
CLÉ DES CHAMPS and CULTUR'INNOV



ISSUE: Focus on the natural rural resource

ITINERARY 2B

Date: Wednesday, September 11, 2013

Location: La Mara Inn

PROMOTERS

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Project description:

In 2005, the Clé des champs de Saint-Camille, an agri-food cooperative, has an interest in the agroforestry sector and wants to develop three types of NTFPs: medicinal plants, nut-bearing trees and mushrooms. In 2008, the cooperative hires a resource dedicated to developing the agroforestry sector. The cooperative discovers a business opportunity:

- interesting development potential for NTFPs;
- a need for support and advice for the producers of emerging crops;
- funding opportunity for agricultural producers by the Agriconseils network.

However, the cooperative faces various problems for the development of this new project:

- The Clé des champs cannot be accredited by the Agriconseils network;
- the truck farmer sector must be empowered (profitability);
- the need to use some of the benefits from the agroforestry in order to maintain their advantage in the NTFP business;
- uncertainty about some grant programs, including the *Programme de mise en valeur des ressources du milieu forestier - Volet II* (Forest Resources Development Program - Part II).

The solution:

- from now on, the Clé des champs will focus on the production, sale and resale of plant materials, and on the possibility of processing and marketing their production;
- a new solidarity cooperative is created: Cultur'Innov. This structure provides independent consulting services in the field of agroforestry.

The key elements to remember according to Stéphane Demers:

- Cultur'Innov is currently on the up swing. Their success is due to:
 - a team of worker members who believe in the cooperative and who put the time and energy necessary to acquire knowledge, develop the services and effectively meet the needs of the customers;
 - a dynamic Board of Directors that has a clear vision for the development of the cooperative;
 - user members who use the services offered.

La Clé des champs as it is today:

The Clé des champs is now a GP (private company). The cooperative's assets were purchased in 2012. The truck farm now markets its community-supported agriculture (CSA) products through public procurement contracts and short distribution channels. The new Clé des champs extends its season over several months and allows the owners to work year-round.

The key elements to remember according to Catherine Audet and Alexandre Cardin:

- an extensive range of products and a diversified production result in a profitable truck farm;
- by changing the legal form of the Clé des champs (from coop to GP), the new owners could take on some of the challenges highlighted by the study led by Mr. Lair, which focused on the Clé des champs at the time the company was a coop (management and staff involvement, use of agricultural programs, training and experience of the developers, internal management, etc.).

RESEARCHER

Richard Lair, Cégep Victoriaville | E-mail: Lair.Richard@cegepvicto.ca

Summary of the researcher's presentation:

Mr. Lair first presents the Centre d'Innovation sociale en agriculture's mission and vision (CISA). The CISA aims to lead discussions and applied research quality projects related to social innovation, and of which the results have a practical relevance to the agri-food industry and to the society in general, through training, transfer of results to the companies and civic education.

The researcher then presents the results from his research on the Clé des champs. He outlines the conditions necessary for the agricultural success of a non-family succession, according to studies conducted by TARGET-Laval in 2004. He continues with other conditions identified by Cyr (2012) regarding innovative productions.

He insists on the issue of access to land and the difficulties for a non-family succession. He explains the Farm Bank Project, directed by CISA, whose objective is to promote the establishment of successful farm succession.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

NOTE: All linked documents (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) are only available in their original French version.

[PowerPoint from Stéphane Demers, Cultur'Innov](#)
[PowerPoint from Richard Lair, Cégep Victoriaville](#)