



STEP REPORT OF THE UEAA AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION COMMISSION

Brussels, 28 September 2017

Chair : Mr Jean Pierre Bastié

At the General Meeting on October 11, 2016 in Paris, it was officially recorded the establishment of a commission "**agricultural education**" chaired by Jean Pierre Bastié¹.

At that meeting, J P Bastié (member of the French Academy of Agriculture) proposed to the President, M Thibier, to set up such a commission aiming at soliciting the network of the UEAA "to mobilize agricultural schools to become even more than today major players accompanying a changing agricultural world". It was approved by the UEAA steering committee.

AIM OF THIS COMMISSION

This commission focuses initially on technical agricultural education and the medium-term objective would be to produce a report on the various challenges that currently meet the farmers and particularly the young ones across Europe in running their own business.

One of the key points is the following: how could adequate technical agricultural education assist them to better understand the changes in agriculture of today and tomorrow and help them to cope with those in the most efficient manner.

We strongly believe that farmers should make a decent living out of their production and to reach this goal, training and education are a critical key process.

METHOD

The way this Commission works is through an **Electronic Working Group (EWG)** with UEAA members across Europe. The principle of this group is based on **exchange**: exchange of information, exchange of ideas and exchange of good practices. It is hosted at my level so as to make your workload as light as possible². However, to some of us who may be concerned, it is believed that it is useful to send responses and comments to the whole EWG (see e-mail addresses here below: Annex I), so as to make our Group more lively.

¹ Jean Pierre Bastié is Inspector General of Agriculture (Honorary), he is a local councilor in Bagnères de Luchon (France). Jean Pierre made the most of his career in agricultural education with responsibilities at the local level (school head of 3 agricultural schools), regional (responsible regional agricultural education in Aquitaine) and national (Deputy Director of the action of the educational community).

² Please make sure you noted the new e-mail address of Jean Pierre : jean-pierre.bastie@laposte.net

To be practical, the way the Commission tackled the problem was first to draft a questionnaire and forward it to the UEAA members of this EWG, agreeing to participate to this Commission, thanks to them.

The frame of this first step was to report on the state of the art in 2017:

- What level of education is required for a person to start to run a farm?
- In what kind of schools does this person get trained?

To achieve this, was set a questionnaire that was sent to the members of the Commission to fill.

The second step will aim at collecting more precisely the practices and proposals for action on the following topics:

- How can the schools become a major development actor with a strong insertion in its territory and relations increased with local partners (local authorities, farming profession, parents ...)?
- How farms and technology workshops can increase their role in technology transfer and innovation?
- What training to support agriculture mutation: initial and continuing training (linked to higher education)?
- What farmer profile of tomorrow to face the challenges and changes?
- How openness to the world through international cooperation can promote local dynamics?
- How to improve the link between sellers and incoming?

In the longer term, these exchanges in the EWG should promote the networking of these settlements at EU level and enable exchanges of good practices and the establishment of a genuine European cooperation.

RESULTS: RETURNS OF THE FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE.

Here below is a summary of replies to the first questionnaire sent in July 2017 covering all the members identified in the list of the EWG.

Twelve responses from 12 different countries were received and the effort by each one of those responders was very much appreciated.

Question 1: What level of education is required for a person to start to run a farm?

In all the countries (which responded) of the European Union it seems that there is no particular diploma required to be able to exercise the profession of farmer. On the other hand, qualifications are required to obtain public aid.

In all cases, it is strongly encouraged for future farmers to obtain the highest level of training possible.

Question 2 : In what kind of schools do these persons get trained?

There are two types of education in all countries (which responded) to prepare the students for their future farming jobs:

- A secondary level up to 18/19 in agricultural specialty schools.
- And a university level often given at a Faculty or more rarely at Agronomic or Veterinary Schools.

Question 3: Is it an important part of the students (%) compared to classic education?

The specific agricultural education system in all EU countries (which responded) affects only a very small minority compared to the traditional education system (between 1 and 5%)

Question 4: What training to support agriculture mutation: initial and continuing training (linked to higher education)?

The majority of the responses to this investigation shows that continuing training for farmers is the most appropriate response to help them to meet the challenges they have to face. This is one of the points that need to be made clearer.

It is of notice that to those of our colleagues who have not yet had a chance to respond, their replies to J P Bastié would be much appreciated.

DISCUSSION

From the results of this first questionnaire, it appears as a common denominator to all these types of agriculture that it is through:

1. the contribution of research,
 2. initial and continuous training and
 3. by the advice given to farmers through the extension services
- that they will be able to meet those challenges of today and tomorrow.

The next questionnaire that I would suggest should therefore make it possible to document these 3 items:

- At the research level, how can cross-cutting research programs be defined at EU level and funded in part by European funds?
- Regarding training, and particularly at the level of vocational and continuing training, could the content of training sessions not be built in common through a European countries network?
- Referring to development, ie advice to the farmer through extension services, could exchanges of good practices be implemented, taking into account the specificities of each territory?

If agreed by the UEAA Steering committee meeting in Brussels on 28 September 2017 on these suggestions, I will go ahead in that direction and contact again all members of this EWG.

This is the end of this report. Thanks to all.

Bagnères de Luchon, 20 September 2017

Jean Pierre Bastié.

ANNEX I

Here is the list of the members of this Electronic Working Group to date :

davidg@i4agri.org ; (UK)
giampiero.maracchi@georgofili.it;
nedelnik@vupt.cz ;
munch@tum.de;
anne.poitel@akadeemia.ee
baiba.rivza@llu.lv ;
dabkevicius@lzi.lt ;
kerstinniblaeus@hotmail.com ; (Suède)
sing@asas.ro ;
michel.thibier@outlook.fr ;
tomasgarciaazcarate@gmail.com; (Spain)
guram_aleksidze@yahoo.com (Georgia)
Stefan.Mihina@uniag.sk
alar.astover@emu.ee
Balazs.ervin@agrar.mta.hu
claesgoran.claesson@gmail.com (Sweden)
inter.naas@gmail.com (Ukraine)

ANNEX II

Recent advances :

1. Lithuania

Intervention of Svetlana ARMAND : International Development Manager of UAB BOLLUQ society, Subačiaus g. 15-53, LT-01126 Vilnius, [+370 655 10 833](tel:+37065510833) (eurasian.concept@gmail.com)
She ensures development in Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova.

2. France

At the French Ministry of Agriculture, the International Service for Agricultural Education proposes to mobilize the network of agricultural schools already involved in European co-operation in order to relay and amplify this dynamic, following a meeting at the Ministry of Agriculture.

It is important now that all those in connection with this action get in touch with me: jean-pierre.bastie@laposte.net
(Mobile: + 33 7 84 10 16 81)