



How do farmers' pluriactivity projects evolve?

CLARISSE CERIANI*, AMAR DJOUAK, MARINE CHAILLARD

GRECAT, ISA - Junia, Lille, France

*Corresponding author. E-mail: clarisse.ceriani@junia.com

Citation: C. Ceriani, A. Djouak, M. Chaillard (2023). How do farmers' pluriactivity projects evolve? How do farmers' pluriactivity project evolve?. *Bio-based and Applied Economics* 12(1): 5-15. doi: 10.36253/bae-1344

Received: July 25, 2022

Accepted: March 30, 2023

Published: June 24, 2023

Competing Interests: The Author(s) declare(s) no conflict of interest.

Editor: Davide Menozzi, Linda Arata.

ORCID

CC: 0009-0003-3733-6536

AD: 0009-0003-3026-6467

MC: 0009-0009-9871-8021

Abstract. Long criticized, pluriactivity is now perceived as an alternative agricultural strategy and it is becoming a subject of support policies. However, having an off-farm job generates organizational issues that can penalize the viability of this strategy. In this paper, we study the initial motivations of pluriactivity and the strategies developed by farmers over time to handle pluriactivity difficulties and we examine conditions that lead to permanent pluriactivity or not. We use an original qualitative approach interviewing 29 pluriactive farmers in “Nord-Pas de Calais”, region located in northern France. Our results show that pluriactivity is a dynamic strategy and farmers develop different strategies to adapt their pluriactivity over time to their farm requirements and time constraints. We find that most of the trajectories lead to a permanent pluriactive status, but pluriactivity lasts longer when both activities adapt to each other.

Keywords: pluriactivity duration, agriculture, pluriactivity projects, farm management strategies.

JEL codes: Q10, Q12, L29.

1. INTRODUCTION

The agricultural sector has experienced several crises in recent years that challenge the conventional production model and encourage farmers to develop income diversification strategies. There is a wide variety of on-farm income diversification that are effective in improving the profitability of the farm such as agricultural output diversification and non-agricultural income diversification (Salvioni and *al.*, 2013). The diversification path can also take the direction of an off-farm job. Following this strategy, farmers decide to allocate part of their labour forces to off-farm professional activities. Farmer's pluriactivity is an old agricultural strategy but little appreciated by the agricultural world and by the research community which, for a long time, thought that working outside the farm was a marginal strategy. Nevertheless, farmers' pluriactivity presents a set of advantages at the territorial and individual levels. In some respects, this strategy responds to the new requirements of multifunctionality of agriculture, including land use and social networking. Often synonymous with part-time salaried employment, pluriactivity can support local development by favouring the reception of new urban populations with specific needs (sport, cultural activities ...) and thus meet the new objectives of the agricultural policies that aim to boost rural areas by creating jobs (Blanchemanche *et al.*, 2000). Some ter-

ritories have integrated the economic and social cohesion benefits of pluriactivity and set up new policies to support this strategy (Tallon and Tonneau, 2012). For farmers, pluriactivity has many different motivations (Mage, 1976) but at first, it can compensate for low farm incomes, for their variability, and it can even play a structural role by facilitating investments on the farm (Glauden *et al.*, 2006, Butault *et al.* 1999). It can therefore provide an interesting economic answer to new farmers who are more sensitive to “comfort of life” and for whom farm income volatility is an impediment to installation (Simon, 2013). On the other hand, having an off-farm job and combining two activities can be hard to handle over time and generates organizational constraints, in particular increasing worktime (Keating, 1987) that raises questions about the viability of the project. However, most of the time pluriactivity becomes a permanent path (Corsi and Salviani, 2017; Barlett, 1986) even when it was intended to be transitory and in support of a gradual farm installation (Ceriani and Djouak, 2018)

The agricultural projects of pluriactive farmers are multidimensional and dynamic. They combine both professional projects and family/personal life and must evolve according to the economic and territorial context but also depending on opportunities and organizational constraints (Dedieu *et al.*, 1999). Initial pluriactivity projects can be short-term, linked to farms’ financial difficulties, or longer-term, due to a desire to conduct several activities. However, initial conditions (socio-economic, organizational, motivation, etc.) can evolve and make pluriactivity permanent or not. The following questions therefore arise: Does the duration of pluriactivity depend on the initial project? How do farmers adapt and organize their pluriactivity over time?

In this work, we are interested in pluriactive farmers’ trajectories. More specifically, we study the initial motivations of pluriactivity and the management strategies developed by farmers over time to reconstitute the paths that lead to permanent pluriactivity. We use an original qualitative survey with 29 semi-structured interviews of pluriactive farmers in *Nord-Pas de Calais* (NPdC) in France that explores farmers’ life trajectories and expectations about pluriactivity. After presenting our methodology to collect and analyze the farmers’ narratives, we present our results concerning initial pluriactive projects, farm management strategy and duration of pluriactivity. These elements are then cross-compared to reconstitute trajectories and understand better how farmers adapt their organization and expectations to handle their pluriactivity. Finally, we discuss our results and conclude.

2. METHODS

2.1. Theoretical typology of the initial project

Pluriactivity can be considered at different scales; at household level (the household is said to be pluriactive if at least one individual has an off-farm job), or at the farmer level (farmer has an off-farm professional activity). We study farmers’ pluriactivity because we want to focus on pluriactivity as a (new) professional strategy and a farmer is considered pluriactive if he or she has a job outside the farm¹.

In this paper, we are interested in the organizational strategies developed by pluriactive farmers. Many studies have worked on the duration of the agricultural pluriactivity and found that most of the time pluriactivity is a permanent path (Barlett, 1986), but they do not compare that long-run situation with the initial expectations of the individual. Using a panel of Italian family farms, Corsi and Salviani (2017) have found strong evidence that the off-farm duration is due to farmers’ unobservable characteristics (i.e. risk aversion, preferences...) and to state dependence (e.g. changing status may imply sunk cost because pluriactivity requires time to find a job, to set up the organisation of the farm, allocate the production factors...). Recently Ceriani and Djouak (2018) have studied more than 60 pluriactive farmers’ interviews and found that most of them wanted to be only a farmer when they set up, but the farm was not profitable enough. Therefore, for some farmers, pluriactivity was intended to be transitory and in support of a gradual installation but socio-economic constraints or job opportunities have impacted their motivations and expectations. Some previous studies also noticed that the “intent” of the operator is an important factor that should be used to discriminate the duration of pluriactivity (Boudy, 2009; Mage, 1976). Indeed, initial pluriactivity motivations are important in pluriactive systems (Tallon and Tonneau, 2012) and impact the way farmers value their production (income, social ties, environmental criteria...). To analyze the dynamic process of pluriactivity and identify the different strategies farmers can develop and use to adapt their pluriactivity in the long run, we first need to differentiate the initial motivations and expectations of part-time farming.

¹ This definition does not include activities of diversification which, being an extension of agricultural activity, does not open up to another status. Moreover, diversification is another agricultural strategy that requires different farmers’ skills and generates other organizational constraints that represent a barrier to the adoption for many farms (Barolini and *al.*, 2014). For the same reason, the household’s pluriactivity (companion exercising a profession outside the farm) is not included and analyzed in this article.

Table 1. Initial pluriactivity projects.

Initial pluriactivity project	<p>Set up: Farmers already have a job when they set up. They keep the off-farm job to support investments in the farm (new lands, new productions for example) and increase farm income. Pluriactivity motivation is essentially economic, and pluriactivity is <i>intended to be transitory</i> because <i>farmers want to be 100% on the farm</i> in the long term (what Mage (1976) calls the “aspiring type”).</p>
	<p>Survival: This situation is a necessity; the <i>farm is the main activity</i> and farmers must take another job due to <i>farm or personal occasional financial issues</i>. Those farmers did not want to be pluriactive, but it is the only way to continue being a farmer and save the farm (“transitional part-time farmers” for Barlett (1986)).</p>
	<p>Passion: The main motivation is passion for agriculture and farm activities. Farmers set up in agriculture to live their dream and keep the family farm. Farmers already have a full-time job that is important, for income but also for open-mindedness. <i>Farmers would have been 100% on the farm when they set up, but farm incomes were not sufficient</i>. One day they might leave the off-farm job to be full-time farmers (“Hobby farmers” for Mage (1976))</p>
	<p>Patrimonial: Farmers already have a <i>full-time job outside the farm</i>, they want to keep it because it is important to them economically but also socially, so they have <i>no intention to leave it</i>. The main motivation for pluriactivity is the maintenance of the family heritage. <i>Pluriactivity is supposed to last</i>. (“Investors” for Barlett (1986)).</p>

Four initial pluriactivity projects depending on farmers' motivations and professional situation at the time they set up in agriculture can be defined. Like Barlett (1986) and Mage (1976) before, we consider short run projects when farmers use the off-farm job to invest in the farm to expand it or to save it when it has financial issues. On the other hand, some pluriactive projects are intended to last longer either for strong patrimonial motivations or because farmers are passionate about farming, but do not want to become full-time farmers. Table 1 displays more details about this typology of initial pluriactivity projects.

2.2. Farm management strategies

Regardless of the initial motivations and projects of pluriactivity, combining two activities generates various constraints and in particular increases the working time. It implies time constraints and organizational issues. There could be an additional workload even when the other job is a source of well-being and personal fulfillment. According to Wilkening (1981), the same number

of hours spent in an off-farm job will be more stressful for farmers since it will represent “wasted hours” for their real job as a farmer. The same observation is made by Keating (1987) who highlights a feeling of competition between off-farm employment and agricultural activity. These difficulties are variable, directly related to the farm characteristics and the type of off-farm jobs but they can be a source of stress and dissatisfaction (Mc Coy and Filson, 1996, Keating, 1987). Mc Coy and Filson (1996) highlight the fact that pluriactivity also impacts the quality of time spent by pluriactive farmers with their families but also limits their own free time.

To reduce these constraints and effectively manage their pluriactivity, farmers have to develop strategies according to the farm's requirement and their motivations. Indeed, some farmers will develop strategies to maintain the pluriactivity and to make it more comfortable and others will try to leave this situation. We assume that farmers' strategies can be analyzed regarding two factors: (i) Farm investments and prospects; (ii) Socio-economic and organizational constraints. We pay attention to farm projects (the will to develop new production or to find new lands...) and to farmers' intentions about the pluriactivity (the wish to stay pluriactive or to change in the future). For the organization of pluriactivity, we analyze time constraints related to the off-farm job such as flexibility because agricultural activities must deal with exceptional constraints such as bad weather and livestock surveillance that might affect the organization (Dedieu *et al.*, 1999). We also consider the available labour resources (employees, volunteers...) because the labour force is a decisive resource in the management of the farm and it impacts its organization (Fiorelli *et al.*, 2007; Laurent *et al.*, 1994).

2.3. Pluriactive Farmers' trajectories

In the last part, we examine the various elements to set up trajectories that lead to a permanent path or not. More specifically, to better understand the conditions that lead to a permanent pluriactivity, we combine the initial project, the strategy on the farm and the “chronological” dimension of pluriactivity (its previous duration on the farm and the future projections of its future existence on the farm).

2.4. Data collection and analyses

The study was conducted in the *Nord-Pas de Calais* (NPdC), a part of a French region (called *Hauts de France* since 2014) located in the north, bordering Bel-

gium. Agriculture is an important sector that occupies two-thirds of the territory: in 2010, the Utilized Agricultural Area (UAA) represented more than 66% of the total area of the region. Agriculture remains highly diversified: field crops, livestock (Avesnois and Boulonnais dairy), and horticulture (in suburban spaces) (Agreste, 2015). Pluriactivity is an old phenomenon that tends to increase, but so far, there is still a lack of empirical data and studies on pluriactive farmers in the NPdC.

To better understand farmers' paths in a dynamic perspective from their initial project to their current strategy, the richness of a qualitative approach using open questions is required. Such research requires at first a deep understanding of farmers' initial motivations, the reasons for which farmers got an off-farm job, the set-up conditions, the family farm history, and their professional career. To achieve this, we decided to conduct a pilot study selecting 29 pluriactive farmers with a wide variety of personal and professional situations. Indeed, an increasingly marked redundancy of collected narratives was observed when we reached this amount, which can be interpreted as the effect of a form of a data saturation relating to the various situations encountered. A summary description of these narratives is detailed in Table 1 in the appendix. Interviews started with some questions concerning farmers (age when setting up in agriculture, education level, family situation, etc...) and farms (UAA, legal status, production ...). Then, we asked farmers to tell us about their installation in agriculture and their personal/professional trajectories. Next, we asked the farmers to detail their pluriactivity, initial and current motivations, advantages and disadvantages of this double life, and their expectations for the future. At the end of the interview, some questions related to the financial situation of the farm and the workforce were included.

A thematic approach was used to analyze the collected qualitative data. This approach enables us to go beyond simply counting words or phrases in the text and to explore explicit and implicit meanings in the data. Indeed, with the thematic analysis, we used "themes" (and "sub-themes" to refer to the breakdown of certain themes) to summarize and process the collected material. In short, it is a question of breaking down, recomposing, and associating the main ideas contained in our material, to respond little by little to our main questions: What is fundamental in the farmers interviews to help us see things more clearly? In addition, an empirical-inductive approach was adopted (which is used when there is not much information available related to the problem studied), this is justified by the highly exploratory nature of our investigation, as well as by our need to identify the parameters of aspects relating to the

farm management strategies which are truly specific to pluriactivity in agriculture. Finally, this general process allowed us to categorize farmers according to their initial pluriactivity project and to identify different farm management strategies developed by farmers. Thus, dynamic trajectories could be constructed, which made it possible to make the link between the initial project, the strategy on the farm and the "chronological" dimension of pluriactivity.

3. RESULTS

3.1. *Initial motivations and projects of pluriactivity*

Pluriactivity motivations and expectations depend on family context and job opportunities. The reasons why farmers decided to become pluriactive at first allow individuals to be classified according to four types of initial projects and motivations (Table 1, "initial project" line).

Like Barlett (1986), we found that a major motivation is economic, but in different ways. Among the 29 farmers, 8 wanted to use pluriactivity as a transitory development project to develop the farm and make it more profitable (set up type). We observed that 7 farmers took an off-farm job because their farm incomes were not enough and so for them being pluriactive was a necessity, a forced choice to compensate for temporary financial difficulties (survival type).

Passion is very important as well: 8 farmers had a passion for agriculture; they wanted to become a farmer, at least a part-time one and they all grew up in an agricultural environment. According to them, the financial situation of their farm was not bad, but the farm was not big enough to leave the off-farm job and become only a farmer. Moreover, the other job was important for them, economically and socially, that is why they decided to combine two activities. Pluriactivity was a positive choice when they set up: "Yes, it was a desire to be pluriactive, in fact, I did not see myself a full-time farmer... I had a real love and interest in farming, but at the same time I had the desire to have another job activity, physically to be on the move, to be able to travel a little bit... so, farming seemed a little too sedentary to me actually "(passion type).

Almost all the farmers we interviewed took over the family farm, which implies patrimonial motivations even if the weight of those patrimonial motivations differs among farmers. Indeed, we found that 6 farmers had a patrimonial project at first, and even if most of them wanted to become a farmer and work on the family farm, they never intended to be 100% on the farm. They consider agriculture as a secondary or complemen-

tary activity while the off-farm job plays an important role, financially but also for personal identity:" (speaking of agriculture) it is secondary because my off-farm job is really important in my professional life" (individual A7). For these farmers, pluriactivity has imposed itself as the only way to preserve the family farm, perpetuate a family tradition, a commitment undertaken a long time ago by parents, grandparents, etc...but also the only option to enable them to pursue their passion for agriculture. "It is only a family project [...] it is the result of the work of generations before us, but it is true that if there had not been children behind, we did not necessarily make it... we would not necessarily have taken the step." (individual A7) (patrimonial type).

Eventually, when we asked the farmers if they wanted to be pluriactive when they set up on a farm, a majority (21 farmers) clearly said that they would have been 100% on the farm when they set up in agriculture, if the farm revenues had been sufficient. Thus, 72% of the pluriactive farmers we interviewed did not want to be (or stay) pluriactive at first. Even if some of those farmers did not try to develop the farm to make it more profitable, this result is important because it means that for many pluriactive farmers, pluriactivity was neither the ideal nor the first choice.

3.2. Dynamic farm management strategies

The analysis of the organization of pluriactivity included work on the farm, advantages and disadvantages of pluriactivity felt by the farmer, as well as farm investments and projects. We identified 4 different strategies that farmers use to face organizational issues and reach their expectations (see Figure 1 "strategy" line).

Development strategy: Some farmers are in a proactive strategy, using pluriactivity to develop farm revenues so as to be able to live on farm incomes only and leave the other job soon. Farming is the most important activity. For the moment, farm incomes are not sufficient, and part of the other job income is used to invest in the farm. Some of them had a set up motivation and are young farmers (installed for a few years). Most of them have livestock farms. Sometimes, developing the farm means expanding or creating a new activity on the farm: "Being pluriactive has reinforced the development of my Angus direct sales workshop for sucklers... As long as I have not reached a sufficient number of cows, I will remain pluriactive"(individual A25). Another way to increase farm income can be the transformation of the family farm and its organization; as individual A24 says that this situation permits him to take some risks without pressure: "Anyway, we are much more confident

in what we do. [...] I knew I wanted to do organic vegetables, but I had no idea how to do it, I even complicated things by working with the old varieties of wheat, by working in a local distribution network, etc. ...Concerning the other profession, it allows me to take more risks in my agricultural activity if necessary". Farmers who belong to this type of strategy are quite satisfied with their pluriactivity because it allows them to set up in agriculture in better conditions, with less risk because the financial security of the other job gives them the opportunity to develop the farm. However, they can be frustrated by not being fully dedicated to the farm, in particular in case of livestock farming: "When you are at the town hall and have a lot of work on the farm, it is annoying because you are not at the right place " (individual A6).

Farm disengagement strategy: The farms' financial situation was quite bad, so farmers took another job to save the farm. The farm had not been organized at first for a pluriactivity because the farm was the only activity of the farmer. Due to financial issues, farmers quickly took full-time off-farm jobs that most of the time were not flexible. A majority are livestock farming which requires intense demand for labour and does not fit easily with pluriactive time constraints, in such a way that farmers have to reduce farm activities. In this category, two subtypes of farmers can be differentiated:

- The happy one who wants to keep being pluriactive. Those farmers seem to be satisfied with their pluriactivity because they decided/accepted to reduce and simplify farm activities as much as possible. Those farmers have less stress, more time such as individual A19 who eventually found his job balance: "The strong points are the simplicity of my work and a lot of free time. I spend very little time on my holding. I don't want to develop things anymore, I'm too close to retirement". The other job enables them to increase revenue and reduce risk, and they also find that it enables social contacts and open-mindedness.
- Unsatisfied farmers who think about leaving agriculture. These farmers do not invest anymore in the farm, but the farm organization remains incompatible with pluriactivity. They highlight tight schedules and working weeks that sometimes exceed 60 hours which leaves little time for leisure and family. There is frustration because the off-farm job appears in competition with their farm activity (Keating, 1987). For some farmers, time spent outside the farm may even be perceived as a lost time for the "real" job of farming (Wilkening, 1981). Agricultural politics clearly impact these farmers and increase their dissatisfaction "We are not compensated for the work

we provide... still low milk price and the rise of financial charges!" (individual A12).

Responsive strategy: Some farmers adapt the farm to their off-farm job as they want to be pluriactive. They keep on investing in the farm and keep on developing farm projects, but they want to have another activity outside the farm. For most of them, the other job is qualified, and they like it. They are convinced that their agricultural activity improves their off-farm work efficiency. Indeed, it provides entrepreneurial and business skills; it enhances professional networks and gives them a better legitimacy in their work: "(about the farming activity) As part of my job, it brings me a lot of things, both professionally, also socially, somewhere, because I am in contact with other farmers, social networks that are different. I have contacts with my fellow farmers as part of my CUMA², with the new owners. There are many circles of exchange that are, in my opinion, positive, that I would not have if I were only an employee of the Chamber of Agriculture" (Individual A27). Some of them have changed farm organisation or production to reduce time constraints, such as individual A4 who oriented the agricultural activity towards automated production which requires less labour and when necessary, gets occasional supports and help from family or friends. Others have an agricultural enterprise that requires significant workload and presence on the farm but the off-farm job is flexible so they can free up time when needed such as individual A5, a cattle farmer. This strategy involves reciprocal adaptation of both activities. However, pluriactivity can be constraining and even frustrating: "What is difficult for me is to accept to be locked up when the weather is nice, or to accept when an animal is not fine or maybe I'll find it dead at night [...] it is difficult to handle the fact that if I would be there, I would manage to cure it or I would be at home I would be able to cut wheat because it is ready" (individual A3). These farmers have a positive image of farm work: farmers have their own business, which gives them independence and a freedom to make decisions. Farmers have multiple functions and diverse skills: "I am a farmer, a business leader who takes into account different dimensions: technical dimension, economic dimension and then environmental dimension" (individual A20). They think that pluriactivity gives them the possibility to be in « both worlds », it opens their mind. Most of those farmers seem to be confident in the future and in their capacities, and most of them are in a proactive entrepreneurial logic: they maintain the family

² *Coopérative d'Utilisation de Matériel Agricole*, Cooperative for the use of agricultural equipment

heritage, remain open to possible evolution of their farm and their career without being limited to technical conceptions, or cultural and legal aspects of the profession (Lagarde, 2006). "On the heritage side, I am very proud of myself. I have two activities and maintained this farm that may be passed down to my children. I am also very proud to maintain an agricultural business..." (individual A27). Still, even when pluriactivity seems to be pleasant, many farmers note work overloads and time constraints: "The disadvantages (of pluriactivity) are double organization, double stress. We combine two different professions and therefore two different stresses. We also have different deadlines." (individual A26).

Managerial strategy: Other farmers have developed a managerial strategy and have regular employees who manage a large part of the farm work, almost independently. These pluriactive farmers do not consider the farm as their most important activity and most of them became pluriactive for patrimonial motivations. This type of organization of the farm makes the farmer appear as "a manager" who delegates a part of the work to one (or more) trusted person, family members or employees. An essential element of this "managerial" organization of pluriactivity seems to be having someone present on the farm daily. This can be an employee: "Today it is the employee who does all the work ... for the anecdote?? I address him with the courtesy "vous" because he is my employee, but he knows me from my childhood... I do not need to see him every day, there is trust and he agrees to be autonomous" (individual A1). It can also be a family member who keeps an eye on the farm. The ability to adjust the off-farm work schedule to free up time thanks to its flexibility and the choice of an agricultural enterprise (no livestock farming or vegetables) with fewer time constraints reduce the stress and constraints: "I can easily arrange things with my employee. I make myself available in winter for stand-by duties that I compensate for in the summer at the time of the harvest. So, there are no worries... my tractors return in October to the buildings and come out in February to spread fertilizers. I have six months to disconnect the batteries" (individual A8). This "managerial" governance combined with an optimal organization of the time spent on the farm allows them to consider the future of their pluriactivity with greater serenity.

3.3. Reconstitution of individual trajectories

Having analyzed various elements of the pluriactivity: initial project and strategy; we can now set up trajectories and analyze the link between these different ele-

Table 2. Summary of farm management strategies.

Strategies	<p>Development strategy: Farmers work on the farm regularly and farm activities tend to be more important for farmers. <i>Farmers work to develop farm activities; they continue to invest in the farm and farm revenues tend to increase.</i> The off-farm job is secondary, and the farm has not been arranged or adapted to the off-farm job. Pluriactivity is not well organized and tends to be tough for farmers.</p>
	<p>Farm disengagement strategy: Farmers work on the farm regularly without help. The off-farm job is not flexible, but they cannot employ someone because the farm has <i>financial problems</i>. <i>Farmers cannot develop the farm; they do not invest anymore in the farm and farm activities tend to become less important</i> for farmers. They keep the off-farm job because it is the only way to maintain the farm and it provides them a constant revenue.</p>
	<p>Responsive strategy: Farmers work on the farm regularly thanks to organized pluriactivity which avoids time constraints and organizational issues. Either the <i>off-farm job is compatible</i> with the farm work obligations or a <i>salaried labour force</i> is mobilized when needed. <i>Farmers still develop and invest in the farm.</i> Moreover, pluriactivity is meaningful, and has social and economic advantages for the farmers.</p>
	<p>Managerial strategy: Pluriactivity is <i>well organized</i> and most of the <i>farm work is done by employees</i>. Pluriactive farmers do not feel pluriactivity is restrictive since they do not have to be on the farm every day. Farm revenues are sufficient to at least pay bills.</p>

ments to identify the conditions that lead to permanent pluriactivity (Figure 1). We will not detail all the possible trajectories but the most important and frequent ones that apply to 19 farmers.

Development strategy: Some of them had a set up motivation and are young farmers (installed for a few years). Others had more survival motivations and succeeded to switch into a development strategy. Those farmers do not want to stay pluriactive and think about leaving the off-farm activity as soon as the farm revenue is sufficient “As long as I have not reached a sufficient number of cows, I will remain pluriactive”(individual A25).

Farm disengagement strategy: Due to financial issues or setting up in agriculture, farmers took an off-farm job. Diverse constraints forced them to adopt a disengagement strategy towardsthe farm. Some are unsatisfied with this situation and might leave agriculture one day because the farm’s financial situation is bad, and they feel they do not belong to the “agriculture world” anymore. Other are satisfied and they see their situation as permanently or transitory disengagement, depending mostly on their age.

Responsive strategy: Farmers motivated by a passion to farm, pursuing a responsive strategy. Some of the “set up” type found good compatibility between both activities and developed this strategy, too. A majority of these farmers consider their pluriactivity as a long-term strategy. Indeed, some of these farmers do not really want to

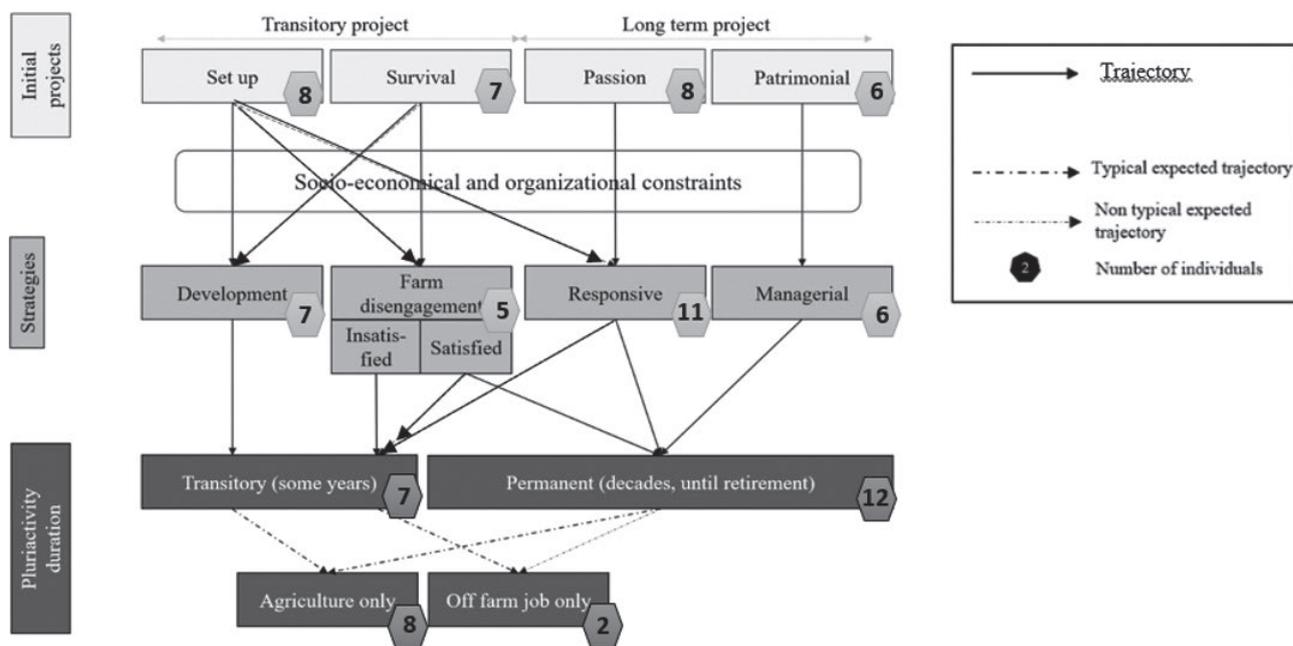


Figure 1. Dynamic typology of the pluriactivity strategies.

stop pluriactivity in the short term, but they still consider pluriactivity as a transition. They seem to be willing to leave their off-farm job one day to become “*just a farmer*” because they think the work overload will be too much. “I like it. Satisfied, yes. After that, I’m not saying it’s easy every day. Some days when you have to run, you run. That’s why I put it into perspective. Today, I’m young, it’s okay. Maybe ten years from now, I will not be willing to run like this anymore. There is, I think, an evolution over time, with age, which will change priorities. Pluriactivity works great for a while, but not forever. I don’t see myself pluriactive until I am 65.” (individual A22).

Managerial strategy: Due to cultural motivations, these farmers all want to stay pluriactive and they are proud of keeping the family farm, despite their other job: “I managed to set up a system that allows me to get my own farm, to manage the farm without limitations, so I am very happy with what I did” (individual A9). They want to manage the farm until its transfer to their children.

4. DISCUSSION

Stable long-term projects: These long-term projects include passion and heritage projects. Starting a pluriactive approach with these types of motivations induces specific strategies: responsive in the first case, and managerial in the second. Indeed, the necessary conditions to take over the farm were thought out within a framework of managing the farm while being pluriactive, but a certain financial stability was required. Moreover, pluriactivity has been conceived and organized from the beginning so that time constraints and work overload are reduced, which facilitates the articulation of the different activities. In the first case, the farm is the place of fulfilment and experimentation, and farmers spend a large part of their time on the farm, whereas in the second case (with more cultural/heritage motivations) farmers manage the farm in a more distant way. Time has not changed the initial motivations and projects and farmers are satisfied with their pluriactivity, which brings them a strong complementarity between their two activities. Pluriactivity is therefore considered for the long term, for several decades, or until retirement.

More flexible transitional projects: Initial “set up” and “survival” projects imply strong motivation for agricultural work and a transitional pluriactivity attitude. Indeed, we observe that farmers with “setting up” initial motivations and farmers with “survival” initial motivations tend to be following a farm development strategy and a farm disengagement strategy, respectively (in par-

ticular, among farmers who do not manage to recover the financial balance of the farm or to set up properly). However, strategies can evolve and so trajectories can be more complex. For instance, we found that some farmers who have reduced their farm engagement (disengagement strategy) have more experience (the majority have been farming for more than 16 years) and tried to develop the farm first (development strategy).

However, we also observe that some pluriactive farmers who were in the process of setting up their own businesses have found a certain complementarity and balance between the two activities that allow them to develop a more responsive strategy. In particular, farmers who develop their farm are more likely to continue pluriactivity as long as it brings them advantages, they are in a transitional but dynamic pluriactivity with the aim of leaving the off-farm job someday. On the other hand, when investment in the farm has not been possible, pluriactive farmers are forced to reduce their agricultural activities to handle both activities together. This situation can be experienced as unsatisfactory even if pluriactivity is considered as an opportunity to keep the farm.

Initial transitional projects enable transitional pluriactivity that allows farmers to develop and (re)invest in the farm to improve the future farming conditions. When the financial and organizational situation do not allow for saving the farm, pluriactivity can be experienced as a failure and farmers can cease agriculture. This type of initial project can also lead to unexpected long-term trajectories, with differentiated investment in the farm, but both activities create a form of complementarity for the pluriactive person.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Our research is based on a qualitative approach that allows a deep understanding of farmers’ motivations and trajectories. Our results confirm that pluriactivity organisations and expectations tend to change over time depending on the family context, job opportunities and financial situation of the farm; and the way farmers adapt their pluriactivity is usually related to their initial project. However, some unusual trajectories show that farmers’ strategies evolve according to the context and this can also modify motivations and expectations. Indeed, finances, organizational constraints and work overload are critical factors that can modify the initial pluriactivity project. It appears that work overload and incompatible schedules might change initial expectations such as individual A14 who was leaving an off-farming job at the time of the interview, even though

this job provided additional benefits to their agricultural activity and personal life.

Our results indicate that pluriactivity is easier for farmers and lasts longer when both activities adapt to each other, for example when the off-farm job requires lots of time, farm production must be less demanding in terms of the workload. Also, the possibility of hiring regular or permanent labour makes it easier for farmers. Indeed, the presence of a complementary source of labour appears highly significant in terms of the durability of pluriactivity because it allows farmers to be less present on the farm, and it limits not only the workload but also the "competition" between jobs that can generate stress (Keating, 1987). The "partial" presence of the farmer on the farm compensated by non-family labour raises the question of the identity of the pluriactive farmer, their managerial skills, and the farmer's position as executive director (Legagneux and Olivier-Salvagnac, 2017). Most of the farmers we interviewed consider themselves farmers-entrepreneurs because their vision of the job is different from that of their parents and grandparents. This new perspective of being a farmer can be related to an increase of the use of salaried workers on farms since the 2000s (Legagneux and Olivier-Salvagnac, 2017) and the restructuring of work and labour organization within the farm (Harff and Lamarche, 1998).

The possibility to hire employees depends on the financial profitability of the farm, which also appears as an important criterion for the initial project's success. Some farmer interviewees expressed the wish to get an employee on the farm, but they cannot afford it. Indeed, pluriactive farmers who employ someone on the farm are the only ones who consider that the financial situation of their holding is good. Others are often in a precarious financial situation, leading them to increase their working hours in the hope of increasing farm profitability. Unfortunately, they rarely see their efforts rewarded and they follow a negative spiral: a bad financial situation requiring them to work more that causes a lot of stress, fatigue, and psychological tension and with results, in general, far from their expectations that can even be a real obstacle for future transfer of the farm to a successor or new entrant.

To conclude, this pilot study is the first step in a long-run study about the organization, adaptation, and sustainability of farm pluriactivity. Indeed, we believe that farm pluriactivity is becoming more and more common among farmers due to market price fluctuations and agricultural crises that can discourage young farmers to take over the family farm. Therefore, pluriactivity can be an interesting strategy that contributes to reduce the income variability and allows the combination of

different activities and environments. This strategy however raises specific questions and issues. A deeper reflection on the support of pluriactive farmers requires an integration the characteristics related to their dual profession: time and work management, lack of labour force, organisational difficulties, etc... This consideration is important because it would improve pluriactive farmers' systems and make this strategy more sustainable and attractive for young farmers who want to set up.

6. REFERENCES

- Agreste (2015). Polyculture-livestock: one out of five farms in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region. In French. Service of Statistics, Evaluation and Agricultural Foresight. French Ministry of Agriculture.
- Barlett P. F. (1986). Part-time Farming: Saving the farm or saving the life-style? *Rural Sociology*, 51(3): 289-313.
- Bartolini F, Andreoli M. and Brunori G. (2014). Explaining determinants of the on-farm diversification: empirical evidence from Tuscany region. *Bio-based and Applied Economics* 3(2): 137-157
- Blanchemanche S., Laurent C., Mouriaux MF., and Peskine E. (2000). Multifunctionality of agriculture and activity status. *Économie rurale* 260: 41-51.
- Boudy J.F. (2009) Live from two jobs. pluriactivity, In french. Paris, L'Harmattan, 301 p.
- Butault, J.P., Delame N., Krebs S., and Lerouvillois P. (1999). Pluriactivity: a corrector for inequalities in farm income. In French. *Economie et Statistiques* 329-330: 165-180.
- Ceriani, C. and Djouak A. (2018). The motivations of the pluriactive farmers of the Nord Pas De Calais region. In French. *Mondes en développement* 182: 115-130.
- Corsi A. and Salvioni A. (2017). Once part-timer always part-timer? Causes for persistence in off farm work state of farmers. *Bio-based and Applied Economics* 6(2): 159-182
- Dedieu B., Laurent C., and Mundler P. (1999). Labor organization du travail in complex agricultural systems: interest and limits of the *Bilan Travail* method. In French. *Économie rurale* 253: 28-35.
- Fiorelli, C., Dedieu B. & Pailleux J.Y., (2007). Explaining diversity of livestock-farming management strategies of multiple-job holders: importance of level of production objectives and role of farming in the household. *Animal* 1: 1209-1218
- Glauden, T., Tietje H., and Weiss C. (2006). Agricultural on the Move: Exploring Regional Differences in Farm Exit Rates in Germany. *Review of Regional Research*, 26: 203-118.

- Harff, Y., and Lamarche H. (1998). Work in agriculture: new demands, new challenges. In French. *Economie Rurale* 244: 3-11.
- Keating N. C. (1987). Reducing stress of farm men and women. *Family Relations* 36: 358-363.
- Lagarde V. (2006). Manager profile as an explanatory variable for diversification choices in agriculture. In French. *La Revue des Sciences de Gestion* 220-221: 31-41.
- Laurent C., Chevallier C., Jullian P., Langlet A., Maigrot J.-L., and Ponchelet D. (1994). Households, agricultural activity, and land use: from local to global through general agricultural censuses. In French. *Cahiers Agriculture* 3: 93-107.
- Legagneux B., and Olivier-Salvagnac V. (2017). What contract labor on farms? At the root of the break-up of the family model? In French. *Economie Rurale* 257: 101-116.
- Mage J. A. 1976, « A comparative Analyses of Part-time Farming and Full-Time Farming in Ontario-some selected Aspects. » in Fuller et Mage (eds.). Part-time Farming: Problem or Resource in Rural Development. *Norwich Geoabstracts* 170-196.
- Mc Coy M., and Filson G. (1996). Working of the farm: impacts of quality life. *Social Indicators Research* 37: 149-163.
- Salvioni C., Ascione E. and Henke R. (2013). Structural and economic dynamics in diversification Italian farms. *Bio-based and Applied Economics* 2(3): 257-275.
- Simon B. (2013). The installation in agriculture. The construction of entrepreneurial intent. In French. *Economie Rurale* 334: 23-38.
- Tallon, H., and Tonneau J. P. (2012). The pluriactive project between autonomy and precariousness. The challenges of accompaniment. In French. *Economie Rurale* 331: 42-55.
- Wilkening E. A. (1981). Farm families and family farming. *The Family in Rural Society*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 27-37.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Description of interviewed pluriactive farmers.

Farmer	Description
A1 Female	Farmer in PLFC ³ and farm management advisor, field crop farm of 68 ha, 38 years old, installed for 12 years, married with 3 young children
A2 Male	Farmer in PLFC and sales executive, field crop farm of 62 ha, 37 years old, installed for 5 years, married with 2 young children
A3 Male	Individual farmer and mechanical workshop manager, crop-livestock farm of 41 ha, 40 years old, installed for 5 years, married without children
A4 Male	Individual farmer and employee in a battery factory, field crop farm of 42 ha, 52 years old, installed for 18 years, married with 2 children over 20.
A5 Male	Individual farmer and trader in cattle cooperative, cattle breeding on 35 ha, 36 years old, installed for 8 years, married with 2 young children
A6 Male	Individual farmer and gardens-parks manager, crop-livestock farm of 20 ha, 45 years old, installed for 15 years, single, 3 children from 5 to 18 years old.
A7 Female	Individual farmer and an agricultural advisor, field crop farm of 80 ha, 40 years old, installed for 1 year, married with 2 children of 12 and 18 years old.
A8 Male	Individual farmer and hospital employee, field crop farm of 24 ha, 48 years old, installed for 17 years, married with 2 children of 13 and 16 years old.
A9 Male	Individual farmer and agricultural union director, field crop farm of 57 ha, 41 years old, installed for 14 years, married with 2 children of 13 and 16 years old.
A10 Female	Individual farmer and specialized educator, horse breeding on 10 ha, 34 years old, installed for 6 years, married with 1 children of 5 years old.
A11 Male	Individual farmer and manager of a transport company, field crop farm of 50 ha, 52 years old, installed for 22 years, married with 2 children over 20
A12 Male	Individual farmer and works in the construction industry, crop-livestock farm of 52 ha, 60 years old, installed for 21 years, married with 2 children over 20
A13 Male	Individual farmer and machine operator, field crop farm of 31 ha, 35 years old, installed for 8 years, married with 2 children of 5 and 8 years old.
A14 Male	Individual farmer and employee in a battery factory, field crop farm of 42 ha, 52 years old, installed for 18 years, married with 2 children over 20.
A15 Male	Individual farmer and electromecanician, field crop farm of 98 ha, 35 years old, installed for 5 years, single with 2 young children
A16 Male	Individual farmer and gardens-parks manager, field crop farm of 25 ha, 40 years old, installed for 16 years, single, no child.

³ Private limited farming company

Farmer	Description
A17 Male	Individual farmer and teacher, field crop farm of 67 ha, 54 years old, installed for 20 years, married with 3 children between 16 and 26 years old.
A18 Female	Individual farmer and worker in industry, cattle farming of 18 cows, farm of 10 ha, 38 years old, installed for 16 years, married with 3 children of 9 and 13 years old.
A19 Male	Individual farmer and worker in a medical institute, field crop farm of 36 ha, 60 years old, installed for 35 years, single with 3 children between 12 and 31 years old.
A20 Male	Individual farmer and CUMA manager, field crop farm of 75 ha, 34 years old, installed for 6 years, married with 2 children of 2 and 4 years old.
A21 Male	Individual farmer and computer scientist, field crop farm of 65 ha, 44 years old, installed for 18 years, married with 2 children over 20
A22 Male	Individual farmer and teacher, field crop farm of 140 ha, 36 years old, installed for 8 years, married with 2 children between 3 and 6
A23 Male	Individual farmer and farmer employees, field crop farm of 57 ha, 42 years old, installed for 22 years, married with 2 children of 14 and 10 years old.
A24 Male	Individual farmer and office designer, field crop farm of 15 ha, 36 years old, installed for 4 years, married without children
A25 Male	Individual farmer and teacher, crop-livestock farm of 140 ha, 40years old, installed for 18 years, married without 5 children between 13 and 17
A26 Male	Individual farmer and teacher, crop-livestock farm of 20 ha, 33 years old, installed for 13 years, single without 3
A27 Male	Individual farmer and manager in Chamber of Agricultural, field crop farm of 40 ha, 45 years old, installed for 12 years, married with 2 children of 14 and 17 years old.
A28 Male	Individual farmer and executive manager, field crop farm of 15 ha, 48 years old, installed for 18 years, married with 3 children of 18 and 22 years old.
A29 Male	Individual farmer and industrial contract manager, field crop farm of 52 ha, 35 years old, installed for 2 years, married with 1 child aged 1 year
