1990 saw the replacement of the Rural Policy Advisory Council by the creation of the National Agency GBV (“Glesbygdsverket” / “National Rural Development Agency”) whose multisectoral intervention affects all matters related to rural development. The GBV facilitates the coordination of policies and programmes concerning rural areas, encourages and supports the implementation of often innovative projects in sectors as diverse as employment, business start-ups, services, municipal planning, culture, actions in favour of women, young people, etc. Since Sweden’s accession to the European Union, the GBV is involved in most Community policies of concern to the rural areas of Objective 5b and in certain programmes—e.g. LEADER—of Objective 6. The agency has played a central role in the preparation of LEADER II, coordinates the implementation of the Initiative at national level and provides technical assistance (advice, training, information) to local action groups.

## LEADER II: complementarities and innovation

Because of its integrated and multisectoral approach, the Community Initiative LEADER II has been easily incorporated in the objectives of Sweden’s global regional policy. Like Finland, Sweden has set up two “regional” LEADER II programmes, one for the Objective 5b areas, the other for Objective 6 areas. The former benefits from a Community contribution of ECU 12.1 million for a total cost estimated at ECU 71.8 million. The latter can rely on a Community contribution amounting to about ECU 4 million for a total cost that should reach ECU 14.10 million. In both cases, the private contribution is high, representing 44% of the total cost in 5b areas and 43% in Objective 6 areas.

In total, 12 local action groups have been approved by the Swedish government upon recommendation of the GBV after selection by a committee of independent evaluators. Regional diversity (geographical balance), exemplary value (innovation and transferability) and local representativeness (diversified partnership) have been three very important criteria for selection.

The specific nature of LEADER in relation to the other Community and national programmes is well respected in Sweden. Equal opportunity and environmental responsibil-

ity are two dimensions intrinsic in the action of LAGs which have a large autonomy. The development of Lapland (about 17 000 Lapps live in Sweden) is also a main priority of the LEADER programme of Objective 6.

The People’s Movement Council, the GBV and other bodies involved in rural development have together taken charge of the coordination of the LEADER II national Network which has been operational since June 1997. <

**GBV [Glesbygdsverket/**

**National Rural Development Agency]**

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**Ms Marianne Stålberg, Director General of the National Rural Development Agency in Sweden [GBV]**

### **Ms Stålberg, what is the role of your Agency as regards Sweden’s cooperation with the EU?**

The National Rural Development Agency has, since its foundation in 1991, been given a unique role in ensuring that rural areas gain significantly from Sweden’s regional policy. After Sweden’s admission to the EU we have been given responsibility for the national LEADER II programme as well as a coordinating role in the regionally implemented 5b programmes. I am particularly pleased that we, who are located in the heart of rural Sweden, have the opportunity to work with these tasks.

### **Partnership is a key concept within LEADER. How is it realised in the Swedish LEADER areas?**

I’m glad you mentioned partnership. This is what makes LEADER II truly innovative in Sweden. All of our LAGs are broad partnerships, with community groups, local businesses, village committees, local educational institutions and the public sector acting together for the development of their area. Indeed, when selecting our Local Action Groups, we have paid particular attention to ensuring that they are truly representative of their area. I am very pleased to know that the LAGs, too, consider partnership as a key component in their work.

### **What can Swedish local action groups bring to other LEADER groups in Europe and what can they learn from them?**

I think a contribution from Sweden may come from two main areas: environmental issues and women’s participation. In both cases we have strong traditions going back to the early 1970s. At present, community groups all over the country are working in the spirit of Agenda 21, making environmental concerns a high priority in their activities. Women more often than not have decisive roles, both in organising groups with the aim to improve the quality of life in communities and in carrying out projects.

As regards influences coming from other countries, I have in mind, in particular, what we can learn from working in local partnerships, with private enterprises as a vital component. <



# Agriculture and rural development the necessary connection

Agriculture can be doing well while rural areas are doing poorly. The future of Europe's rural areas therefore cannot be envisaged without taking into account the role of agriculture in the management of these spaces. How in such a case does one imagine an agriculture that is in keeping with the expectations and interests of European societies and areas as a whole?

BY BERTRAND HERVIEU

*Director of Research at the CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research, France), **Bertrand Hervieu** is particularly interested in the transformations of rural society and agricultural policies. He is the author of numerous publications on French rural society and one of the coordinators of the Bruges Group which comprises some twenty eminent individuals of Europe eager to contribute to the societal debate on the future of agricultural policy.*

**Rural development** is faced with two pitfalls: the first consists in only thinking of rural development in terms of the development of agriculture; the second is to think of rural society as separate from the agricultural world, when not against it.

To think of the development of rural society only in terms of agriculture leads to a number of very familiar impasses. We know in fact that the agricultural population no longer accounts for more than a small proportion of the working population of rural society: in a way, the notion



# Development: Divergence

itself of rural development has emerged from the awareness that the vertiginous growth of productivity gains in agriculture made it necessary to invent new sources of wealth and job creation in rural society to keep the population there and limit the exodus. It can be said that it is indeed because of the successful development of the model strongly favouring productivity in agriculture that the problem of rural development has emerged.

The paradox with which we are faced is the following: at the same time as it becomes a very great agricultural and agri-industrial power, Europe stops being an agrarian civilisation and some of its areas become optional for agriculture. A prodigious movement of concentration is under way, tending to relocate productions according to the places of processing and distribution. The Rouen-London-Amsterdam triangle of ports has such a power

of attraction that it is possible to imagine a scenario thirty years from now in which 60% to 70% of Europe's agricultural production would tend to be concentrated along the rim of the English Channel and North Sea, from Brest to Copenhagen.

Agriculture can be doing well while a large number of rural areas are doing poorly. We therefore cannot think of the future of rural areas without weighing the role of agriculture in the management of these spaces, especially since the European contribution to dealing with this problem begins with the agricultural budget: ECU 40 billion in 1997, over half of the budget of the European Union.

How can this conclusion be taken into account and an agriculture imagined that is in keeping with the expectations and interests of European societies and areas as a whole. To devise this programme, we must first take seriously the fact that agriculture does not only produce tangible goods but intangible goods as well; not only food products but non-food products as well; not only market productions but non-market productions as well.

## Quality, the mainspring of change

In the case of food productions, an initial guideline is necessary which consists in replacing the objective of quantity by that of quality. The notion of quality is probably the mainspring of the economic and cultural change to be implemented.

The first dimension of quality concerns the quality of the product itself. In this area, requirements are growing and sometimes contradictory, but these contradictions must not conceal what is essential: the European food trade has become standardised sooner than could have been imagined 15 or 20 years ago, and the standardisation of the agricultural products put on the market has contributed to this. Not without a few episodes that have crystallised consumer awareness: everyone remembers the emotion of consumers in the veal hormone affair or







## “Managing space to help young farmers get started”

Jacques Fournier [LEADER Livradois-Forez, France]



**In the Valley of Ance**, situated in the regional Nature Reserve of Livradois-Forez (Auvergne), farming employs 30% of the working population, but a lot of farmers are old and have no successor. The extreme parcelling out of land and the advancement of the forests to the valley bottoms is gradually closing up and casting a gloom over the landscape around the villages and hamlets. This deterioration of space has among other consequences that of discouraging young farmers from going into the business (difficulty in mobilising a viable area for profitable farming or logging; shortage of available buildings because of the transformation of farms into second homes).

Beginning in 1992, and at the initiative of the Reserve, an experimental action to manage space was launched in several geographical sectors of Livradois-Forez, including the Valley of Ance. This action, which today involves 55 communes (about 1 000 km<sup>2</sup>), is aiming, through the coordination of local working groups, to arrive at objectives for the management of land use in the medium and long term, objectives shared by the local authorities and all the socio-professional categories present in the area.

The operation, partly financed in the framework of LEADER I, was carried out in four phases:

- 1) the action was presented to the town councils which then undertook to define spatial management objectives for 15 years, to work in close consultation with the neighbouring communes and to set up a working group representative of the town population;
- 2) working groups identified and mapped land use, the users of agricultural spaces, the challenges of spatial management related to the quality of the living envi-

ronment and landscape, to the agricultural, forestry, tourist economy, to hunting, fishing, etc. This analysis phase ended with the drawing up of a summary report which, once approved by the local population, constituted the reference document for the area;

3) the first programme of actions was then elaborated. In the Valley of Ance in April 1996, this programme was the subject of an “area contract” signed by the local authorities and all the partners involved;

4) one year after the signature of the “Valley of Ance” programme of actions, which was composed of 13 measures, a review meeting highlighted the progress of developments. Among the examples are: the setting up of a relay farm (the commune bought a house for sale in a village where the last farmer living there was preparing to retire early. Several applications to take it over were received in 1996); the restoration of 60 ha; the felling of trees and the recultivation of a forest enclave in the agricultural space, near a market town and a secondary road; the creation of a land reserve and the hiring, through LEADER II, of a coordinator whose mission is to find owners willing to sell their land and farmers interested in taking it over in order to gradually recreate a market and mobility for land.

The action as a whole is based on coordination sustained and followed up in time. The operation’s primary goal is to ensure that the local authorities, farmers, hunters, foresters, fishermen, tourism professionals, shopkeepers, etc. meet and work together to prepare the conditions of a possible future for their area. It is a long-term job whose initial results are gradually translating into concrete developments on the ground. <





— during the epidemic of the so-called “mad cow” disease. The sensitivity of public opinion to sanitary problems in food matters has become great, and consumer requirements in this area apply to mass products and to luxury products. Those who are exasperated by certain extremes in this matter say that the criteria to define quality are many and often subjective: however, they would be wrong to lose interest in the challenge today of defining the quality of products intended for the food trade. Quality is defined on several levels: quality of taste, nutritional quality, sanitary quality related to freshness and preservation, quality of presentation, etc. Producers, distributors and consumers have different assessments of the respective importance of these various levels, and opinions differ on each of them. It is nonetheless possible to come up with definitions and to continually improve them in a debate in which all the partners involved participate: the introduction of labels, of registered designations of origin is a good example of what can be done and this with remarkable ratchet effects for a production and for a specific region. The LEADER programmes, moreover, largely contribute to these actions.

### “Standardised tailor-made”

But it would be wrong to deduce from this example that these logics of improving quality only concern exceptional and marginal productions. They involve just as much everyday consumption, in a constant shift between “ordinary” products and “refined” products. At the level of the whole of society, preoccupations with taste and health have become dominant. The growth in the daily consumption of easy-to-serve standardised prepared products which the consumer expects to meet criteria of quality, that is to say total safeness, is accompanied by perfectly parallel growth in demand for products identified as rare, “different”: regional products, farm products, products labelled ‘to be cooked’, etc. The growing consumption of prepared products is accompanied by a marked development in gastronomy. These methods of consumption are spreading in our countries in favour, namely, of the transformation of distribution methods. In a certain number of countries, so-called “sundry” products and so-called “quality” products today may be purchased at the same place: quality is not limited to the products offered for sale by specialised distributors or large caterers. Large supermarkets also have their requirements for quality and more and more are in search of the product identified as original but equal, with steady quality. The quality farmhouse product is therefore no longer only for sale at the



Making sheep's cheese in the LEADER area of Rhodes [Greece]

farm. But to have access to supermarkets, it must meet criteria that imply organisation, grouping, packaging. For the food trade in much of Europe, we have entered a system of “standardised tailor-made”, and it is therefore a whole subtle job that has to be pursued to satisfy these additional or simultaneous expectations that open up prospects that are probably not unlimited but are inevitable. What is certain is that in a sector like food where demand is constantly changing, the only producers who can survive are those capable of participating in a complex process of supply and negotiation, in which numerous cultural factors come into play. It is clear: now the notion of quality does not only apply to the product itself but also to the production process and the production support which in this case is the land and water.

### Non-food productions

The history of the 20th century has taught us that developed societies can mine, extract and utilise natural resources less and less and become societies that invent and produce their energy raw material. In this context, the organic and biotechnological production of energy (ethanol, ether from colza, etc.) becomes a long-term strategic and environmental challenge, comparable in importance to yesterday's food challenge, even if still quite often we are talking about courses of action that require long-term experimentation and involve risk-taking by different partners, particularly industrialists. In addition to these energy productions, agriculture is called upon to provide basic molecules for industries of synthesis, textiles or pharmaceuticals. To introduce the agricultural world through these non-food productions into a new energy and environment culture is a novel direction of great significance. —

## —> Intangible goods

But agriculture is not only an activity creating tangible goods and commodities. It is also—and can become more and more so—a sector producing intangible goods, and this in two main categories.

### **(Agri)culture**

The first category comprises everything related to culture, health, gastronomy, tourism, education and training of children. New occupations are to be invented to meet the expectations of consumers and citizens. This demand should be less and less a “secondary” or “subsidiary” demand, associated with the recreational activities and entertainment of city-dwellers deprived of the open air. Not only does the consumption of culture and recreational activities represent a growing share of the expenses in the household budget, but this demand is also the expression of a more profound aspiration to redefine—going beyond the museums, parks and other exhibitions intended to explain to these city-dwellers an agricultural world that is further and further removed from them—the link that society maintains, through agriculture and farmers, with nature.

*Planting bulrushes to restore a wetland area  
[LEADER Ostvorpommern, Germany]*



This educational expectation is an important challenge. It refers back to one of the essential paradoxes of a situation experienced by a growing percentage of the European population which has never eaten so well in terms of diversity, quantity, freshness, etc., but never known so little about what it was eating: in an increasingly urbanised Europe, less and less families have rural roots and everyone has met children who at eight or nine years old had still not made the connection between a hamburger and a cow! Culturally, it is without question a loss. Politically, it is a risk if one accepts that this ignorance can generate at any time irrational collective reactions. School alone or even the family alone will not be enough to disseminate this knowledge and learning. The professional circles concerned, in particular farmers, should make their contribution. Imagine what the cultural contribution in the broad sense would be if each European child had the possibility at primary school to visit a farm to see what an animal is, what a plant is, how they are cared for, what is done with him... This societal challenge is already at the heart of a large number of LEADER projects. Eventually, the aim will certainly be to determine how to generalise these multiple experiences.

### **Environment**

The second category of intangible productions comprises productions of nature, the environment, water, the landscape, balance in the areas. It is obvious that a country—and even more so a continent—that has these natural assets is richer, including from an accounting point of view, than a polluted, run-down, depleted... space. In the past, this wealth was the fruit of an agricultural activity whose purpose was the global development of the land. In this sense, the patrimonial concept of the land had the advantage of having the individual interest (that of the farmers) converge with the general interest (that of society). By treating the land like real estate capital which is only worth what it “yields”, the logic of strongly favouring productivity has detached farming from the mission of preserving the environment which was associated with it (at least implicitly) in the patrimonial concept. In other words, if we want harmonious landscapes, rich land, limpid water, areas full of life, a viable environment, a varied nature, we must now choose to produce them, that is to say make them the objective of a deliberate and publicly debated policy. In this perspective, a vast site is opening up for farmers and all those



## “Family holidays and quality agri-food products”

Michael Hofmann [LEADER Oberes Altmühltal-Mittelfranken, Germany]

### In the upper valley of the Altmühl (Bavaria),

it is agriculture that predominates, employing 14% of the working population. Milk, pigmeat and beef productions make up the main sources of income of the 2 000 or so local farmers. Since 1991, the LEADER group of Middle Franconia and an association of inhabitants and farmers (“EPIG”) have been implementing a series of rural development actions primarily geared towards agri-tourism and the marketing of quality beef.

#### Family holidays

At the initiative of five families of farmers eager to diversify their activity, the 70 inhabitants of Lauterbach created a “Village Community” and turned the place into a real “family holiday village”;

- > 13 quality rural cottages were opened between 1993 and 1996;
  - > a programme of weekly activities was organised beginning in 1992 (meetings, games and manual activities for children; “Pirates’ Day” for which children make their own costume; barbecues organised by and for the parents; carriage rides, tours of a brewery, etc.);
  - > 1993 saw the building of a play area and the fitting out of two multipurpose rooms;
  - > in 1995, a pond was developed (public lavatories, point of sale of local farm products) and a cycling trail was created. The village also installed a sewage system based on lagooning.
- Lauterbach is now attracting numerous visitors, and the tourist activity has generated jobs, particularly for the farmers’ spouses.

#### Quality meat

One of the major objectives of the LEADER I programme of Middle Franconia was also to gradually reduce intensive agriculture and change over to extensive livestock farming. A group of 60 farmers formed an association, WFG (“Weidefleisch Franken GmbH & Co. KG” / Grazing meat from Franconia). Relying on Angus and Limousin grazing cows raised according to specific criteria, WFG markets quality beef, essentially in short distribution channels. The “Franki” label has been created, close links exist with several major customers (hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, etc.), and a number of private households directly buy from the farmers.



#### Road market

Begun in the framework of LEADER I, these actions to support agri-tourism and quality agricultural production are continuing in the framework of LEADER II and have found their place in the “Bäuerlicher Rastmarkt Obere Altmühl” project which has consisted in setting up a “Road Market of Agricultural Producers of Upper Altmühl” at a rest area on the A6/E50 motorway between Nuremberg and Vienna, one of the most heavily travelled roads of Europe. The two buildings together form a 500 m<sup>2</sup> covered market where local agri-food products are sold. There is also a restaurant offering culinary specialities of the region, a tourist point of information and a 30-room hotel. This ECU 5-million project, financed in the framework of the LEADER programmes and Objective 5b, has been run by a company created by 30 investors primarily from the local agricultural sector. Officially inaugurated in September 1997, this complex is the “showcase” of the region and constitutes an excellent sales outlet for farmers and local agri-tourist operators while creating between 50 and 60 jobs in a relatively disadvantaged rural area. <

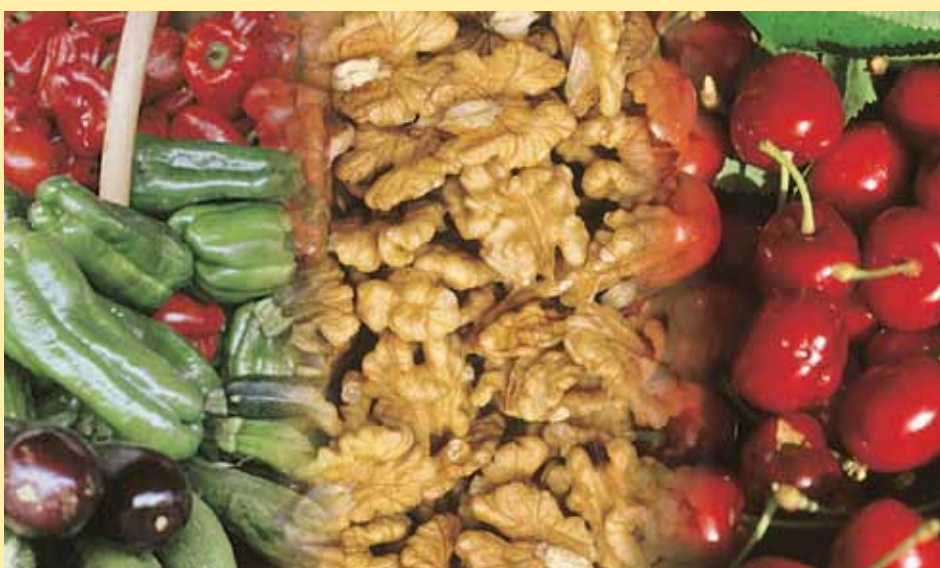






## "Support for organic farming"

António Realinho [LEADER Raia Centro-Sul, Portugal]



**Convinced that organic farming** was an interesting possibility for diversification, 60 farmers in Beira Interior (central-east Portugal) created in 1995 the association ARAB ("Associação Regional de Agricultores Biológicos" / Regional Association of Organic Farmers). The productions involved are very diversified: almonds, cherries, table grapes, but also olive oil and preserved olives, figs, cereals and horticultural productions. The aims of the association are to promote the development of organic farming (notably by organising meetings, symposiums and conferences) and to provide producers with technical assistance for the production, marketing, promotion and presentation of products. The Raia Centro-Sul LEADER group has helped implement the following actions:

- > creation of a mobile stand in order to facilitate promotional operations and ARAB's participation in specialised fairs (national and international);
- > publication of a journal (15 000 copies intended for farmers, technicians, schools, etc.) and a brochure aimed to promote a better knowledge of the products, to raise the awareness of the entire population of organic production methods, to opt for environmentally responsible packaging, etc.;

> annual organisation of a national meeting of organic farmers: thus, the second "Encontro Nacional de Agricultores Biológicos", which was held on 17 and 18 May 1997, was attended by about 300 people from Portugal but also from Spain. Among the main topics of discussion were the difficulties encountered by the sector: need to adapt programmes of assistance and certification, need for a better collective organisation, etc.

In the short term, organic farming should represent a very interesting prospect for the development of rural areas: in addition to ensuring an improvement in public health and the preservation of the environment, it helps maintain the rural population, because it is more labour intensive than conventional farming.

To export more, Portugal's agriculture must move towards a production of better quality. Products certified "organic" are a major step in this direction. <



→ who want to practice the professions relating to spaces. While the first category of intangible goods produced by farmers will be increasingly taken care of by the market, the second category will for a long time still depend on public payment, corresponding to the creation of collective or public wealth. To create and maintain an intergenerational heritage, to renew a collective identity illustrated in particular by landscapes, to ensure the quality of day-to-day life are the missions of general interest whose financing is the responsibility of the community. In what way would contributing to this and earning a living by it diminish the social status of farmers, especially since the wealth produced is, more than in any other case, non relocatable wealth?

### A job of synthesis

Another way of practising the profession of farmer is looming on the horizon. To move beyond the standard, technical accountant, model of today's farmer, the new generation is not being asked to reinvent yesterday's farmer but to invent a job of synthesis, a short-term and long-term job, a job of the market and the area. Not only manager, not only technician, not only gardener, not only coordinator, but probably all of that at the same time.

This redefinition means that the relationship that the agricultural world maintains with the public authorities has to be set in a new context. Rather than an abstract contract between agriculture and Europe, it is a contract defined between each one of tomorrow's farmers and the public authorities that has to be imagined. It is an individualised contract, with specifications, stipulating the rights and duties of each side. Since agriculture is necessarily a public affair and therefore everyone's business, it is the relationship between the farmer and the public authorities that has to be modernised today. By explicitly directing public money towards the preservation and improvement of the area, environment, water, landscape, we will at the same time avoid introducing a definitively dual agriculture: on the one hand, an exporting agriculture monopolising public money, yesterday in the form of export refunds (according to the difference between the guaranteed price and world price), today in the form of compensations, and tomorrow in the form of repairs of the damage caused to the environment; on the other hand, an agriculture weakened on the markets, occupying space and requiring national solidarity to avoid complete impoverishment.



### Agricultural development and rural development

To put the requirements of balanced area and management of the environment and landscapes back at the heart of the definition of public intervention is to refuse this dualism that is developing to the benefit of the diversity of agricultures, farmers and areas. It is to invent a new agricultural mission, at least as mobilising as the food mission that had to be carried out in the post-war period. It is to put the area at the heart of the definition of agricultural policy. It is finally to explicitly have agricultural development converge with rural development. From this point of view, the LEADER programmes all appear as places of experimentation of this convergence. Considered as a whole, these experiences truly offer a new picture of farmers and rural spaces confronted with complexity, turning their back on a unidimensional approach to apprehend the economic, cultural, territorial challenges. And it is truly by trying to meet new expectations from European societies that agriculture and rural spaces will tomorrow help strengthen the construction of the Union, as they did yesterday by meeting the food challenge that confronted Europe in its early days.

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## European measures in favour of young farmers

**The reinforced application of Community and national measures is indispensable to keep young people in rural areas, to facilitate their start-up in farming and to enable them to actively contribute to the development of their area.**

BY VERONIKA VEITS [ \* ]

**Insecurity**, hard working conditions for an uncertain income, the profession of farmer is no longer attractive. The phenomenon is not recent, and farming today is an ageing sector: only 8.3% of those at the head of holdings are under 35 whereas nearly one active farmer out of four is over 65.

Ageing, farming is also an activity undergoing change, and the farmer, if he has to be correctly trained in order to face the increased demands of competitiveness, must be versatile. In fact today's farmer is just as much a producer of foodstuffs, technician, producer of renewable materials as he is a "guardian" of the environment and manager of the area.

Considering that young people are an essential dynamic element for the agricultural sector but also more generally for rural areas, the European Union has gradually introduced a series of instruments to support young farmers. Among these instruments, particular attention should be drawn to start-up and investment aids intended to make it easier for young farmers to take over farms and from which over 25 000 young farmers benefit each year. The Community system of early retirement should also help rejuvenate the agricultural sector. Furthermore, particular emphasis is being placed on training, and the young people taking over farms can benefit from specific aid for this purpose. Similarly, young farmers can participate in other Community training programmes such as "Leonardo da Vinci" or "Youth for Europe". Finally, various actions are being set up on a decentralised basis in the framework of the programmes of the Structural Funds for the regions of Objectives 1, 5b and 6 or in the framework of the Community Initiative LEADER. This Initiative in effect offers young farmers various possibilities not only to valorise their production (farmhouse products, etc.) or to participate in the preservation and enhancement of the environment but also to develop complementary activities (agritourism, etc.) and to play an active role in the development of their area.

If the various existing European instruments<sup>[1]</sup> constitute an appropriate framework of action, a reinforced application of the measures is essential to keep young people in rural areas and to make it easier for them to

go into farming. That is in particular one of the main recommendations of the Commission's report on "Young farmers and the problem of taking over farms in European agriculture" (COM (96) 398 final). The Commission is also making another recommendation: it is inviting Member States to adapt the current national measures on the taxation of transfers and inheritances to facilitate the access of young farmers to the sector.

The report, which provides an overview of the various Community instruments for young farmers, has raised the awareness of political decisionmakers of the situation of young farmers. It is therefore not a final point but an intermediate phase in the debate on the place and role of young farmers not only in agriculture but, in a wider sense, in rural areas and on the means that these young farmers have at their disposal to actively contribute to the socio-economic development of their area.

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[1] the "Community Actions and Rural Development" directory published by the LEADER European Observatory presents all of these instruments in the form of concise factsheets.

(\*) Administrator at the Directorate-General for Agriculture of the European Commission (DG VI/FII.1).





All-out diversification  
in the Cavan-Monaghan LEADER area [Ireland]

# From agricultural enterprise to rural enterprise

**Bordering Northern Ireland, counties Cavan and Monaghan are primarily agricultural. But diversification being a must, a number of farmers have taken up a second activity which, quite often, is supplanting the first. Hence, some farms are turning into genuine artisanal enterprises. With LEADER to assist them.**

*"Ten years ago, cooperation between people in the south and the north was very difficult..."* Michael Heaney has come as a neighbour to present the experience of the Inishowen group, of which he is the director, at the seminar attended today in Monaghan by all the LEADER groups operating on both sides of the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Aim: launch a process of sustainable cross-border cooperation. For more than a border, these 12 areas concerned share the same difficulties: a certain isolation, lack of jobs, rural exodus and a potential for development held back by the politico-religious conflict that has been simmering in a more or less latent fashion in Northern

Ireland, with negative consequences on the neighbouring counties in the South. *"How do you want us to attract tourists or investors for that matter when you have this battlefield image, even if in the rural communities, Catholics and Protestants get along quite well?"* deplores Adge King, director of the Cavan-Monaghan Rural Development Co-op, a cooperative that manages the LEADER programme of an area doubly isolated because of the border and its relative distance from the sea.

Created in 1991 at the initiative of managers of agricultural cooperatives, this local action group comprises the main socio-economic actors and sectors of the two

→ counties of Cavan and Monaghan: dairy cooperatives, agricultural associations, village associations, local authorities, Teagasc (national centre for research and agricultural and rural popularisation), financial institutions, business leaders, etc. *“By giving it the institutional impetus and the financial means necessary to open up to all the living strengths of the area, LEADER has enabled the agricultural cooperative movement to evolve quite logically towards what is actually its primary purpose, rural development,”* says Anthony Leddy, chairman of the board of directors of the LAG. *“At the turning point of the 1980s, dairy cooperatives already were no longer interested in just the price of milk but in local development as a whole. They were instrumental in setting up the ‘Water Scheme Groups’, groups of inhabitants and farmers that organise the installation of running water in the countryside. In a way, these groups have been an initial experience in local dynamics, the mobilisation of all citizens around a project of concrete development.”*

In this area where a number of sectors—tourism in particular—are penalised by a “sensitive” border, agriculture still

ranks first in the economy: over 60% of the jobs depend on it directly or indirectly. But the land is poor and most farms are divided up and very small (on average 16 ha). Combined with the constraints from quotas in the milk, beef and sheepmeat sectors, these unfavourable conditions made an extensive diversification of farming a must.

### Mushrooms

In the 1960s, an initial wave of diversification first concerned two “classic” farm productions: a lot of farmers had turned to poultry (currently 55% of national production) and pigmeat (20%). But because of its size, its innovative nature in Ireland and the effects that it had on the entire economy, the production of mushrooms was a few years later the first “great leap forward” in terms of local development.

Tim Connolly is a pioneer: encouraged by Teagasc, he launched out in 1981 into the production of mushrooms grown in compost bags placed inside large polyethylene tunnels ensuring steady light, temperature

■ The buildings of the McCabe farm are built in an entirely ecological manner.





and humidity. *"I first installed two tunnels,"* he says. *"After a year, we saw that it was profitable: production rapidly generated a cash flow because there are six weeks between sowing the mushrooms and harvesting them. We therefore installed three other mushroom tunnels in 1983."* Tim thus produces each year 100 tonnes of mushrooms which earn him as much as his 65 dairy cows. *"The mushrooms have enabled me to buy enough land so that my two sons can stay with me on the farm."* Picking the mushrooms—by hand, which is the advantage of the Irish production in relation to British or Dutch competitors—also provides work at Connolly's for five permanent part-time employees (about 30 hours a week).

One of the keys to the success of the some 240 mushroom growers in the LEADER area (nearly half of Ireland's mushrooms producers) has to do with the organisation of distribution: Tim Connolly sells his production through a buying group—"Monaghan Mushrooms Ltd"—which manages to place on the shelves of British supermarkets the mushrooms harvested 24 hours before in Ireland. This system has enabled the enterprise to become in 16 years the leading producer of mushrooms in Europe. This packaging and distribution group which has organised about 200 producers of mushrooms in as many "satellite units" to which it supplies spores, compost and technical assistance made ECU 32.3 million in sales turnover in 1994 and created 300 jobs in its different packaging units.

Adge King insists on the importance of this sector before adding, however: *"here, the support from LEADER for farmers concerns above all non-agri-food products because given the narrowness of the market, few farmers have launched out into farmhouse products: instead they are choosing a second activity, compatible with their farm in terms of time, space, buildings, etc. It is usually an activity very different from their first activity."*

## Inventors

This second activity is often in the beginning a hobby, a passion that is turned into a job until it becomes a full-fledged enterprise which in some cases no longer has much in common with farming. Often innovation, invention, even genius converge in this process. With jobs at the end of the day.

John McKeown is 36. He "does" milk and beef part time because he does not have enough land. A mechanics



■ Martin Gilliland operating a ball-trap

fanatic, he launched out in 1989 into the building of steel farm sheds before developing a revolutionary product in 1995: the "trail lift" is a four-wheel drive tractor-drawn fork-lift, four times less expensive than a conventional fork-lift, "tailor-made" for farmers. *"The product is ready, and we have patented it. The big challenge now is the commercialisation..."* And it is apparent that in that area John feels a little helpless.

Jim O'Donnell has invented a heatpad to raise piglets. The device—an electrical resistor placed between two insulating plates—provides greater comfort to the animal and consumes ten times less energy than the usual infrared lamp. *"The success in Ireland was instantaneous,"* explains Tim. *"In mid-1996, we began anticipating the level of saturation on the national market. We have now launched out into the export market: the United Kingdom, France and Italy—a little—Portugal—a lot—and for the past couple of months, Canada, where we have found a distributor. The problem is that in volume we are still not capable of meeting demand..."* The O'Donnell enterprise, which has eight employees and produces 250 heatpads a week, therefore now has to envisage its expansion: *"first we are going to expand our facilities here, in Cavan, before taking on perhaps the American adventure: the United States represents a market of 50 000 units a year..."*





It is worthy to note in passing that the local farmers do not have a monopoly over innovation: a professor from Coothill (Cavan), Séan Grogan, has invented a push “chalk holder” which prevents the user from getting dirty when writing on the blackboard. The principle is inspired by lipstick. Simple but it had to be thought of... LEADER has provided ECU 4 000 to promote the product that is beginning to be found in certain good stationer’s shops in Ireland.

**Making a profession out of one’s passion**

Recreational activities for a local or very specialised clientele are another niche that farmers are seeking to take advantage of. Three examples:  
In the Jones family, alongside the dairy cows, horses have been bred for generations. *“Despite the arrival of the tractor, a lot of farmers in Ireland have kept one or two horses,”* explains Tom Jones, *“but they don’t look after them. Now for the past few years there has been a new craze for riding, be it pony trekking or competition. My brother and I saw a strong potential in this sector and decided to make our passion into a genuine enterprise for breeding and training horses.”*  
In 1993, the International Fund for Ireland helped them build modern stables for mares and colts. Three years later, LEADER II contributed ECU 50 000 to install a ring. *“It is going to be used to train and to learn to train horses, either for recreational purposes or for jumping. In collaboration with the North-Eastern Horse Breeders association (150 members), a ‘horse business’ with real value added is to be recreated: untrained, a three-year old mare is worth ECU 600. Ready to be mounted, she can be worth ECU 12 000 and more...”*  
Martin Gilliland has also turned his passion into a business, the ball-trap: he has only recently finished setting up on his farm four shooting ranges that can simulate some ten types of hunting (rabbit, woodcock, pheasant, etc.). The originality and success of what is becoming a real recreational enterprise lie in part in its design: the shooting ranges are laid out like a golf course that can be covered at one’s own pace. LEADER has helped finance the equipment: shelters, paths, fences but also sophisticated automatic throwers. *“In addition to tending to my 14 cows, I was a bricklayer. With the ball-trap I can now do all my activities on the farm,”* notes Martin.  
Johnny and Lucy Madden own the Hilton Park estate which lies along the border. The six guest rooms that they fitted out in the 1980s not being enough to make this farm-mansion profitable, they applied for assistance from LEADER to restore the magnificent gardens which, for want of sufficient means, had been neglected. *“The aim was to do more than welcome tourists and to make this history-rich place a cultural attraction for the entire region,”* explains Johnny. Flower beds and paths were restored, a small shelter was built along the lake situated on the property. Open to the public in 1996, the estate is beginning to attract specific groups, amateur painters for example: *“my goal is to create an art centre*

*open to everyone operating in a network with three other cultural poles of this part of the county. We’re currently building a project with the Tyrone Guthrie Literary Centre nearby. But I’d like to say that LEADER has done an enormous amount for this area, we’re just now beginning to reap the benefits. Pity that LEADER can’t do more because you can really tell that it was designed to actually help people with projects.”*

**Permaculture**

It is also passion that motivates Marcus McCabe. This young farmer from county Monaghan, an ardent environmentalist, has turned his farm over to permaculture: for the past three years, his farm has been producing aquatic plants (reed beds, bulrushes, etc.) that naturally clean waste water (lagooning) and a large variety of plants intended to restore the landscape and biodiversity. In addition to this horticultural production are lagooning-related training and consulting activities, landscape development, eco-building using only eco-materials, etc. The large biomass-heated wooden house that he built himself provides permanent accommodation for young people in occupational training and students who want to specialise in what could become an important agricultural activity tomorrow.  
LEADER has participated in the promotion of the project, and Marcus gives as example: *“the publication of a brochure, a catalogue, direct mailing aimed at landscape architects, local and regional authorities, the different potential clients in Ireland and elsewhere. The sum may not seem much—ECU 2 500—but even so, the operation has put us on the map and opened the market: following this, contracts came pouring in and there is no shortage of work. Our problem now is to grow gradually...”*  
Member of several international environmental organisations, notably the Global Eco Village Network, Marcus McCabe is beginning to dream of *“villages operating in an ecological and autonomous fashion which, through telecommunications, would take some of the pressure off cities and recreate a quality rural environment: lively, friendly, interdependent...”* Ahead of his time? A Utopian? What is certain is that at its current stage the project has attracted the attention—and favour—of all the farmers of the area. <

**Surface area of the region:** 318 km<sup>2</sup>  
**Population:** 106 000 inhabitants  
**LEADER II funding:** ECU 6 875 000  
**EU:** ECU 3 165 937  
**Other public funds:** ECU 1 055 313  
**Private:** ECU 2 653 750

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*Washing wool  
in the upper valley  
of the Möll*

## LEADER and agriculture in Carinthia [Austria]

# Local linkages

**In this Alpine region where most farmers have several activities, LEADER and the other instruments supporting rural development are aiming to consolidate locally jobs, income and quality of life. The strategy chosen—to organise genuine “sectors of development” with traditional but for many years underutilised local agricultural products—is reactivating the entire economy of the three areas of Carinthia concerned by the Initiative.**

**The LEADER area** of Grossglockner-Oberes Mölltal, which stretches from the “roof of Austria” (3 798 m) to the lower basin of the Möll, is one of those places where the expression “upstream... downstream” takes on its double meaning, geographical and economic. In this upper valley on the western edge of Carinthia, the local action group has chosen to revalorise a traditional but declining production: wool. Taking over and completing an action begun by the Upper Tauern Nature Reserve, programmes 5b and LEADER have made it possible to organise a sector whose main links—production, processing and marketing—literally follow the course of the river: upstream, the high mountain pastures and

sheep of the 50 or so farmers involved as well as a modern unit to wash, card and spin the wool; in the centre of the valley, the weavers and other processors of wool who work at home, often farmers’ wives; downstream, the sales outlets and in particular the shop of the “Regionalverein Grossglockner” association of 150 socio-economic actors of the valley and a boutique—“Mode & Design KM”—which creates and markets all kinds of clothes combining tradition and modernity, particularly “jeans from Carinthia”, a local version, revised and adjusted, of the inescapable American pants.



## "From sheep to woollen stockings"

*"This boutique is the core of our project 'Goldärmel' [\*] which consists in marketing wool clothes produced by local craftsmen and designers," explains Maria Schmidl, who divides her working time between the local secretariat of LEADER and management of the shop of the Grossglockner association opened in 1995 at the entrance to the valley. "In parallel to our 'Gold Trail', we can now speak of a genuine 'Wool Trail' which goes down the valley. It is a complete economic sector, which goes from 'the sheep to woollen stockings'. Wool is a dynamic sector: more and more consumers are showing interest in it and are prepared to pay more for handmade products. In the past, this wool was thrown away. Now, it is the basis of a complementary activity with good value added which particularly benefits numerous farmers and complements tourism."*

The shop of the Association  
of Craftsmen of Grossglockner



In addition to its large range of woollen goods, the shop enables some 300 farmhouse and artisanal products to be marketed. The association has 140 members, and this new sales outlet (three permanent part-time employees) made ECU 70 000 in sales turnover in 1996.

In their thirties with two children, Georg and Elisabeth Fellner form a farming household particularly representative of the valley. Their ten-hectare farm being unable to provide them with a sufficient income, Elisabeth weaves wool blankets while Georg works in the winter at the ski station. He is also member of the "Innovation in farming" group set up in the framework of LEADER. *"Most of us have more than one job but some work at their second activity as far away as Munich, over 200 km from here. They are weekly commuters, a situation that is not very convenient... We are therefore trying to make it possible for them to have all of their work in the valley. To do this, our working group has chosen to promote the organisation into sectors of productions processed on the farm. Wool is the leading sector, but there is also cheese, meat and prepared meat products. 20% of the farmers here are also farmhouse producers."*

Through programme 5b and LEADER, a collective slaughtering unit (sheep, pigs and cows) is already operating in Heiligenblut, the most remote village, and four others are going to be built in as many villages. The entire agri-food production, which is based on organic methods, follows a quality charter guaranteed by a label. *"In general, programme 5b finances the equipment and LEADER, which is beginning to take over, ensures back-up support for the projects—studies, promotion, marketing, etc.,"* points out Christian Kropfitsch, director of KIR, the Carinthian Institute for Local Development (see boxed text).

## Priming the pump

With about one third of the funds already committed (June 1997), Carinthia is the Austrian region furthest along in the implementation of LEADER II, and in the framework of its programme, it is the area of Grossglockner-Oberes Mölltal that has the most projects already operating. *"The north of this area benefits from the presence of Austria's oldest National Park, founded in 1981, where rural development actions have been conducted for a long time,"* explains Kurt Rakobitsch, LEADER coordinator for the Land. *"By incorporating the 5b projects and LEADER in the action already undertaken by the Park higher up in the valley, we could save time and be more effective, achieve a certain visibility and, in this way, 'prime the pump' of local development, not only in this valley but also in the two other LEADER areas of Carinthia."*





## Carnica

In the Rosental (“Valley of the Roses”), along the Drave, we find this same linkage approach which makes it possible to develop an area-based identity, culture and image, environmental responsibility, farming, tourism, additional income or even full-time jobs for the inhabitants.

Here the unifying product is the carnica bee, a very productive native species that the region exported by the trainload all over the world between 1850 and the 1930s. Beekeeping then declined, but still today the region produces 35% of Austria’s honey. There are some 200 beekeepers here, most members of a professional organisation with which, inter alia, the local action group has elaborated a two-pronged strategy: association of the eight municipalities to promote the valley’s image (widespread use of the name “Carnica Rosental”, a logo displaying the carnica bee, etc.), development of an integrated beekeeping sector.

Ernst Fuchs, head of beekeeping in the LAG and a real walking encyclopaedia on bees, could talk for ever about the action undertaken: *“the reactivation of the beekeeping sector is based on three steps, all co-financed by LEADER: the breeding of queen bees in order to rede-*



## “Regional” development

The Land of Carinthia seems to have found the right balance between “top-down” management constraints and the “bottom-up” approach to development.

In Carinthia like elsewhere in Austria, integrated rural development based on the area approach (“Regionalentwicklung”) and local initiative is not new but benefits from experience dating from the end of the 1970s (see LEADER Magazine no. 11).

Drawing the lessons from certain difficulties encountered a few years ago in the framework of a programme to support rural tourism, the authorities of the Land of Carinthia seem to have found the right balance between the “top-down” constraints of any responsible management of public funds and the “bottom-up” approach to development that takes into account the aspirations of the population and enables local initiatives to be unbound. The Regional Planning Department of the Land coordinates the different regional, national and European programmes of local development, but technical assistance for the projects is

ensured by an autonomous structure, the “Carinthian Institute for Regional Planning, Local Development and the Protection of Nature” (KIR), set up in June 1996.

Each of the three local action groups of Carinthia is an informal association of individuals, local associations and institutions (municipalities, Nature Reserve, etc.) concerned by development which has a large autonomy in the selection and implementation of initiatives, provided of course there is observance of the operational and financial parameters set in advance in the regional LEADER programme.

Each LAG is structured in several thematic “innovation groups” (farming, beekeeping, tourism, crafts, etc.). These working and discussion groups are responsible for coordinating local development in the framework of LEADER but also other Community



programmes (5b, INTERREG, etc.): mobilisation of the population and local actors, discovery of potential project holders, etc. This type of organisation explains in great part the extremely collective dimension of the actions implemented in Carinthia: agricultural and intersectoral linkages, tourist infrastructures...

The interface between local action groups and the Land’s authorities is ensured for each area by a LEADER manager (“LEADER Betreter”) responsible for coordinating the implementation of the actions already committed, putting together the applications for future projects and selling them to the Land’s authorities. <



The Sonnenalm cooperative supplies dairy products to the schools of the Norische Region

velop a pure carnica breed (a laboratory will soon be built), the professionalisation of producers, even if they are all part-time beekeepers, the development and marketing of innovative products derived from honey. All of this must be accompanied by a rediscovery of the bee as guardian of the natural and cultural heritage."

The sector's standard is the Museum of Honey in Ferlach opened in 1995 and also situated at the entrance to the valley. In addition to everything related to beekeeping and the history of the activity, one can find there the range of new products already marketed: organic honey, wax and propolis of course, but also honey-flavoured salami, muesli, liqueur, special honey beer made by a large brewery in Klagenfurt (which allocates a percentage of its profits to research on bees) and a new type of more productive hive. In September 1996, 20 beekeepers created a selling group and are now developing a label.

## Noah's Ark

Already briefly mentioned in the case of the carnica bee, the reintroduction of nearly extinct native animal breeds is another major dimension of the development strategy of the three LEADER areas of Carinthia.

Further south, at the foot of the Karawanken (2 000 m) which form the border with Slovenia, Friedhelm Jabinschek and his association "Alpen-Adria" (60 farmer members) only recently reintroduced the "sheep with glasses" or Brillenschaf, an old breed of sheep common to Southern Austria, Slovenia and Italy's Friuli region. Practically extinct towards the end of the Second World War, the herd now has 400 head. The only labelled sheep in Austria, its savoury meat is beginning to be marketed, in particular in ten restaurants in Carinthia. "Demand is very high," says Friedhelm, "our advertising campaign actually exceeded our selling capacities!" Friedl believes above all in private investing: the production's promotion is entirely financed by the Alpen-Adria asso-

ciation; watches, T-shirts, umbrellas, etc. bearing the effigy of the valuable sheep are sold at fairs and other events that the association organises during the year and along a Transhumance Road that is being marked out. "Our aim is to be totally self-financing within three years, to outlive for example the two programmes that have helped us along, LEADER and INTERREG. LEADER has enabled us to take on the market by financing the necessary technical assistance, INTERREG helps us to recruit and organise the sheep farmers in Slovenia."

"The Community assistance has enabled us to improve the standing of relatively 'unrelocatable' agricultural productions like traditional local breeds, something that was not possible before Austria's entry to the European Union," says Raphaël Pliemitscher, head of the association of farmers who breed golden cows comprising 60 farmers from the Norische Region LEADER area from where this very rustic breed originally comes. These farmers have turned part of their farm over to what was in the past considered "the best cow of the Austro-Hungarian Empire". It is still possible to speak of sector here, since the operation concerns cattle farmers, butchers, caterers, tourist operators and local population, promotion of the "golden cow" involving the organisation of village fetes. In German, local development is called "regional development": in Austria like in Germany, a "Region", a territorial unit referred to for rural development actions, is in fact a living basin usually corresponding to a valley or group of valleys having historically a cultural, economic and social unit. The sectors developed in Carinthia are promoting this identity and, as the LEADER head of the Norische Region, Barbara Klemens, says, "putting farmers back at the heart of rural development."

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[\*] "Golden Sleeves", a play on words referring to the artisanal quality of the clothes and an old activity of this region which has a gold deposit unexploited today. Gold constitutes a unifying image for tourism in this area: the "Gold Trail" is a network of walking paths across Grossglockner-Oberes Mölltal.

**Surface area of the region:** 1 586 km<sup>2</sup>  
(Grossglockner-Oberes Mölltal: 596 km<sup>2</sup>;  
Carnica Rosental: 467 km<sup>2</sup>; Norische Region: 523 km<sup>2</sup>)  
**Population:** 45 928 inhabitants  
(Grossglockner-Oberes Mölltal: 8 577 inhabitants;  
Carnica Rosental: 22 475 inhabitants;  
Norische Region: 14 876 inhabitants)  
**LEADER II funding:** ECU 8 400 000 - **EU:** ECU 2 900 000  
**Other public funds:** ECU 2 900 000 - **Private:** ECU 2 600 000

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## LEADER Seminars (October 1997 - April 1998)

The LEADER European Observatory is organising a series of seminars between now and April 1998. Each of these meetings will take place in an area whose LAG has relevant experience in the theme covered. The definitive programme, languages and venue are available two months before the activity is held. (Contact: LEADER European Observatory, "Organisation" Unit).

> **"Training and local development"**

*Dates: 8-11 October 1997.*

*Languages: Finnish/English/German.*

*Venue: North-Eastern Savo LAG (Viitaniemi, Finland).*

## "Organising local partnerships"

This second dossier of the series "Innovation in rural areas" is concerned with setting up and implementing partnerships and therefore the method applied to make

*(Price: BEF 300 inclusive of tax / about ECU 7.5).*

## LEADER II publications (reminder)

> **"Community Actions and Rural Development" Directory**

*(Price: BEF 1 800 inclusive of tax / about ECU 45).*

> **"Innovative Actions of Rural Development" Directory**

*(Price: BEF 1 800 inclusive of tax / about ECU 45).*

> **"Evaluating a territory's tourist potential" (methodological guide).**

*(Price: BEF 300 inclusive of tax / about ECU 7.5).*

## Seven LEADER II national networks operational

When this article was written (July 1997), the LEADER II national networks were operational in the following countries: Germany, Austria, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands and Sweden.

### GERMANY:

**LEADER-Netzwerk-Deutschland,**

a/s Hermann Klenner,

Bundesanstalt für Landwirtschaft und Ernährung,  
Adickesallee 40, D-60322 Frankfurt am Main.

Tel: +49 69 15 64 756; Fax: +49 69 15 64 790.

### AUSTRIA:

**LEADER-Netzwerk-Österreich,**

a/s Luis Fidlshuster,

ÖAR-Regionalberatung GmbH,  
Amalienstr. 68, A-1130 Wien.

Tel: +43 1 877 94 21; Fax: +43 1 877 94 25;

E-mail: oear@ping.at

### FINLAND:

**Network headquarters: LEADER-verkostoyksikkö,**

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Tel: +358 6 2360 067;

E-mail: mari.ojanpera@leader.kauhajoki.fi

**Swedish-language branch:**

**Finlands LEADER-nätverksenhet (Kristinestad),**

a/s Ulf Grindgärd,

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Tel: +358 6 2221 496; Fax: +358 6 2222 462;

E-mail: ulf.gindgards@leader.kauhajoki.fi

> **"Marketing local products in short distribution channels"**

*Dates: 5-9 November 1997.*

*Languages: Portuguese/French/Spanish.*

*Venue: Mirandella, Terras Quente (Norte, Portugal).*

> **"Developing tourist products based on walking"**

*Dates: April 1998. Languages: Italian/German/English.*

*Venue: Appenino Piacentino,*

*Parma (Emilia-Romagna, Italy).*

possible—and sustainable—this approach which has become a key element in the processes of rural development.

> **"The collective organisation of a sector for the local valorisation of agricultural resources:**

**the example of cheese processing"**

**(Innovation in rural areas" - Document no. 1).**

*(Price: BEF 300 inclusive of tax / about ECU 7.5).*

> **LEADER II poster**

*(Price: BEF 700 inclusive of tax / about ECU 18;*

*additional poster to the same address: BEF 200*

*inclusive of tax / about ECU 5).*

### IRELAND:

**LEADER II Irish National Networking (LINN) Service,**

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### ITALY:

**Rete nazionale italiana LEADER,**

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INEA (Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria),

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### NETHERLANDS:

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### "Rural Europe": LEADER on line in 6 languages

The publications (LEADER Magazine, INFO-LEADER, technical dossiers, etc.), the programme of activities, the updated list of all approved LEADER beneficiaries as well as various databases can be consulted on line in 6 languages (French, English, German, Spanish, Italian and Portugal) on the Internet. Several forums are also open.



**Name:** LEADER

("Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy")

**Programme type:** Community Initiative

**Target areas:** Objective 1 regions (development lag), Objective 5b areas (fragile rural areas) and Objective 6 areas (Nordic areas of very low population density) of the European Union. However, up to 10% of the allocations in Objective 5b areas can be granted to non-eligible contiguous areas.

**Objectives:** providing continuity with LEADER I (1991-1994), LEADER II is intended to:

- > encourage model local rural development initiatives;
- > support innovative, demonstrative and transferable measures which illustrate the new directions that rural development can take;
- > increase exchanges of experiences and transfers of know-how;
- > support transnational development projects proposed by those active at local level in rural areas and which express their solidarity.

**Recipients:** LEADER II can assist two categories of final beneficiaries:

- > principally, "Local Action Groups", i.e. a combination of public and private partners jointly devising a strategy and innovative measures for the development of a rural area on the scale of a local community (less than 100 000 inhabitants);
- > other rural collective bodies, public or private, (for example, chambers of agriculture, industry, commerce or crafts, cooperatives, business groups, local authorities, non-profit-making organisations), provided that their more specific activities relate to a plan for the rural development of a local area.

**Types of measures:** acquisition of skills in rural development, rural innovation programmes (vocational training, rural tourism, support for small firms, increasing commercial value locally and marketing of agricultural, forestry and fisheries products; improvement of the environment and living conditions, etc.), transnational cooperation.

The various elements of LEADER II are organised around a "European Rural Development Network", permitting wide dissemination (through seminars, meetings and publications) of innovative measures implemented for the benefit of rural areas and fostering transnational cooperation. The network is coordinated by the "LEADER European Observatory".

**Duration of the programme:** 6 years (1994-1999)

**Community grant:** around 1 755 million ECU, of which over 1 000 million ECU are for Objective 1 regions, financed by the three Structural Funds.



**LEADER  
European Observatory**



**European Commission  
DG VI Agriculture**

**LEADER magazine** is the quarterly journal of the rural development programme LEADER II. **LEADER** ("Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy") is a Community Initiative launched by the European Commission and coordinated by its Directorate-General for Agriculture (Unit VI-F.1.1.). - The contents of LEADER magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union Institutions. - **Editorial board:** A.E.I.D.L. - **Person responsible at law:** William Van Dingenen, A.E.I.D.L., chaussée St-Pierre 260, B-1040 Bruxelles - **Journalism:** Jean-Luc Janot - **Contributors to this issue:** Yves Champetier, Jacques Fournier, Katell Gurnic, Bertrand Hervieu, Michel Hofmann, António Realinho, Veronika Veits - **Photos:** LEADER Groups, Campagne Campagne, Ann Linden, Ferdinand Neumüller, Hans-Olof Utsi - **Cover photo:** Campagne Campagne - **Production coordination:** Christine Chartier - **Graphic design:** Kaligram - Printed in Belgium - **LEADER magazine** is published in the eleven official languages of the European Union and has a print run of 37 500 copies - **For further information:** LEADER Magazine, A.E.I.D.L., chaussée Saint-Pierre 260, B-1040 Brussels. Tel: +32.2 736 49 60. Fax: +32.2.736 04 34. E-Mail: leader@aeidl.be - WWW: <http://www.rural-europe.aeidl.be>