

FINLAND

Innovation & cooperation

Location

South Savo

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P1 – Knowledge transfer & innovation

Measure

M16 - Cooperation

Funding (EUR)

RDP budget 214 430.00
EAFRD 90 060.60
National/regional 124 369.40

Project duration

2016 – 2018

Project promoter

Natural Resources Institute
Finland

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www.luke.fi/projektit/kiltu-kilpailukykyinen-ja-vaha/

A project to enhance the competitiveness of agriculture and the food industry, as well as the low-carbon economy, through the analysis of alternative future scenarios.

Summary

The foresight project enhances the competitiveness and reduces the carbon footprint of agriculture and the food industry of the South Savo region, through the analysis of alternative future scenarios until the year 2030.



Dairy farms, organic farms and horticulture farms form the main target group of the project. The main issue addressed is the search for better farm profitability. The project activities consist of foresight analyses, qualitative methods of customer research, stakeholder interviews and participatory workshops.

Results

The project has produced foresight analysis data for the farms, food processing companies, advisory organisations, R&D organisations and donors in the South Savo region.

The results have been disseminated to some 80 farmers and food processing entrepreneurs that participated.

Some 60 people attended the future scenario workshop and 32 consumers attended the consumer group discussions.

Lessons & Recommendations

- Wide participation from different sectors was crucial to the success of future scenario workshops. It also made information exchange between different sectors and stakeholders possible.
- Private sector commitment to the project could have been tighter and better encouraged.
- The private sector companies could also benefit from more focused, tailor-made foresight analysis trainings.

Context

The number of farms in Finland has been declining gradually since the country joined the EU. The key to farm success, generation change and continuation of farming in the northernmost agricultural country in the world, depends on farm profitability, new entrepreneurs and business models. Entry of young farmers is especially critical in regions that are most dependent on primary production, such as the South Savo region.

Objectives

The project seeks answers to the following questions:

- What business models are possible for dairy, organic and free cultivation farms under the alternative future scenarios?
- How can these production lines improve their resilience and how can they best prepare themselves for alternative future scenarios?
- What type of cooperation do the production lines need both internally and externally under the alternative future scenarios?

Activities

The project consisted of three parts:

1. Carrying out a baseline analysis in August 2016: collection of relevant statistics, former research and surveys to back up the foresight analysis. The baseline analysis was completed in Autumn 2017 with 15 company interviews on the low-carbon economy and renewable energy plans and cooperation.
2. Organising and analysing consumer group discussions in Autumn 2017. The focus was on consumer needs and expectations and the target group was both local people and those from the Helsinki capital region who own a summer residence in South Savo. The participants were asked about expected and desired future scenarios related to food, food services, agriculture and food processing in South Savo over

the next 15 years.

3. The foresight analysis part had three phases: 1) questionnaire to the actors in the food chain; 2) workshop on future scenarios in June 2017; and 3) workshop on scenario impacts in October 2017. Both workshops were attended by some 25 people from the food chain and stakeholders, including private, public and third sectors.

Main results

The project produced foresight analysis data for the farms, food processing companies, advisory organisations, R&D organisations and donors in the South Savo region.

The results were disseminated through multiple channels such as blogs, professional magazine articles, social media and events, which attracted 80 farmers and food processing entrepreneurs.

Some 60 people attended the future scenario workshop and 32 consumers attended the consumer group discussions.

Key lessons

Wide participation from different sectors was crucial to the success of the future scenarios workshops. It also made information exchange between different sectors and stakeholders possible.

Private sector commitment to the project could have been stronger and better engaged. Businesses felt the long timeframe somewhat abstract, as their own planning works on an annual basis. However, the food companies acknowledged that investments require more foresight analysis and longer timeframes than what they are used to, so the project was useful for them too.

They could also benefit from more focused, tailor-made foresight analysis trainings.

Additional sources of information

n/a