

The role of market intermediaries in building sustainable food systems.

Understand the "why" and "how" of innovations implemented by beneficiary intermediaries in the agri-food chain.

Introduction

In the introduction, we would like to develop the two fundamental concepts of our research.

1. Beneficiary intermediaries. The first concept to be considered is that of economically advantageous intermediaries in the agri-food chain, as opposed to the facilitation or initiation of public bodies aimed at enhancing sustainability in the food chain. Explanation of the necessary shift from sustainability through aid to sustainability through trade.
2. Innovation. Why do we need this in the first place? How does innovation depend on context? But also, why do we think that innovation starts in Western countries (and how do we get rid of this idea)? We will end this section by stressing the immense importance of interactions between innovation actors, "which are different enough to gain new knowledge but linked enough to understand each other seems to lead particularly to innovation - a relationship rightly described by Granovetter (1985) as "the strength of weak ties", according to Klerck & Gildemacher, (2012).

Case Studies : We will present five case studies from three different continents and three different countries. Our aim was to find case studies that are very contrasted: in the interpretation of innovation (innovation as technical/innovation as context-dependent), implementation by a different type of intermediary (broker/marketer etc.) and of course different cultures with different sustainability needs within the agri-food chain.

The contact phase of our research, in order to obtain more information by conducting interviews, will begin next week. We cannot, therefore, at this time, confirm those listed below. We briefly present each case study by labeling it with : (1) description of the innovation, (2) country of activity, (3) intermediary role, (4) scale, (5) establishment phase.

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| | Innovation description | Country of activity | Role as intermediary | Scale | Phase of establishment ¹ |
|--|--|---|--|---------------|--|
| Giant leaps | Online tool for caterers, restaurants, events and chefs that measures and helps manage the climate impact of the food served (calculation tool CO2 emission). https://www.giantleaps.nl/about/ | The Netherlands | Agent middlemen: type broker | National | Start-up |
| Kolectou | Upcycling of bread waste from local bakeries near Rennes. http://www.kolectou.com | France, Rennes | Processors and manufacturers | Local | Start-up |
| Jean Bouteille | Circular economy idea. Recycling glass bottles is completely new in France, whilst glass recycling systems in Cameroun or Germany has been existing for over decades. http://www.jeanbouteille.fr | France | Merchant middlemen | National | Growth |
| Lufa farm | Rooftop-farm combining production, retail and delivery all in one, in the heart of Montréal. https://montreal.lufa.com/en/ | Montréal, Canada | Combination of food processors and manufacturers, commission men and merchant middlemen. | Local | Expansion |
| Food delivery boxes with recipe (Marley Spoon, Hello Fresh) | Combatting food waste and boosting organic food consumption <u>OR</u> <i>Green Washing</i> middlemen?: A Critical Impact Analysis https://marleyspoon.com | Western countries all over the world (sufficient infrastructure required) | (New type of) Merchant middlemen. | International | Hellofresh (Maturity) / Marley Spoon (Expansion) |

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|--|---|-----------------|------------------|----------|----------|
| De Seizoensarbeiders | Platform aiming to combat Dutch farmers lacking employees due to coronavirus by connecting them with jobless people coming from the event-sector. | The Netherlands | Broker middlemen | National | Start-up |
| https://deseizoensarbeiders.nl (Dutch only) | | | | | |

¹ Phases of a business lifecycle: 1. Development; 2. Start-up; 3. Growth; 4. Expansion; 5. Maturity.

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