

The European Group of the International Farming Systems Association (IFSA, ex AFSRE) carries out European Symposia every two years. After four successful symposia in Edinburgh/UK, Granada/Spain, Hohenheim/Germany and Volos/Greece, the Group decided to carry out the next symposium in Florence/Italy. This European Symposium addresses all Europeans, irrespective of their area of research and work, as well as Non-Europeans working in Europe. Participants and authors will hopefully represent a wide range of European States (EU member States, Central and Eastern Europe).

The Committees

Steering Committee: Jacques Brossier (INRA, France), Artur Cristóvão (Un. of Alto Douro, Portugal), Werner Doppler (Un. Hohenheim, Germany), David Gibbon (United Kingdom), Alex Koutsouris (Agricultural Un. of Athens, Greece), Rebecka Milestad (Swedish Un. of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden), Luigi Omodei Zorini (Un. of Florence, Italy), Tahir Rehman (London School of Economics, United Kingdom).

Scientific Committee: Will be composed of reviewers of papers, presenters and reporters of the Symposium.

Organising Committee: The local organising committee is composed by Luigi Omodei Zorini, Caterina Contini, Giancarlo Campolmi, Ivan Malevolti, Donato Romano and Studio Scaramuzzi.

Background

Farming and rural development has been changing rapidly and often dramatically. New opportunities and constraints are emerging. Globalisation and liberalisation on the one hand and resource degradation on the other are altering the future of farm families and rural institutions and intensifying the pressure on the environment and natural resources. These new realities must effectively be considered in farming systems research and rural development. Thanks to its interdisciplinary approach, the farming systems profession can help with the development of environmentally sound farming and rural concepts. In this context the term environment is interpreted very broadly including physical, biological, economic, social and institutional features of farming communities and aspects of nature and ethic evaluation.

Purposes

- Encourage the debate on farming and rural systems approaches in order to improve the linkages among methodologies of different disciplines. The disciplines potentially involved are soil sciences, agronomy, sciences of renewable energy, forestry, animal husbandry, environmental sciences, economics, social sciences, geography, land use planning, regional sciences, extension, communication, ethnology and anthropology.
- Reach a common understanding of the complexity and the needs within environmentally sound farming and rural development. Which strategies allow a satisfactory integration of agronomic, economic, social and environmental needs? How do concepts such as sustainable agriculture, liberalisation and privatisation, participation empowerment, indigenous and external knowledge systems, environmental conservation concepts, agricultural and

environmental policy contribute to the definition of strategies and their evaluation?

- Strengthen the farming systems profession and stimulate collaborations among researchers, advisors and practitioners in order to develop the agricultural sectors with particular reference to environment.

Symposium Programme

The programme features two plenary sessions, five workshops with presentation and discussion of the accepted papers, posters display, training and tools bazaar, field trips and special parallel sessions.

Provisional Schedule

Time	Sunday 7.4.2002	Monday 8.4.2002	Tuesday 9.4.2002	Wednesday 10.4.2002	Thursday 11.4.2002
8.00 -		Registration			
9.00 -		time: 9.45	Field Trips	Parallel Workshops (presentations & discussions)	Two Special Parallel Sessions
11.00 -		Welcome and Plenary Session 1		Coffee break	
11.30 -				Parallel Workshops (reports - general discussion)	Parallel Workshops (summary - results)
13.00 -				Lunch	
15.00 -		Parallel Workshops (presentations & discussions)		Poster Session & tools bazaar	Plenary Session 2
17.00 -		Coffee break		Coffee break	
17.30 -	Registration	Parallel Workshops (presentations & discussions)		Poster Session & tools bazaar	End
19.00 -				time: 18.00 Meeting European Group of IFSA	
21.00				Social Dinner	

Plenary sessions

1. Welcome addresses, introduction to the general topic and presentation of the typical Tuscan localities where the field trips will take place.
2. Reports from the workshops, plenary discussion, summary, findings and posters' prize giving.

Two special parallel sessions will focus on: a. Science and Society; b. Eastern Countries

Workshops

The workshops will be the major component of the Symposium. Five parallel workshops will deal with the following issues:

1. Concepts and methodologies
2. Resilience and continuity of small scale farming within sustainable rural livelihood systems
3. Rural/Urban relations
4. Quality of life, food, landscape, environment: from rural resources to better livelihood systems for people
5. Learning processes in research and extension

Organisation of workshops and discussions

Each workshop is organised as follows:

A small team will co-ordinate, review and organise the papers that will be submitted for each workshop theme. The organisation of the workshops during the Symposium is left to the team responsible. Time spent in workshop activities will be maximised and the participation of all members of the group ensured. In general, the format of each workshop will be as follows:

1. *Presentation:* A presenter will introduce the papers to be dealt with in each session.
2. *Discussion:* Workshop participants may break up into small discussion groups if wished. Each discussion group will have a reporter.
3. *Reporting from workshops - General discussion:* The reporter of each group will present the results of the group discussion to be examined and discussed by all the workshop participants. A summary will be presented in the final plenary session on Thursday by a reporter for each workshop.

Posters

Posters will be displayed during the Symposium. Two sessions are allocated for discussions of the posters. Authors will be available at the poster. A selected jury will give a prize to the best poster.

Training and tools bazaar

Two sessions will be made available (parallel to the discussion of posters) for participants to present examples of tools and techniques that have been used in the field or in training courses.

Field trips

Field trips will be organised during the second day of the Symposium. They will be planned in order to give the participants the possibility to speak with farmers and extensioners working in the area. In each field trip, participants will have the opportunity to split into small groups and discuss with the local stakeholders. English speaking people will be available to facilitate the discussions.

Topics and Content of Workshops

1. Concepts and methodologies

Conceptual contributions and discussions should focus on the composition, relations and the overall rational of problems, objectives, design, structure and strategies in a selected area of systems research and extension. Methodologies will have to deal with the ways and means relevant to apply and implement systems concepts and should include quantitative/qualitative methods as well as the role of participation and modelling. Areas of special interests are the linkage or integration of natural and social sciences

(e.g. farm and family), the relations between micro and macro-economic as well as social development, the relations between resource owner and user, between farming and non-farming families and the society's interest, the rural and urban relations and relations between different social or ethnic groups. Empirical cases should refer to the relation between local development and global aspects.

2. Resilience and continuity of small scale farming within sustainable rural livelihood systems

This theme will build on the discussions and conclusions that emerged on the same topic during the Volos meeting in 2000. In addition, we will examine the potential role for the sustainable livelihoods framework, now widely used in developing country and developed country contexts in contributing to the continuity of small scale farming systems in Europe. We would appreciate contributions from both theoretical analytical studies and case studies from widely differing contexts which will contribute to our ongoing debate.

3. Rural/Urban relations

The workshop will represent the chance to consider the role of urban areas within rural territories in a context of globalisation and application of local and rural development policies. How can the small town regain the role of driving element in rural territories searching for new strategies of integrated development? Which are the contradictions, incompatibilities and complementarities between traditional agricultural policy and the newborn rural policy? The workshop will allow considering the new forms of household agriculture and rural enterprise (multi-activity, mobility and urbanisation) that will influence the new spatialities and dynamics of territories' organisation and development.

4. Quality of life, food, landscape, environment: from rural resources to better livelihood systems for people

The multifunctional role of rural space, increasingly required by the population, includes sound land use, environmental-friendly farm practices, production of quality food and rural and eco-tourism initiatives. These are, among others, matters of attention of policy making, research and action. Some issues in this regard are: Who are the main actors involved in these diversification processes? Who is taking advantage of the rural resources and getting most benefits out of them? What are the conditions and difficulties in promoting an integrated and sustainable use of rural resources? Is a broader view of rural resources leading to better livelihood systems for the rural people or mainly to better quality of life for some urban people?

5. Learning processes in research and extension

In continuity with previous meetings the workshop will focus on: a.. the complementarities and differences between "theories of learning" and "theories of action" as frames for conceptualising learning processes, and the implications of these for practice b.. the role of the researcher in relation to facilitation of learning, in the confrontation of differing social conceptions of given issues, and to the organisation of social spaces in which (formal and informal) learning can occur c.. learning approaches to the study and design of new standards and norms that promote and support the ecological and environmental functions of agriculture d.. the study and improvement of new tools and methods for involving stakeholders (and "non-participants") in learning processes and platforms, at a range of agro-ecosystem scales.

Symposium Modalities

Language: The working language of the Symposium will be English; papers will be accepted only in English.

Travel grants: No travel grants will be available for participants including those who present accepted papers.

Documents and publication of proceedings: All accepted papers will be distributed at the Symposium in a document provided to all participants upon registration. It is intended to publish proceedings after the Symposium including accepted papers as well as the presenters' papers and reporters' presentations in the final discussion.

Submission of Papers

For papers, a maximum of 10 pages A4 single spaced, including tables, figures and bibliographies should be submitted by mail along with the file on diskette (WinWord) or by e-mail. The title page must indicate the workshop to which it is submitted. In addition, the title page should have an abstract of half a page. Papers will be selected on the basis of their quality and relevance to the questions raised in the presentation of each workshop through a process of an international review. Papers that are only descriptive will not be accepted. Papers must show results of general interest.

Deadlines:

April 30, 2001: A second announcement (including registration forms) **will be sent by e-mail only to those who reply to this first announcement.** Whoever has not got an e-mail address but interested in receiving the second announcement, is kindly requested to inform us.

June 30, 2001: All authors must notify the Symposium Secretariat on their intention to submit a paper (workshop and title) no later than this date.

September 30, 2001: Papers must be submitted to the Symposium Secretariat no later than this date.

December 31, 2001 After review of the papers, authors will be notified of the acceptance or rejection of their papers by this date.

January 31, 2002: If the reviewers suggest modifications, authors may adjust and provide the final version for the Symposium no later than this date.

Posters and Tools Bazaar

Those interested should inform the Secretariat not later than December 31, 2001. For posters, a maximum of two pages is allowed outlining the purpose, objectives, location methodology and results of the study. For tools bazaar the type of tools and the necessary equipment should be known.

Symposium Secretariat

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Fifth IFSA European Symposium



IFSA European Group
International Farming Systems Association

Farming and Rural Systems Research and Extension

Local Identities and Globalisation

First Announcement and Call for Papers

**Florence, Italy
April 8 - 11, 2002**



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