

Measuring the success of three different CSA models in Spain on the basis of selected factors

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Spain is one of the most affected European countries by the economic crisis of 2008 and now faces a precarious economic situation. Not only in Spain, but particularly there, alternative agricultural and economic systems like Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), which follow the approach of a more socially sustainable and just economy have become more relevant during the last years. Unfortunately, many of the new initiatives that formed in Spain have severe problems to survive. I assume that on the one hand the reasons for their failures are of socio-economic character, but to a great extent also depend on the internal structures of the enterprises, as there are other CSAs which successfully established themselves. Although most CSA systems have their basic principles in common, there is no uniformity of structures and the different CSA models are diverse. In Spain three different model types were analyzed: 1. the farmer driven model, 2. the joint community members and producers driven model, and 3. the professional farmers' network driven model. The internal structures of CSA initiatives that belong to the same model have a quite homogenous character. However, these structures vary between initiatives of different models.

Within this research I want to find out about individual model's strengths and weak points and evaluate this information. The central question is: "How do internal factors differ among the three Spanish CSA models and how do they affect a success of performance?".

In a first step, I defined internal factors that have significant importance for the functioning of CSAs. For each model three different Spanish initiatives were selected that will be examined along these factors. I will collect the data by single person, open ended, semi-structured interviews with one to three persons of each initiative. Therefore, I will travel to Spain and visit the interview partners at their places. Afterwards, I will try to draw conclusions about the different CSA's internal structures to their impact on the communities' performance and stability. A following comparison of the initiatives then hopefully will reveal clear patterns that will allow to determine general guidelines for successful CSA communities and thereby contribute to the movement's wider distribution. I consider obtaining this knowledge to be an important component forwarding the development of sustainable CSAs in Spain and to improve their applicability.

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