



## II<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Work in Agriculture

*Thinking the Future of Work in Agriculture*

September 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> 2020

### **Workshop 3 - Rural Development**

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Work in agriculture contributes to rural development and helps to keep people in rural areas through both the provision of incomes to the workers and enhancing economic activities which benefits both the immediate farming sector as well as the wider rural economy. Rural development activities can also provide pathways out of chronic poverty and food insecurity for farm households as they engage the seasonal or all-year opportunities to supplement household incomes. It can be viewed as a sub-set of the wider employment and economic opportunities which emerge in rural areas. The close relationship between rural development activities and the utilisation of farm labour in these activities, either on or off-farm, is long established and recognised. This is captured within the concept of a multifunctional agriculture which envisages farm labour being directed towards activities that reflect new functions on farms that add value to production ('deepening') and/or expand ('broaden') the range of services and commodities available. This multifunctional model also encompasses the important role of off-farm employment as a way to reconfigure farm labour towards augmenting farm incomes. This off-farm work, commonly referred to as 'outside the farm gate pluriactivity' has the potential to enable the continuance of farming in areas where it would otherwise have ceased or stagnated leaving behind an isolated older generation of farmers. Both off-farm work and new diversified activities on farm can interfere with the core farming business through work organisation issues i.e. peaks management, subordination of tasks and delegation options. On the other hand pluriactivity may provide a good insight of what is more interesting in farming from the workers' own point of view i.e. earning an income while also working with nature, animals, being autonomous etc.), by comparison to the working conditions associated with the traditional farming activity.

The relationship between farm labour and rural development is dynamic and influenced by a range of factors over time, including: the imperative of achieving household food security on a seasonal or all year round basis; the extent to which farmers organise themselves in collectives such as producer or marketing groups and co-operatives to engage market opportunities; consumer preferences for new commodities and services and how they are produced; as well as public policy measures that either drive or restrain rural development, including the extent to which these measures support local rural development organisations and initiatives. Transitions occur: as food security and/or emergence from poverty for households is achieved and new opportunities evolve in the rural economy; or because rural development is highly influenced by urban-rural interactions and consumers, local authorities and other stakeholders influence the emergence of new functions from farming including agroecological services and local foods, with short chains or direct selling. In some territories, the status of farming professions is decreasing and leading to controversies that affect work attractiveness and self-fulfillment.

We welcome papers and posters that evaluate the contribution of work in agriculture to local development from both an economic and social point of view. We welcome contributions that examine the interactions and relationships which emerge between farm labour and the employment opportunities which result from the emergence of multifunctional agriculture and from the wider rural economy. This includes contributions that discuss how '*within the farm gate pluriactivity*' utilises farm labour effectively and the extent to which off-farm work, i.e. '*outside the farm gate pluriactivity*' compliments or undermines the viability of farms. We welcome contributions that examine the ways in which household food security and poverty reduction can be achieved through directing farm household labour towards rural development initiatives that augment farming incomes. We welcome discussion on how farmers, working collectively, provide opportunities for farm labour to engage in rural development activities. We also welcome contributions that examine the work



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organisation tensions due to the combination of activities (within and outside the farm gate) and the sense of farming work in situations of pluriactivity. And we are also interested by contributions that explore the new rural – urban interactions in territories, fostering local food and short chains and how these impact on farm work.

We welcome case studies, empirical data, methodological and theoretical papers.