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european agri-cooperatives



WAGENINGEN ACADEMY  
WAGENINGEN UR

# European training programme for Cooperative Leaders

## Internationalization of Agri-Cooperatives

Cogeca, Brussel

2, 3, 4 March 2014

### Introduction

#### **Cooperative entrepreneurship on an international level**

Internationalization is an increasingly important growth strategy for cooperative firms, because of saturated markets in their home countries and competition legislation prohibiting domestic takeovers. Especially cooperatives in small countries experience domestic limits to their growth ambitions. With the on-going market integration in the EU, the internationalization process of cooperatives is expected to become stronger in the near future.

A cooperative with the ambition to expand its activities abroad can choose among different internationalization strategies. The choice depends to a large extent on the nature of the company and its products. Due to cooperatives being member-based organisations, they are faced with a number of challenges that differ from non-cooperative companies. One of the choices entails having members or contract suppliers in other countries.

Following up on a study on cooperatives and producer organisations in the EU, Wageningen University & Research Centre and Copa-Cogeca have taken the initiative to support the further development of competencies of cooperative leaders facing these internationalization challenges. Tailored to the sector, a specialised training programme has been developed, providing theoretical knowledge and practical insights for cooperative leaders.

### Programme

During this training programme a group of renowned lecturers from leading research and education institutes will present the latest knowledge on international business related to agri-cooperatives. Throughout the programme there is a strong focus on practical implications for cooperatives following an internationalization strategy. In addition to attending lectures, the participants will be working on case assignments, which enables them to discuss the theoretical insights and translate

those to their own practice of strategic and operational decision-making. The programme will contribute to the building of personal skills and leadership capacities.

## **Learning objectives**

- To understand the economic, legal and social challenges of working in different countries.
- To assess the advantages and disadvantages of having members or contract suppliers in other countries.
- To improve capabilities to deal with the challenges and opportunities of cooperatives going international.
- To be able to translate theory into day to day practice of strategic decision-making
- To stimulate and support cooperative entrepreneurship on a European level.

## **Target group**

The target group of this Executive Training Programme consists of members of the Board of Directors of cooperatives from different sectors and countries, including leaders from financial cooperatives focusing on agribusiness. The programme is offered in English.

## **Programme management**

Dr. Jos Bijman – Wageningen University  
Drs. Krijn Poppe – LEI Wageningen UR

The Executive Training Programme is led by dr. Jos Bijman en drs. Krijn Poppe of Wageningen University & Research Centre. They have been project managers of a large international research project on the development of agricultural cooperatives and producer organisations in the EU.

**For more information and registration visit [www.wageningenacademy.nl/en](http://www.wageningenacademy.nl/en) or contact:**

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Price: € 2.295, - including overnight stays, meals, .....

Official language of the programme: English

Translation possible

Closing day for registration: 27 January 2014

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[www.wageningenacademy.nl/en](http://www.wageningenacademy.nl/en)

## Programme

### Day 1, Sunday 2 March 2014 (evening only)

- Opening of the training programme  
~~Copa~~ Cogeca
- The changing role of cooperatives in the international food chains, market imperfections, and the EU policies.  
*Dr. Tomas Garcia Azcarate, European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development*

#### Content of the presentation

How do EU policies affect cooperatives in different sectors? What is the development in EU policy on producer organisations in Fruit & Vegetables and in other sectors?

### Day 2, Monday 3 March 2014

Cooperative leadership and Board-CEO relations

Cases: Several US Cooperatives

*Prof. dr. Michael Cook, University of Missouri, USA*

#### Content of the presentation

When cooperatives become larger, more diverse and more international, the world of the farmers in the Board of Directors (BoD) and the world of the professional managers may become increasingly different. Still, the BoD has to accommodate these two worlds. How do CEO and BoD interact? What role can the BoD play vis-à-vis the CEO? What dilemma's rise in this relationship and how to deal with them?

- Internationalisation as a growth strategy  
Cases: Tereos (France), Südzucker (Germany), Cosun (The Netherlands)  
*Prof.dr. Maryline Filippi, Bordeaux Sciences Agro, France*  
*Prof.dr. Rainer Kühn, Giessen University, Germany*

While several European sugar cooperatives have become international, others have remained mainly domestic. While French cooperatives seem to be more tied to the region (as *terroir*), German cooperatives have rapidly expanded internationally. Different internationalisation strategies are linked to ownership structures as well as to historical developments.

- *Dr. Jos Bijman and drs. Krijn Poppe, Wageningen UR, The Netherlands*  
The life cycle of federated and hybrid cooperatives  
Cases: Cebeco (The Netherlands) and The Greenery (The Netherlands)

In some countries, federated cooperatives have almost disappeared, while in other countries they are still dominant, providing goods and services at the highest level of scale economies. What is the life cycle of federated cooperatives, and why do they disappear on specific sectors and countries.

- *Assignment; presentation and discussion*

### **Day 3, Wednesday 4 March 2014**

- *Prof.dr. Markus Hanisch, Humboldt University Berlin, Germany*  
Mergers and restructuring in the European dairy industry  
Cases: DMK (Germany) and ArlaFoods (Denmark)

Dairy cooperatives have rapidly grown over the last 20 years. First by domestic mergers and acquisitions, later by international expansion. These growth strategies are often accompanied by changes in internal governance structures. How to keep members committed to these large cooperatives, that have multiple businesses.

- *Prof. dr. Constantine (Costas) Iliopoulos, Athens University, Greece*  
Organizational innovations and marketing as means of achieving resilience by agricultural cooperatives. Cases: PINDOS (Greece) and Santo Wines (Greece)

New and international marketing strategies often require innovations in the organisational design of the cooperative. Several Greek cooperatives have shown to be resilient by combining product and organisational innovations by good marketing strategies, domestically and abroad.

- *Prof.dr. Petri Olilla, Helsinki University, Finland*  
Hybrid ownership structures and internationalization  
Cases: HKScan (Finland) and Valio (Finland)

The case of Finnish meat cooperative shows (1) how the demand for additional equity capital can be satisfied without losing members control, and (2) how internationalisations leads to a hybrid ownership structure with multiple subsidiaries and multiple owner groups.

- *Assignment; final presentation and reflection*

## **Biography of the speakers**

### **Costas Iliopoulos**

Dr Constantine Iliopoulos is the director of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute (AGRERI) and Adjunct Professor at the Agricultural University of Athens, both in Athens, Greece. His research program focuses on collective entrepreneurship—particularly the organizational and capital-acquisition aspects of innovative agribusiness cooperatives, and rural development—with attention to both theoretical and policy concerns. The economics of cooperative legislation and policy, the formation requirements for agricultural bargaining cooperatives, and innovative solutions to ownership and governance problems of agricultural cooperatives have been in the center of his research during the last years. Constantine's theoretical tools include approaches such as organizational, new institutional and evolutionary economics. His empirical research includes numerous survey data collection and analyses at the farm, cooperative and industry levels, case study and focus groups research, as well as latent variable model analyses.

### **Mike Cook**

Robert D. Partridge Chair, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO, USA.

### **Markus Hanisch**

Professor for Cooperative Studies and Managing Director of the Berlin Institute for Co-operative Studies, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany.

### **Maryline Filippi**

Professor of Economics, University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux Sciences Agro, France

### **Petri Ollila**

### **Tomas Garcia Azcarate**

In charge of the economic analysis and management of the European fruit and vegetables, potatoes, flowers and bananas markets

### **Jos Bijman**

Professor of Management and Organization, at the Management Studies Group, Wageningen University, The Netherlands. Teaching courses on management, institutional economics, economic organisation theory, and cooperatives & producer organisations. Research focusses at management and economic organization in international agrifood chain, particularly dealing with cooperatives and producer organisations, both in developed and developing countries. Published on topics like cooperative governance, producer organisations and value chains, quality improvement and cooperatives, value chain coordination, contract farming, producer organisations in biofuel industry, cooperatives in China, and co-innovation in agrifood chains in Southern Africa. Project manager (together with Krijn Poppe) of EU funded research programme "Support for Farmers' Cooperatives" (2011-2012).

### **Krijn Poppe**

Krijn J. Poppe is a business economist working in the management of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI) of Wageningen University and Research Centre, located in The Hague, the Netherlands. Being responsible for research management, he is involved in several large, multidisciplinary research projects for the EU. Current research interest focus on monitoring, ICT, the agricultural knowledge and innovation system, cooperatives and competitiveness of the European food sector. Project manager (together with Jos Bijman) of EU funded research programme "Support for Farmers' Cooperatives" (2011-2012).

From 2009 – 2011 he worked part-time as Chief Science Officer for Agro-Chains and Fisheries at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation. Krijn J. Poppe was for 12 years (1999-2011) Secretary-General of the European Association of Agricultural Economists. He is honorary secretary-treasurer of the EAAEP Foundation (that publishes the ERAE), chairs the Steering Group of the journal EuroChoices, chairs the foundation eRNAC on research concerning cooperatives. He co-owns a small arable family farm, and was for a time a non-executive board member of a cooperative.

**Rainer Kühl**

Professor of Agribusiness Management at Justus-Liebig University, Giessen, Germany. Managing director of the Institute Of Management in the Agribusiness and Food Industry.

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