



# Do farmers, consumers and supply-chain professionals differ in their attitude to innovation?

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### Relevance of the question

- Economic, political, and technical constraints to the development of low-input and organic dairy farming supply chains have been identified
- Innovation required to address these constraints
- Innovation will only result in uptake and subsequent desired change if it is acceptable to the whole supply chain
- Need to identify conflicts and synergies between supply chain members in relation to innovation acceptability





### Research Objectives

- Study 1: to identify the broad range of expectations for innovation in management practices and adapted breeds along the whole low-input and organic dairy farming supply chain;
- Studies 2 and 3: to assess the acceptability of novel strategies along the whole supply chain



### Study 1: Method

- 200 statements about current innovations in conventional and organic dairying
- 34 statements selected as a representative sample
- Interviews conducted to discuss and rank these statements to evaluate which were most and least acceptable in organic and low input dairying.



### Study 1: Which innovations?

4 Countries

- UK

- ITALY

- BELGIUM

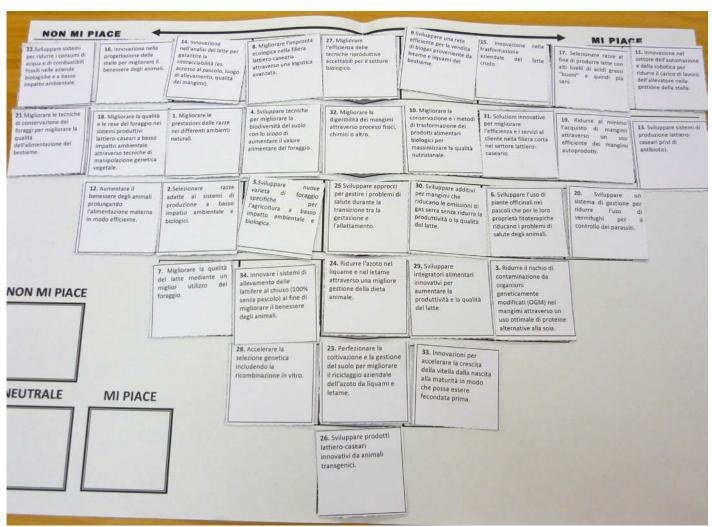
- FINLAND

3 Groups of Participants

- CONSUMERS
  - FARMERS
- RETAILERS & PROCESSORS

DATA
COLLECTION:
GROUP &
INDIVIDUAL
INTERVIEWS

### **Doing Q Sorting**



### Results

Consumers

Animal Welfare

Milk & Feed Quality **Farmers** 

Customer focus: Animal welfare

Feed & Soil Management

R&P Low input systems Animal Welfare Forage & Home-grown **Advocacy** 



### **Study 1: Conclusions**

- Innovation/novel strategies in animal welfare appear a major concern for all categories but:
  - a distinguished group of <u>consumers</u> care more about milk (and therefore feed) quality
  - animal welfare for <u>farmers</u> is key to customer relationships, while feed and soil management is main *internal* worry
  - all <u>retailers/processors</u> take animal welfare for granted, while main differences in focus are the relevance of quality /origin of feed vs. environmental/low-input efficiency





### Study 2/3: Acceptability Surveys

- 2 surveys were conducted among Supply-Chain members in AT, BE, FI, DK, IT, UK:
  - **1.** Farmers & Processors: ≈1500 questionnaires for 223 valid responses
  - 2. <u>Consumers</u>:≈7000 online survey respondents for 5947 valid responses



### **Production strategies tested**

#### Agroforestry

 Agroforestry innovation in dairy production is the integration of animals (cows, sheep) and trees on the same plot of land.

#### Alternative Protein Source

 Use of home- grown protein crops, such as lupins, beans and peas, as animal feed.

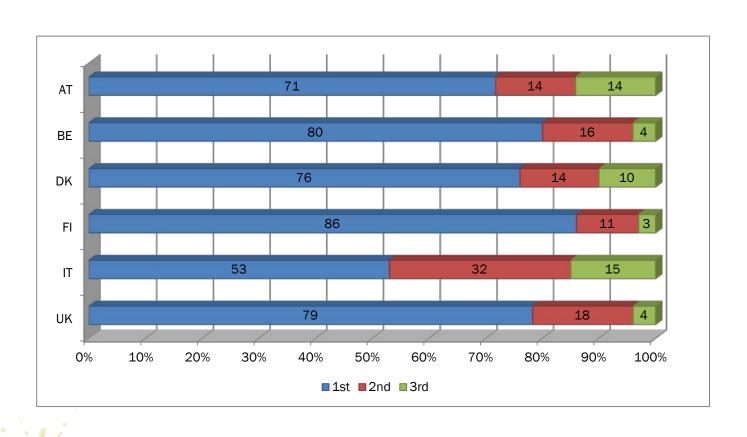
#### Prolonged maternal feeding

 The calves and lambs can suckle directly from their mothers (or a foster mother) for the first 3-5 months after they are born.





# Rankings by country: ALTERNATIVE PROTEIN SOURCE

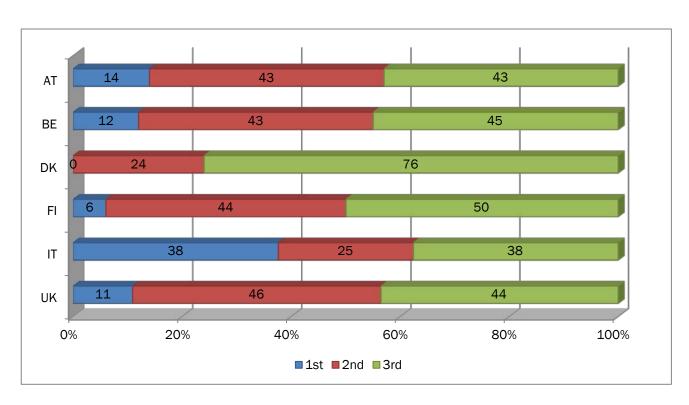






# Rankings by country: AGROFORESTRY

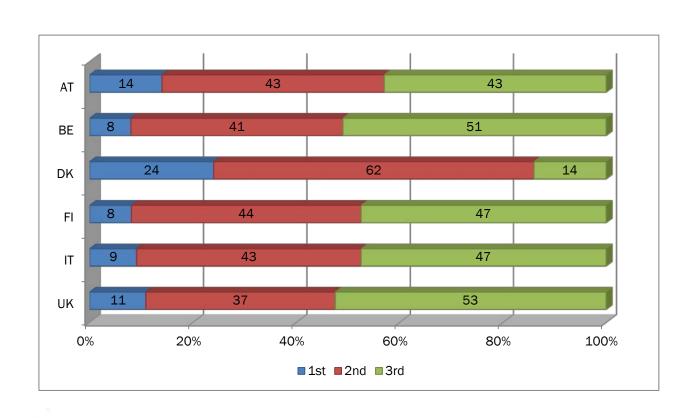








# Rankings by country: PROLONGED MATERNAL FEEDING









## **Study 2: Conclusions**

- Many farmers affirmed that they have already adopted Alternative Protein Source confirm that this production strategy has been more widely tested.
- Individual farmers are more likely to adopt those novel production strategies that receive broader consensus among their peers, their advisers and the society in general







### **Study 2: Conclusions**

- Sustainable production strategies, especially those applied in organic farming, need strong collaboration throughout the whole supply chain:
  - input producers need to recognise the (novel) needs of their farming customers, while
  - processors, distributors and finally consumers need to perceive the higher value produced by means of these more sustainable practices.





### Study 3

- Consumer survey
- Same 3 innovations evaluated as supply chain survey
- Additional questions on willingness to pay for the innovations in the price of milk





# Wilingness-to-Pay results

Country						
Choice	AT	BE	DK	FI	IT	UK
AF	.09	13	37	06	.43	33
PS	34	-1.05	91	51	19	-1.02
MF	.62	.42	25	32	.52	.06

% changes from currently purchased milk price







### **Study 3: Conclusions**

- Prolonged Maternal Feeding is the production strategy that exhibits – in all countries and across all the supply chain categories – the highest level of acceptance by consumers.
- In Denmark and Finland this preference, though reflected in Attitudes and Purchase Intention, does not transfer to actual (stated) choice and WTP.
- The Alternative Protein Source strategy for feeding dairy cows did not score as highly with consumer as it did with supply chain and WTP was low.







### **Study 3: Conclusions**

- Two relevant conclusions can be drawn on these results:
  - Alternative Protein Sources is either not fully understood by consumers as a strategy that could benefit them.
  - Prolonged Maternal Feeding, the most accepted strategy by consumers, since it is potentially a costincreasing strategy, may be a viable solution only if farmers received adequate monetary compensation for potential losses. WTP results are not very encouraging.





### Overall conclusions

- Consensus does not exist over acceptability of innovations.
- Those that raise costs of production (e.g. maternal feeding) not popular with farmers and whilst popular with consumers, WTP is poor.
- More communication and greater understanding of supply chain by all actors would be beneficial.









### Thank you!

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