Agricultural Knowledge Systems In Transition: Towards a more effective and efficient support of Learning and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture.
AKS

Agricultural Knowledge System (AKS) is a term used to define a set of public and private organisations dedicated to research, education and extension, and their interaction with knowledge users, traditionally farmers. In Europe, these organisations have been linked in a linear way, aligned with the common goal of increasing agricultural production. The knowledge organisations have evolved to resemble networks as they have broadened and expanded the knowledge they supply in response to a diversifying demand. Despite the numerous changes in the AKS, however, the flexibility and responsiveness needed to fully support innovative initiatives for sustainable rural development is still lacking.

LINSAs

In the absence of an AKS capable of providing appropriate knowledge, networks have developed that function outside the main AKS. They include farmers, consumers, NGOs, experts and local administrations, looking for alternative ways to produce food and contribute to rural sustainable development. These ‘Learning and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture’ (LINSAs) mostly operate on the principle of knowledge sharing and learning between farmers and other stakeholders.
WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF SOLINSA?

A key aim of SOLINSA is to understand how such networks (LIN-SA) develop and operate in practice. Specifically it aims to identify barriers to their development and explore how policy instruments, financial arrangements, research, education and advisory services might support them in cost-efficient and effective ways.

The results of the project will consist of:

- **Tools and methods** for practitioners that are involved in learning and innovation in agriculture
- Recommendations on **policy instruments and financial arrangements** that support learning and innovation for sustainable agriculture
- **Concepts to reflect** on learning and innovation processes as drivers of transition to sustainable rural development

HOW DO WE PROCEED?

Project partners will collaborate with practitioners involved in LINSAs in a series of workshops and consultations throughout the SOLINSA project. Project partners and a group of expert advisors will together reflect on the processes involved in the study of LINSAs to adapt and refine the collaborative learning and research methods. SOLINSA will be characterised by policymakers, practitioners and researchers sharing their experiences and views in a platform that encourages ongoing reflection on the learning processes.
HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

STAY INFORMED
You can subscribe to the newsletter or consult the website to be informed about the project and the different events organised.

EXCHANGE
You can participate to the events: international seminars in winter 2012, and summer 2013 as well as the final conference in winter 2013.

LEARN TOGETHER
You can join the training course planned in autumn 2013 on methodology used to support learning and innovation networks.

SOLINSA INVOLVES 11 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS FROM 8 COUNTRIES:

France French Livestock Institute
Germany University of Hohenheim
Hungary Institute of Economics of Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Italy University of Pisa
Latvia Baltic Studies Centre
Switzerland AGRIDEA, Federal Institute for Technology and Research Institute of Organic Agriculture
The Netherlands Wageningen University
United Kingdom CCRI (University of Gloucestershire and University of West of England)

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