

International EAAE-SYAL Seminar

1. Title:

Spatial dynamics in agro-food systems: implications for sustainability and consumer welfare

2. Date and location

27- 30 October 2010 – University of Parma, Department of Economics – Parma, Italy.

The Seminar is organized by the Department of Economics at the University of Parma –. Parma is one of the most dynamic cities of Northern Italy, and considered the centre of the Italian agro-food valley due to its several important food industries, known worldwide, as well as its food products that represent the Italian tradition in food production. In spite of being a small town, Parma offers a wide range of opportunities for research, business, culture, opera, gastronomy and tourism.

3. Background

Food production and food processing, nowadays, are economic activities whose local and global strategies are interconnected. Decisions on where and how to produce, and to what extent, are made on a global scale and are more and more driven by the low production costs of various factors, such as labour and transportation, and target market characteristics.

Even in agro-food systems it is possible to observe that many companies have organized their production in developing countries in order to be more competitive in the global market. The range of tasks that can be accomplished by delocalizing production activities has expanded to include core activities that are critical for company performance (such as research and innovation). At the same time, this process generates positive and negative externalities that can affect the welfare of the local population as well the welfare of consumers and more generally the sustainability of local production systems.

On the other hand, local production systems are competing on the global market by producing specific quality goods or by producing innovative products.

In a globalized world, it is therefore possible to locate production activities in a limited geographical area and reach global markets. At the same time, these globalized production systems may reach niche and spatially concentrated markets. As a result, the agro-food system shows a striking coexistence of diverse organizational patterns. These food networks are extremely dynamic and are developing according to the (cultural and productive) characteristics of local production systems as well as the availability of resources (such as land and water), production costs and the localization of target markets.

Although literature on local production systems is relevant, there are still unresolved issues concerning the factors that are influencing the dynamics of agro-food systems and what their effects, locally and globally, are. In particular, what are the dynamics of local production systems under the pressures of globalized food-chains with respect to environmental preservation, cultural identity, market equilibrium and in general socio-economic welfare? How is the process of construction / destruction of territorial links in the agro-food business shaping?

At the same time, on the consumer side a dichotomy behavior exists where some consumers are attracted by “zero mile” products and others are adopting a non-seasonal consumption pattern. Some consumers are attracted by specific attributes, like geographic origin, while others are looking for the industrial brands as quality guarantee.

The implications of the different spatial dynamic strategies in the global agro-food system could be better analyzed by adopting an interdisciplinary approach, where economics, geography, sociology, demography and agronomy can provide useful theoretical tools and innovative analytical outcomes.

4. Objectives

The overall objective of the Seminar is to generate scientific discussion on the spatial dynamics of agri-food systems and related issues (society, human habits, consumers, firm strategies, local-rural development, environmental, national and international legislation, and international organization) in order to debate the implications of different policies locally and internationally, and to provide recommendations for policy makers. More specifically the Seminar aims to reach important objectives both in terms of discussion of new methodological proposals and definition of theoretical frameworks affecting the process of the localization and construction of more dynamic agro-food production systems.

The Seminar is jointly organized by two scientific communities: EAAE and SYAL. EAAE is a scientific association which brings together European economists interested in researching the problems of the agricultural and food industries and rural development in Europe. SYAL is an Association which deals with *Système agroalimentaire localisé (SYAL)* in Countries in the North and South of the world. A shared objective of both organizations is to develop and to exchange knowledge concerning agro-food systems and links between food and territory by organizing Congresses and Seminars. In particular, SYAL studies, analyzes and disseminates concepts related to the environmental and the productive activities associated with production.

5. Topics:

The different topics take into account the main factors (economic, geographic, social, political, technical, cultural etc.) influencing the localization and globalization of food production and the consequences in terms of sustainability and consumer welfare. The first topic analyses what is happening in the agro-food systems and why; the second topic considers more specifically the socio-environmental impact of agro-food spatial dynamics on rural development; the third topic discusses the role played by local resources in the development of spatial dynamic food systems, both as opportunity for localized agro-food systems and for globalized firms/networks; the fourth topic focuses on the theme of the governance of spatial dynamic food systems; the fifth topics discuss on progress in methodological approaches useful to analyze the localization and globalization of food production and the consequences in terms of sustainability and consumer welfare. In more detail:

1) ***The current state of spatial dynamics in agro-food systems in terms of production, distribution and marketing strategies:***

- Trends of spatial dynamics in different socio-economical contexts;
- Supply chain structure and organisation;
- Networks dynamic and strategy;
- Food consumption, globalisation and localisation;
- Modern distribution strategies and effects on spatial dynamics;
- Quality control, standards, traceability and quality assurance systems;
- Alternative food networks, zero food miles and localisation strategies;
- Consumers welfare implications;
- Logistic pattern and needs.

2) **Socio-environmental impact of agro-food spatial dynamics on rural development:**

- Effects on rural dynamics;
- Effects on sustainable development, biodiversity and the environment;
- Agro-food restructuring and local territorial synergies;
- Links with rural tourism and food culture;
- Peri-urban agro-food production and rural development;

3) **The role of local resources in agro-food systems spatial dynamic:**

- Local food quality and local specific resources (human and natural);
- Territorial labels and designations of origin;
- Local resources and localized food systems;
- The role of local resources in localization strategies of multinational firms.

4) **Governance of agro-food systems spatial dynamic:**

- Institutions and stakeholders: role and effectiveness;
- Collective action and collective organizations;
- Public policies and policy instruments;
- Quality issues and public policies;
- Innovation and extension service;
- Good practice in governance actions.

5) **Progress in methodological approaches for analyzing agro-food systems spatial dynamic**

- Innovations in GIS tools;
- Measuring bargaining power and effect;
- Measuring supply chain and network efficiency;
- Developments in economic geography.

6. Call for papers:

In order to organize the Seminar in the best possible way, participants who intend to present a paper are requested to e-mail an abstract of 750 to 1000 words in English, French or Spanish by **March 31, 2010**, to filippo.arfini@unipr.it.

The abstract should include objectives, research questions, the theoretical framework, the methodology and the characteristics of the data set. The study presented should not have been submitted before in any other scientific event.

The thematic area of interest and the preferred mode of presentation (poster or oral) should be specified.

Authors of accepted abstracts will be notified by **May 30, 2010**. The deadline for the final submission of accepted papers is **July 31, 2010**. All accepted papers will be published on a CD-ROM. A selection of contributions will be published in a volume of conference proceedings after editing and streamlining.

The papers should be written in Microsoft Word (version 98 or later), Times New Roman font, size 12, and a maximum length of 10,000 words. The top, bottom and right margins should be 2.5 cm and the left margin 3 cm. The line spacing will be 1.5.

7. Language

Presentations are accepted in English, French and Spanish languages. English translation will be provided for all presentations that are delivered in French or in Spanish. Plenary sessions are translated to all three languages.

8. Organisation and Scientific Committee

The Congress is located in Parma and will be place at the University of Parma, Faculty of Economics. In Parma there are several typology of residence (Bed and Breakfast, Agro-tourism, University lodge and Hotels). The Organization Committee will find the best and comfortable location for spend the time of the Seminar in Parma.

International Scientific Committee:

- Luis Miguel Albisu, Center for Agro-Food Research of Aragon, Spain
- Gilles Allaire, INRA Toulouse, France
- Et Theodosia Antopoulou, University of Athens, Greece
- Filippo Arfini, University of Parma, Italy
- Dominique Barjolle, AGRIDEA, Switzerland
- Giovanni Belletti, University of Florence, Italy
- Jim Bingen Community, Food & Agriculture Michigan State University, USA
- François Casabianca INRA, France
- Arturo Christovao de l'Université de l'Alto Douro, Portugal
- Christian Fischer, Massey University, New Zealand
- Melanie Fritz, University of Bonn, Germany
- Corrado Giacomini, University of Parma, Italy
- George Giraud, Enita Clermont-Ferrand, France
- Monika Hartmann, University of Bonn, Germany
- Andrea Marescotti, University of Florence, Italy
- José Muchnik, ERG SYAL / INRA, Montpellier, France
- Papa Nouhine, DIEYE-Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles –ISRA, Senegal.
- Javier Sanz Cañada, Institute of Economics, Geography and Demography, Madrid, Spain
- Denis Sautier, CIRAD, Montpellier, France
- Gerardo Torres Salcido, Centro de Investigaciones Interdisciplinarias en Ciencias y Humanidades, (CEIICH), Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico
- Dao The Anh, Center for Agrarian systems research and development-CASRAD –Vietnam
- Irene Velarde, University of La Plata, Argentina
- John Wilkinson, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

Organisation Committee:

- Filippo Arfini, University of Parma
- Michele Donati, University of Parma
- Davide Menozzi, University of Parma
- Pascale Lajous, Gis Syal-France
- Hernando Riveros, IICA-Prodar, Interamerican Institute of agriculture cooperation

The 3-day of the joint Seminar will start from the morning of Wednesday, 27th October 2010, until the afternoon of Friday 29th 2010. On Saturday 30th, a study tour will be organized to a food company located in the Province of Parma. The evening of the first day is devoted to an official dinner.

10. Registration:

Participants are kindly asked to pre-register by **March 31, 2010**.

Pre-registration and registration will be available through the Seminar website at: <http://gis-syal.agropolis.fr/>.

11. Participation fees:

Europe, USA, Australia and New Zealand

Researchers, Professionals, public in general: 200 €

Students: 75 €

East Europe, South America, Africa and Asia

Researchers, Professionals, public in general: 150 €

Students: 50 €

The seminar is open to EAAE-members and to staff of the Universities / Research Centers that are member of SYAL. A membership of the EAAE cost € 45. for the period 2008 – 2011.

Inscription after July 31 will have an additional fee of 100 € (Europe) and 50 € (South America)

The inscription fee includes the CD ROM with all papers and presentations, welcome coffee, coffee break, lunch, social dinner. Accommodation is not included.

The participants that send the complete papers should include the payment for the registration to the Seminar to be able to participate as lecturers. (In the next bulletin and on the Seminar web page the way for an early payment will be announced).

The study tour scheduled on Friday requires a specific inscription and additional fee (to be announced).

12. Important dates:

- Submission deadline for abstracts: March 31, 2010
- Authors' notification: May 30, 2010
- Submission deadline for full papers: July 31, 2010
- Deadline for pre-registration: March 31, 2010
- Deadline for final registration: July 31, 2010

13. Contact Person for EAAE:

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