Erasmus Plus for Organic Sector

Erasmus+

Problem-based learning

Project for planning of conversion or optimisation of existing farms

UNIKASSEL VERSITÄT | ORGANIC AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

Peter von Fragstein und Niemsdorff

Section Organic Vegetable Production

Recruitment of stakeholders

(1) Preferably in a reasonable distance to the faculty (50 to 100 km)

(2) In special cases,

(a) No positive response under (1)

(b) Personal demand by a group member

[planning for the own future as responsible farm manager]

long distance addresses possible

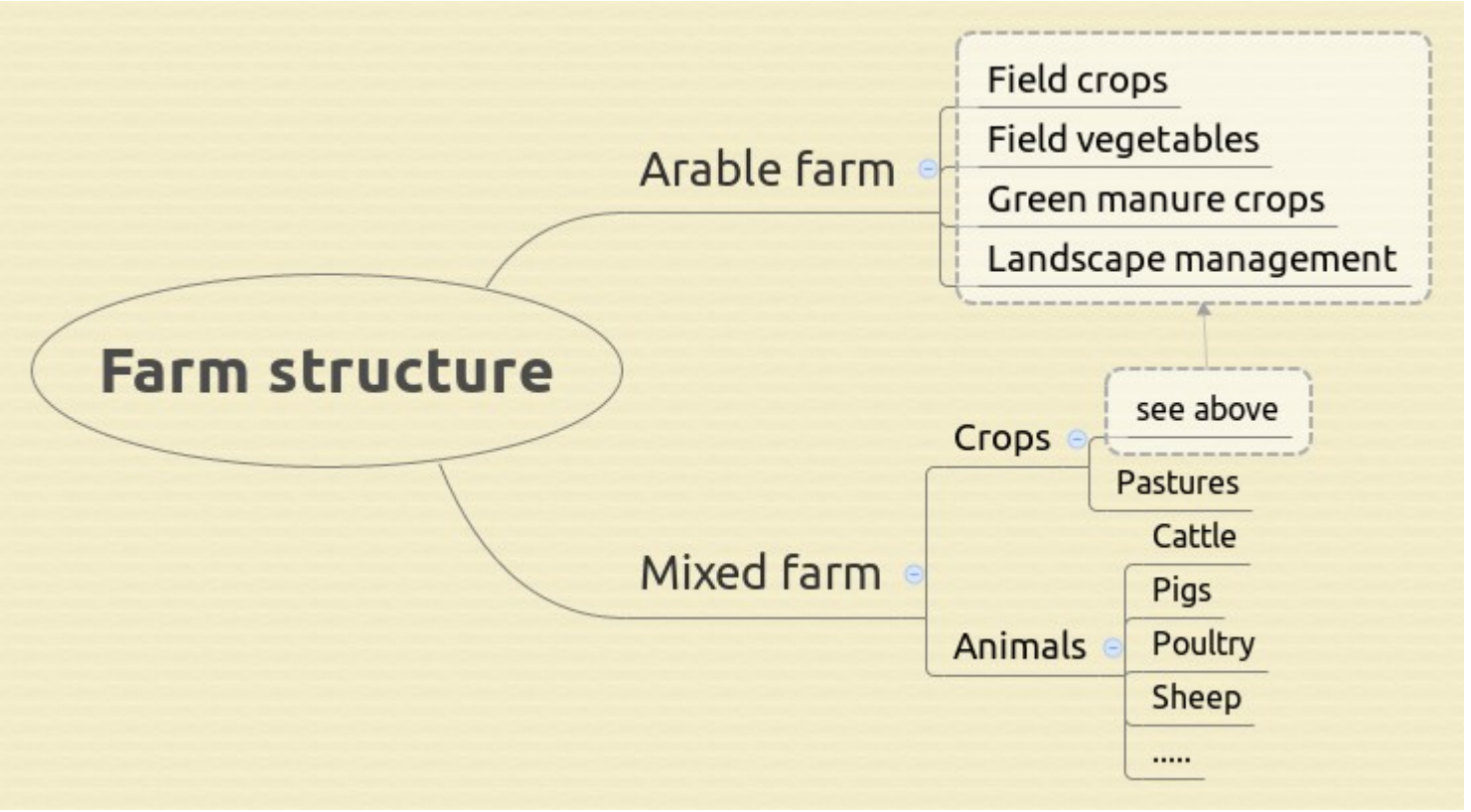
Recruitment of students

- Free choice of students of the 3rd year for a big project (= 2 semesters)
- Preferably groups between 8 and 15 persons
- Guided by teaching staff (professor or docent or PhD student)

Peculiarity of such a project work >>> Team work

- Relying on the prepared sections (elaborated data) of other group members
- Being accurate in time, quality and quantity of agreed tasks
- Developing the right communication skills within the group and to external actors
- Becoming stress resistent in times of increasing labour
- Recognizing leadership skills in case of need
- Being motivated and motivating to other group members

Potential structure of farms



Road map of conversion planning

Semester 1

- **Preparation of farm visit No1 (Role of persons, itinary of questions, what we need to know, which tools must be available during the visit, etc.)**
- **Elaboration of the present status of the farm** (Buildings, machines, animals, crops, working team, economy, marketing)
- **SWOT analysis**
- **Wishes & expectations of the farmer**

Useful tools

- **Useful tools for the work**
- **Repro** = programme for nutrient and humus balances
- **Replan** = programme for economic plannings
- Programme for the calculation of **fodder ratios**
- **Drawing programmes** for drafts of buildings, barns or other installations
- **Cloud computing** for the common access to documents
- Persons which are familiar with MS Word & Excel or equivalent programmes

Working structure

- Several visits of the farm, if needed as a week-end event
- Regular meetings with & without supervising person
- Working individually or in sub-groups for the stepwise achievement of results
- practical issues:
  (a) offer for soil analyses, spade diagnoses, feed analyses
  (b) concrete plannings for reconstructions of barns or farm shop facilities
  if it is in line with the common aim of the project

Semester 2 Planning period

- **Crop husbandry**
- **(Animal husbandry)**
- **(On farm processing)**
- **(Direct marketing)**
- **(Other use of buildings)**
- **Economic situation**
- **Market channels**
- **Report about present & future situation of the farm**
- **Presentation of results, including the co-referate of the invited farmer**

Universität Kassel – Fachbereich 11

Ökologische Agrarwissenschaften

Bericht zur Betriebsoptimierung zu dem Thema:

„Auf trockenem Fuße in die Zukunft?“

Kooperations- und Optimierungsplanung
zweier ökologischer Milchviehbetriebe

Arbeit im Modul H63 „Betriebsumstellung und -optimierung“
WS2015 & SS2016
Betreuer: Dr. Christian Krutzinna

University of Kassel – Department 11

Organic Agricultural Sciences

Report of farm optimisation:

„With dry feet towards the future?“

Planning for the cooperation & optimisation
of two organic milk producing farms

Work in Module H63 „Farm conversion & optimisation“
WS2015 & SS2016
Supervisor: Dr. Christian Krutzinna

Conclusions for the planning of The cooperation of two milk producing farms

Plan 1 >> Technically & economically feasable, but...

- **Considerable risks** due to dominant income by one product
- **High dependence** on stable & adequate milk prices
- Rebuilding of a common barn dependent on farmers' ability to convince the governmental landlord **to share costs** for investments and to enable attractive credit conditions
- As preconditions for sufficient feed and good prices main focus should be given to
  (a) **animal health**,
  (b) **animal feeding according to needs**,
  (c) **feed of high quality**

- Cooperation provides better distribution of workload & potential compensation of missing hours i.e. holidays, illness, etc.
- the challenge of cooperation
  (a) development & maintenance of inter-human relations
  (b) distances between the farms and unavoidable additional driving time

Plan 2 >> less economy-based

- Integration of
  - More organic concepts
  - Sustainability issues
  - Ethical considerations

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Examples from University of Kassel

Thanks for your interest

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