

Analysis of training in agriculture, forestry and entrepreneurship in rural areas

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SUMMARY

The aim of the research was to assess priorities, events and activities described in the single programming document. The conclusions were drawn and recommendations worked out with the purpose to improve European structural funding usage for the next period of planning. The specific aim of the research was to investigate the range of commendatory course themes and teaching methods in agriculture, forestry and entrepreneurship in rural areas. Firstly, as the result of the research was the information basis for working out documents for Rural Developmental Plan 2007 – 2013 activities. Secondly, the validation of the National Program Project „Professional Training 2004” had been carried out.

The research had been carried out by the Institute of Education and Home Economics of the Faculty of Engineering of Latvia University of Agriculture under the guidance of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Latvia from August 2006 to November 2006. The receiver of the research results is the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Latvia.

Actual case appraisal, analysis of the training experience of forest proprietors and farmers in abroad, suggestions on necessary training themes, methods and qualitative organizing of courses in agriculture, forestry and entrepreneurship in rural areas were the outcomes of the research theme *Training Analysis in Agriculture, Forestry and Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas*.

The main methods of the research were questionnaires, discussions, non-structured, partly structured and structured interviews (telephone interviews), co-operative and expert valuations, data statistical processing.

The analysis of the „Professional Training 2004” had been carried out in the research. The acquired knowledge and skills and their impact on professional activity as well as longitudinal effect of training results had been studied. Assessed common evaluation of training quality and put forward recommendations for further organizing of qualitative training in agriculture, forestry and entrepreneurship for persons working in rural areas. Assessing the „Professional Training 2004” the conclusion is that participants on the whole are satisfied with organization in general. Their suggestion is to use more practical examples, exchange of experience and lecturers who are able to link theory and practice together in future courses.

Questionnaires and interviews with persons working in agriculture, forestry and entrepreneurship in rural areas about topical training themes as well as their content analysis and assessment had been carried out. According to the assessment the previously offered themes are still topical and should be continued. The themes should be complemented with innovative themes on the newest technologies, experience abroad, co-operation and the development of competitive farms.

Training methods in agriculture, forestry and entrepreneurship in rural areas had been studied. Expert valuation and suggestions about usage of the most effective training methods for persons with different levels of education had been put forward. Training effectiveness could be increased parallel to lectures to 50% using group work, change of experience, discussions, excursions, practical works, problem tasks and analysis of situations as well as feedback.

The division into basic, deepened and specialized courses, innovations and topicalities are recommended for the future course planning.

Group cohesion (forming of the local initiative groups), co-operation skills, the development of independent and creative thinking as well as reasoning skills should be put forward as additional training aims.

Specific features of districts and needs of participants should be considered in training organization. Theoreticians, practitioners, successful farmers, scientists, specialists of involved institutions with knowledge minimum adult education should be attracted.