Knowledge Management on Austrian Dairy Farms


EAAP – Annual Meeting
September 1st, 2016
Austria: 33000 farmers produced 3.4 mio t of milk in 2013 (BMLFUW 2014)

-> level of self sufficiency more than 100% fulfilled

**High quality standards** from primary production to further processing (AMA 2015)

**Challenges** for farmers:
- Fall of milk quota in 2015
- Price volatility through global market
  -> Resilience necessary to overcome struggles
  -> Transfer of technology and knowledge

**Knowledge as a factor of production** (Mohr 2008, Bick 2004)
Aim of study

• Understand the **present situation of knowledge acquisition** of dairy farmers in Austria

• Which **ways of further education and knowledge acquisition** are available for dairy farmers in Austria?

• How do dairy farmers **evaluate the current offer** on possibilities for further education and knowledge acquisition and their own demand for knowledge and information?

• Which **methods of knowledge acquisition** are suitable for the dairy farmers?
Collection of data:

- On-line survey using software SurveyMonkey®
- members of the Austrian performance control association (LKV)
  - 9,992 cattle breeders
  - Online for six weeks (April, 16th to May, 29th)
  - Return: 10,1% (988 surveys sent back, 983 completed)

Questionnaire:

- 29 questions organised in 3 chapters
- Closed questions
- Data analysis
  - statistic program SAS
  - software Microsoft Excel 2010
### Events of Attendance

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<th>Event</th>
<th>Yearly Conventions</th>
<th>Working Group Meetings</th>
<th>Rural Educational Institute Courses</th>
<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Farm Magazines</th>
<th>Magazines of Chamber of Agriculture</th>
<th>Internet Research</th>
<th>E-learning Courses</th>
<th>Short Online-Courses</th>
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- n=983
Satisfaction with training offer

Opinion and experience of colleagues
- 2% Agreed
- 8% Totally agreed
- 47% Rejected
- 42% Totally rejected

Insufficient information about news and innovations
- 5% Agreed
- 13% Totally agreed
- 48% Rejected
- 27% Totally rejected

Practical Information for everyday working life
- 3% Agreed
- 1% Totally agreed
- 61% Rejected
- 27% Totally rejected

Problems of everyday working life are being addressed
- 6% Agreed
- 4% Totally agreed
- 19% Rejected
- 60% Totally rejected

n=840
Questions concerning the knowledge acquisition

• **Most demanded topics** (n=846):
  • Fertility Disorders (85%)
  • Feeding (83%)
  • Udder Health (73%)
  • Herd Management (70%)
  • Disorders of the Metabolism (69%)

• **Influence of factors on the visit of educational trainings** (n=817):
  • Time > Topics > Practical Exercises > AnimalHealthService Credits > Money

• **Important reference contacts** (n=846):
  • Veterinarians (95%)
  • Colleague farmer (86%)
  • Employee of the breeding organisation (73%)
Interest on use of e-learning platform

- No Interest: 22%
- Moderate Interest: 31%
- Interest: 34%
- Great Interest: 13%

n=846
• **Popularity** of books and magazines (Lissaman et al. 2013, Jansen et al. 2010)

• Quality ≠ Frequency of Usage: Importance of **reference persons** (veterinarians, colleagues) (Lissaman et al. 2010, Jansen et al. 2010)

• **Types of personalities** influence the participation in working groups (Jansen et al. 2010)
• **Most demanded topics** reflect factors with influence on economic success of the farm plus importance in recent research (Mack 1996, Jansen et al. 2010, ADDA 2014)

• **E-learning** – valid way of communicating information, adaptable to the differing needs of its users (Welsh et al. 2003, Brown and Bewsell s.a., Jansen et al. 2010)
Conclusion

- Great popularity of print media
- Farmers feel well informed
- Different types of personality -> influence on educational behaviour
- Certain potential for e-learning
Thank you for your attention!
Firmpartners