

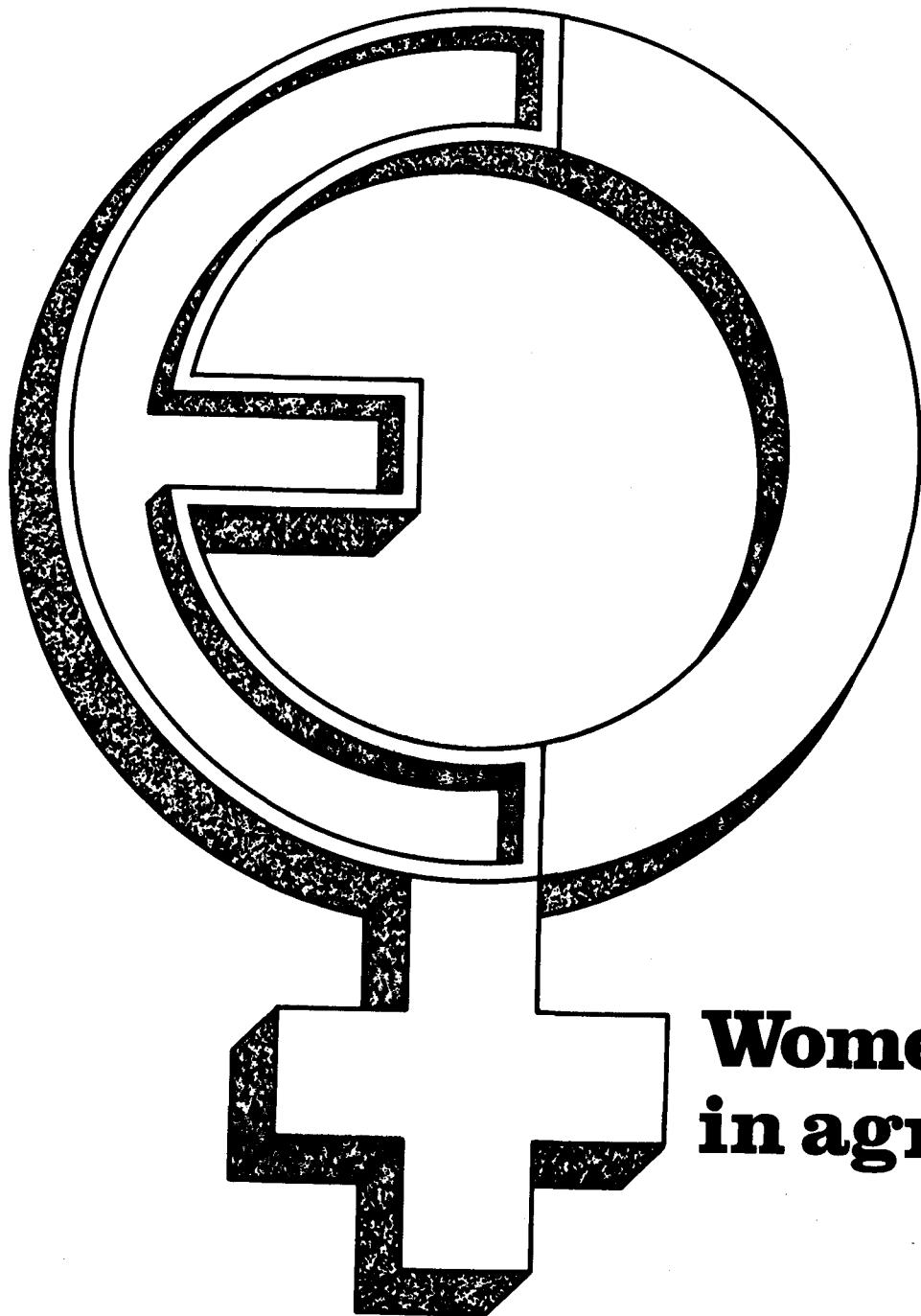
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# **Women in agriculture**



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WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

First Part : Legal Study  
by Blanche SOUSI-ROUBI

Second Part : by Isabelle von PRONDZYNSKI

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INTRODUCTION

Although Community policy on equal treatment for men and women at first appeared to be aimed essentially at wage-earners, it has gone considerably beyond this remit over the last few years and it now includes all kinds of work, including that by the self-employed: trade, crafts, the professions and agriculture.

Paragraph 5 of the Community's new programme of action on the promotion of equal opportunities for women (1982-1985) therefore provides expressly for the application of the principle of equality of treatment for self-employed women and women farmers, especially on family farms (See Supplement 9 to Women of Europe).

The setting up by the European Parliament in July 1982 of a committee of inquiry into the situation of women in Europe and the report on the problems encountered by self-employed women, particularly in agriculture, trade and crafts, that was adopted by the committee of inquiry in May 1983 also bear witness to this interest in equality of treatment for the self-employed and no longer solely for wage-earners.

The European Seminar held in Grado in November 1982 on the "Legal and social position of women in agriculture", which was organised by CEPFAR<sup>(1)</sup> for the COPA<sup>(2)</sup> Women's Committee, was an important milestone in creating awareness of this problem amongst the farming community. The final report affirms the need for a Community Directive to be adopted to guarantee equal treatment for women farmers, whether or not they are heads of farms.

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(1) European Training and Development Centre for Farming and Rural Life

(2) Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the European Community

Although Directive 76/207 on equality of treatment in employment is in principle aimed at all workers, including the self-employed, various studies on the extent to which this Directive has been implemented have shown that certain aspects specific to the self-employed professions are not sufficiently covered.

Participants in the Grado Seminar turned the spotlight on all the elements in the law on agricultural property, succession law, tax law, social security, vocational training, farming organisations and relief services which still constitute an obstacle to the application of the principle of equal treatment for women farmers.

It is in this context that the Commission of the European Communities is currently drafting a proposal for a directive on the equality of treatment in independent occupations including agriculture; numerous proposals put forward in Grado are being taken up here.

The time has therefore come to draw up a summary of the present situation for women farmers in order to pin-point where there was inequality and better to understand what kind of measures would eliminate all discrimination.

This long-awaited study is therefore timely. It has been drawn up on the basis of the national reports submitted at the Grado Seminar; these have been re-worked and supplemented with additional detail. Each section has been checked by the delegation from the country concerned.

To encourage the most effective possible use of this document each of the 5 sections (legal situation, social security, vocational training, access to agricultural organisations, relief services) deals with the situation in each of the member countries in turn. Comparison of the different situations is facilitated further by

a few observations on each section which draw general conclusions that follow on from the analysis that is made.

It has, moreover, appeared advisable to follow this legal study by certain of the documents mentioned above, the importance of which will not escape the reader - these are the final report of the Grado Seminar and the report of the Commission of Inquiry of the European Parliament. Finally in order to complete the documentation, information on the agricultural organisations represented in the COPA Women's Committee, is included.

FIRST PART

LEGAL STUDY

By Blanche SOUSI-ROUBI  
Doctor of Laws

The author wishes to express her sincere thanks, for their valuable help, to all the members of the COPA Women's Committee, its Chairman, Madame BOERAËVE-DERYCKE and its Secretary, Ms Isabelle von PRONDZYNSKI.



1.

THE DIFFERENT LEGAL POSITIONS ON THE FARM

Belgium

Women farmers in Belgium may participate in working the farm either as farm heads, partners, family members or associates.

Women farmers may be farm heads: the law of 14 July 1976 gives each spouse the right freely to choose to exercise a particular profession. Women, like men, may therefore be farm heads, either by setting up the farm, by purchasing it or by receiving it as a gift or succeeding to it.

Women farm heads enjoy complete legal independence: under the primary marriage regime they alone receive the income from their work and they may use it to make purchases justified by the exercise of their profession. They alone are responsible for managing this property connected with their profession. Under the legal marriage regime the farm tools and machinery are the property of the woman farm head and are under her sole management. Where joint property is concerned the woman farm head may take all action that is necessary to the exercise of her profession on the twofold condition that she acts in the interests of her family and in accordance with the provisions of the primary regime.

As an exception from this full legal independence credit institutions usually require women farmers who are contracting loans to have the agreement of their husband; the aim of this is to ensure more reliable guarantees of repayment.

Women farmers may farm jointly:

- if the two spouses farm as partners the primary regime is still applicable and each spouse receives and has control over his or her own income. Professional property

acquired out of this income is under the management of the spouse who has paid for it and for whom it is a justified purchase. Each spouse may buy his or her own tools and machinery. If purchases are made jointly the property is owned jointly by the two spouses. Where jointly owned property is concerned, all action must be taken by the two spouses together, except in the case of straightforward administrative action.

- If the woman merely helps her husband, who is the farm head, she is said to be a "family member", that is to say that she is a working person but that this does not entitle her to any official professional status. The farm head alone receives the income derived from the work done on the farm and it is at his sole disposal. He owns the farm tools and machinery and is solely responsible for managing them. For major decisions involving joint property the question of whether action by both spouses is necessary is unresolved. In the case of straightforward administrative action each spouse may act independently and thus commit joint property on his or her own initiative. Legal proceedings may be instituted if one or other of the spouses abuses these arrangements.

Under the law on tenancy the two spouses are considered as partners in the tenancy and on the farm on the condition that the contract has been drawn up in the name of both spouses and that both are actively engaged in farming.

Lastly, women farmers may be associates in a company; farm companies are provided for by a law passed in 1979. Spouses may form a company of this kind with or without

the participation of third parties. There is no distinction in law between men and women here. The spouse who undertakes to carry out physical work is known as the "manager" (gérant). He (or she) may take all the action that is necessary or beneficial to the company, with the exception of such action as falls expressly within the competence of the associates as a whole. The managing associate is remunerated for his or her work on the basis of the minimum hourly wage paid to qualified people in the same job.

Denmark

Women farmers do not really have any specific status, and their legal position is therefore governed by general law.

The woman farmer may be the head of the farm if she is the owner of the land and property involved; in Danish marital law power is exercised by the owner. This applies both to the husband and the wife. However, since in the majority of cases only the husband's name appears on the property deeds, the wife is very rarely the head of the farm. This is a de facto rather than a de jure situation.

Women may be joint farmers; spouses may arrange for both of them to be co-owners of the farm, in which case both names appear on the title deeds. They are co-owners and thus make joint decisions. Property is divided equally, as are income and debts.

The woman farmer working on her husband's farm may not receive

remuneration; there are however special tax arrangements for wives who assist their husband on the farm. If the husband and wife are taxed jointly and if they have both played a major part in managing their joint farm or the farm belonging to one of them, the income derived from it must be taxed as the income of the spouse who has played the predominant role on the farm. If the couple so desire, 50% of the farm's profits may be transferred and taxed as the income of the other member of the couple. There is, however, a ceiling to this transfer option.

France

The work of women farmers may take several legal forms.

Women may be farm heads, and it is of little importance whether they own the property they work or whether they are simply the leaseholders. There is no difference between this situation and that of a male farm head.

Women may also work as partners on the farm. In 1980 a law was passed introducing a genuine status of joint responsibility for the spouses of farm heads. This law allows either member of a married couple who are working a single farm for their own benefit individually, and without the signature or agreement of the other being necessary, to take action in connection with the administration of the farm. If, however, there is a lease, it may be terminated, surrendered or renewed only with the agreement of the signatory's spouse.

A woman farmer may also work as a wage-earner on the family farm. In practise, however, this arrangement

is rare; if both spouses work on the farm they generally prefer the status of joint responsibility provided for by the 1980 law.

Lastly, the farm may take the form of a company under Civil Law in which the woman farmer may be an associate. There are types of company which are better suited to agriculture than is the company under Civil Law. These are Joint Farm Groupings (groupements agricoles d'exploitation en commun - GAEC) and Agricultural Land Groupings (groupements fonciers agricoles - GFA), in which women may also be associates.

Federal Republic of Germany

Women may be farm heads, though this is rare for sociological reasons (only 8.2% of farms).

Women more frequently work on the farm in an auxiliary capacity, carrying out various degrees of farm work. This work is not fully recognised, particularly in connection with maternity. If, however, the couple's marriage legally provides for property acquired to be held in common, all property acquired during the marriage, including value added, is shared. Under these circumstances, therefore, there is a just return for the assistance provided for by the women.

A woman may be a joint owner of a farm if it is entered in the land register in the name of both spouses. They then have the same rights and the same duties during their marriage in all matters connected with the farm.

Women may also be associates where farms are run by a family company. Lastly they may be wage-earners paid by their husbands under the terms of a contract.

Greece

In Greece the legal status of women on the farm varies according to their marital status.

Women farmers are considered to be farm heads when they are widowed, divorced, or unmarried or if their husband is not himself a farmer.

In other cases, on the other hand, and even if a woman is herself the owner of the farm or if she owns it jointly with her husband, the husband is considered to be the farm head.

Although the law empowers both spouses to engage in various dealings and formal transactions with banks and agricultural organisations it is in practise always the husband who actually exercises the power.

Ireland

There is no legislation specifically concerning women farmers, and their legal situation is therefore governed by general law.

The woman farmer may be the head of the farm, though this situation is relatively rare for sociological reasons (11% of farms are run by women, and these are for the most part widows or unmarried women). It should be stressed that no legal discrimination may be discerned against women who are heads of farms: the law treats them in the same way as male heads of farms.

In the majority of cases, women farmers are married to men who are themselves heads of farms. They do not acquire by marriage any rights over their husband's farm, and even if

they work very actively on the farm for many years they do not automatically acquire any property rights. They may, however, institute legal proceedings in order to obtain recognition of their rights to the farm holding that are proportional to the work they have carried out.

In comparable cases connected with the farm or family home, women have, in fact, been able to obtain rulings that they had property rights over the dwelling in proportion to the work that they had carried out to enable it to be purchased or built. Women farmers could therefore institute analogous proceedings, but in practice the hazards involved in a legal action do not encourage them to do so. A law providing for the rights of women farmers over the property and income of the farm would be helpful in guaranteeing fair recognition of the work which they carry out on the farm.

The woman farmer may not be considered to be a wage-earning employee of her husband, the head of the farm, as the law on labour relations specifically excludes employer/employee relationships between members of a family.

Lastly, it should be pointed out that the legislation on succession and the family home allow a farmer's wife to negotiate her share of the farm when the marriage is dissolved (by death or separation).

Italy
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The legal situation of a woman working on a farm is the same of that of any woman working in a commercial or craft undertaking. There are thus no specific arrangements for women farmers in this area.

The work of women on the farm may take various legal forms: they may be farm heads, partners, members of a family company, associates or wage earners.

The woman farm head has sole responsibility for dealing with the various factors of production, independently of the ownership of the farm.

The woman who is a partner works with her husband in managing the farm. If the farm has been set up subsequent to the marriage it is owned jointly by the two spouses and they have equal shares in its profits and value added.

The woman farmer working in a family business is entitled, as are all members of the family working in the business, to a share in the profits. This share is proportional to the quality and quantity of the work carried out by the woman both in the business and in the home, with work by the woman having the same status as that by the man. She is also entitled to a share in the value added. Moreover, major decisions on the management of the business are taken by a majority of those involved in it, with each person having one vote. If the farm is owned by a single person this person does not enjoy a privileged position except that he or she retains ownership of the original property (value added being shared). Lastly, the woman farmer, like all those involved, has the right of pre-emption if the farm is to be donated or divided. It is clear that this family farm structure creates a legal situation that is ideal for the woman farmer. In practice the problem lies in the implementation of the provisions outlined above. There is the danger that a lack of information will mean that they remain purely theoretical.



The woman farmer may also be an associate in a company provided for by the Civil Code.

Lastly, she may be a wage-earner on the farm.

Luxembourg

There is no specific legal status for the woman farmer and no specific regulations on the position of the woman on the farm. She is therefore subject to general law, which in principle makes no distinction between men and women.

The woman farmer may therefore be, for example:

- the owner of a farm, either by taking over her parents' farm, by succession or by purchasing a farm;
- the joint owner of a farm, either by owning a farm jointly with her parents or with her husband in the case of a farm that is joint property under the marriage regime;
- an associate-lessee if she concludes an association contract with the farm head; this arrangement is possible where the parental farm is partially taken over;
- an associate or member of a farm grouping.

In addition it has been possible since the introduction of a law in 1982 for the surviving spouse (and all members of the family), if he or she has genuinely worked on the farm, either to retain under the same conditions as if he or she were still alive the farm lease granted to the spouse who has died, or to give notice to the tenant within six months of the death of the lessee.

Netherlands

The law provides no specific status for woman farmers and they are therefore subject to general law, their legal situation depending in large measure on their marital circumstances.

The law provides for full joint ownership, which means that all property and all debts are to be shared by the two spouses.

Property is managed by the spouse who has brought it into the marriage. There is, however, one exception to this principle of property management: property whose management is the responsibility of one of the spouses may, with his or her agreement, be placed at the disposal of the other spouse in order for him or her to be able to exercise his or her profession under more favourable conditions. The second spouse is then responsible for managing that property.

These provisions apply to agriculture. A woman may be a farm head and manage the farm either because she has brought the farm into the marriage or because her husband has transferred its management to her. It is, however, more frequent for this to operate the other way round.

If a woman works on a farm managed by her husband she is fully entitled to half the property worked and half the value added derived from it, but she also has to bear half the debts taken on to meet the needs of the farm.

To enable one of the spouses to avoid legal action by creditors, the couple may choose to own property separately. In this way property belonging to the non-farming spouse is not affected by the farm's debts, except where it has been used as collateral for a creditor in obtaining a loan.

United Kingdom

The woman farmer is subject to general law, since there are no specific provisions giving special status.

A woman farmer may be the head of a farm: there is no discrimination in law between male and female heads of farms. Women running their own farms are usually widows or unmarried women.

Women more often work on the farm as partners. A major problem arises where the head of the farm is not its owner but a tenant; when he dies, the wife who has been working with him on the farm may seek to succeed to his entitlement to the lease. One of the conditions for the woman farmer to avail herself of this right is that she must have derived most of her income from the farm. Where there has been no labour contract or association contract between husband and wife it will be extremely difficult for the woman to furnish proof of this; for the woman farmer who is not able to provide proof of the work that she has carried out on the farm this is an almost impossible condition. The problem arising here is that of recognition for the work done by the farmer's wife.

A woman may also be a wage-earning employee of her farming husband and in these circumstances she is treated in the same way as any other employee; there is no difficulty here in proving that she has worked.

The husband and wife may also conclude an association contract in order for them to run the farming business.

Observations on the legal position of women farmers in the Member States of the European Community.

An examination of the legal position of women farmers gives rise to the following observations.

Generally speaking, no specific provision is made for women farmers by the law and they are thus subject to general law: the problems they encounter are therefore the same as in other self-employed occupations such as trade or crafts.

Women farmers may work as farm heads: there is no discrimination in law between them and male farm heads. However, none of the Member States have large numbers of women running farms: this is explained in all the Member States by sociological factors, and the majority of women running their own farm are widows or unmarried. Although de jure equality exists on this point, de facto equality is not always given.

Women farmers are more often engaged in farming as farmers' wives: it is to cover these cases that the law should include all the provisions necessary for recognising the sometimes very considerable work carried out by these women, and recognition of this work would have many consequences. It is true that some countries have a genuine system for co-farming, giving each spouse comparable rights and duties. This situation of equality is sometimes achieved by the adoption of an adequate marriage regime. In other countries, on the other hand, the fact that farmers' wives work is not catered for by any provision in law and in particular they receive no remuneration.

Recognition of the work of women farmers is a precondition for any equal treatment policy. To this end some internal national legislation could usefully be modified.

2.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Belgium

As far as social security is concerned women farm heads are covered by the legislation on self-employed people. There are several differences between these arrangements and those for wage-earners. Thus if a woman farm head is unable to work she must, in order to qualify for a compensatory allowance, prove that she has not worked for three months. Moreover, women farmers may not pay contributions to enable their husbands to receive a widower's pension after their death, whereas male farmers may contribute for widow's pension for their wives. It should be pointed out that this provision runs counter to the principle of equality between men and women.

Women farmers whose husbands are farm heads (this being the most frequent situation) are not insured in their own name: they therefore only have entitlements derived from those of their husband. They thus receive allowances for major expenditure (hospital treatment, for example), together with family allowances, their husband's retirement pension at the "domestic rate" (ie at a higher rate if the wife does not have a pension of her own), or the widow's pension contributed for on their behalf by their husband. There are, however, no allowances for inability to work due to illness, maternity or accident.

Women farmers who are active associates in a company (this is a rare situation) are covered by the arrangements for self-employed people.

Denmark

Husband and wife are basically treated identically under social security legislation: both are equally individually entitled to treatment under the national health service (medical treatment, medicines, hospital treatment...) and have the same entitlement to a retirement pension.

In certain fields, however, the farmer's wife, like all other Danish women, enjoys preferential status over men: in particular, the farmer's wife has readier access to a pension than the farmer (a widow's pension is granted if the woman is 45 or above when her husband dies).

The wife of the farmer working on the farm, on the other hand, does not have the benefit of satisfactory arrangements for compensation if she is unable to work. She is entitled to compensation in cases of sickness only if the tax authorities allow that a part of the husband's taxable income is derived from his wife's work. Like all wage-earning women, however, the woman farmer is entitled to maternity allowance, 90% of her income (as assessed by the inland revenue) for a period of 4 weeks before and 14 weeks after the birth. The woman farm head is also entitled to maternity allowance.

Finally, if the farmer's wife pays in to an unemployment fund for self-employed people she may make use of the early retirement pension scheme introduced in 1978 for persons between 60 and 66 years of age.

France

Women farm heads are covered by the same social security arrangements as male farm heads: child benefit, health insurance, invalidity benefit and retirement pension (flat-rate pension and pension proportional to earnings).

If a woman is an associate of a GAEC she is insured as a farm head in the same way as the other associates and will receive child benefit under the health insurance scheme, and invalidity pension and a retirement pension (flat-rate and proportional).

If she is a wage-earner on the farm the woman farmer has the same entitlements as all wage-earners in agriculture.

Lastly, if the woman farmer is the wife of the farm head she is not considered to be exercising a profession and is not therefore insured in her own right. She is consequently entitled to child benefit and health insurance but may not receive invalidity benefit. As far as a retirement pension is concerned, she may make her own contributions (which is frequently the case) and become entitled to a flat-rate pension. When the farm head to whom she is married dies she will receive her own flat-rate pension, plus half her husband's pension, which is proportional to his earnings. If the widow decides to become the farm head the stamps paid for by her husband when he was insured are added to those that she pays as farm head; this arrangement is highly advantageous to widows.

Federal Republic of Germany

Agriculture has its own system of social security which is divided into agricultural accident insurance, agricultural health insurance and old age insurance.

All farms are legally obliged to be insured under the agricultural accident insurance scheme. This provides insurance against accidents at work and sickness as a result of work for the farmer, his or her spouse, the members of the family working on the farm and everyone employed on the farm. Accidents in the home are also regarded as accidents at work inasmuch as domestic work makes a vital contribution to the farm (this contribution is assessed by the agricultural insurance companies).

Health insurance covers all those whose main source of income is agriculture, together with all the members of their family over 18 working on the farm and children under 18. Wives are also insured if they do not regularly receive a fixed non-agricultural income.

Old age insurance is compulsory for farmers and members of their family working full-time on the farm (with certain age conditions). The allowance is generally paid at the age of 65.

Other benefits are available: the old age pension may, for example, be paid early if the farmer is no longer able to work: benefits are paid to surviving relatives and there are orphans allowances.



There is, however, one area of discrimination between farmers' wives and other working women. Women working as helpers on the farm are not entitled to paid maternity leave, even though their workload is considerable. The wives of men working in the crafts and trade sectors are in the same position of inequality. Maternity leave should be extended and made available to all women, particularly those working in family businesses.

Greece

Since 1982 women working in agriculture have generally speaking been considered to be women farmers working under the same conditions as male farmers. As far as social security is concerned women farmers therefore have the same entitlements as male farmers: when they retire, for example, they receive a pension from the age of 65 provided that they have been working in agriculture for 25 years.

Ireland

As far as social security is concerned, everyone is entitled to children's allowances, irrespective of whether contributions have been paid, and there is no income ceiling. The allowance is payable directly to the mother; there is no discrimination against women farmers in this respect.

As far as other allowances are concerned, farmers are covered by the regulations for the self-employed, under which provision is made for the payment of benefits, but without contributions being made. To qualify for benefit, the farmer has to satisfy income conditions:

the ceiling is very low. His income is assessed in order to ascertain whether he is entitled to the allowances and social services provided by the State.

These benefits and services are: non-contributory old-age pension, unemployment assistance, widow's pension, small farm allowance, health service (free treatment), maternity and child care services (free care), handicapped person's care allowance.

The farmer's wife is entitled to these benefits and services as a dependant of the farmer, except in the case of non-contributory old-age pension, which she receives in her own right if she fulfils the income conditions: her income is considered to be half the couple's joint income.

On the other hand, farmers and their wives do not receive any allowances as compensation for being unable to work, whether it be for reasons of sickness, maternity or accident at work, since these are allowances for which contributions must be made.

Farmers and their wives do not therefore qualify for certain social security benefits because they are not covered by the general system of employee insurance, under which contributions have to be paid.

Italy
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Italian legislation on social security in agriculture provides for the same conditions for both men and women.

Accidents at work and illness as a result of work: benefits in kind, daily allowances for the compulsory period away from work following temporary complete

inability to work, a pension that is proportional to the degree of invalidity and to the annual contract wage, a pension for members of the family of women farmers who have died as a result of accidents at work or illness as a result of work.

Invalidity, old age: a pension is paid directly to the woman farmer who is an invalid or who has retired and her surviving relatives receive a pension when she dies.

Sickness: there are benefits in kind, but there are no cash benefits if the woman farmer is unable to work due to sickness.

Child benefit: this is available for dependent children up to the age of 18 and may be extended up to the age of 21 or even 26 for children in higher education.

Maternity: there are benefits in kind and very meagre cash benefits in the form of a very small allowance paid to the mother irrespective of the period for which she has to cease work (this allowance is at present under review).

Women farmers are thus treated in exactly the same way as men as far as both the conditions for qualifying for these various benefits and the level of the corresponding contributions are concerned. There is just one difference: the retirement age is 60 for women and 65 for men. It should be stressed that this does not affect the pension itself and that women may in any case continue to work after the age of 60.

Luxembourg

Single or widowed women farmers are covered by the same social security arrangements as male farmers. For the purposes of pensions they may be insured as farm heads or as family members if they are related up to three times removed to a farm head and work full-time helping him on the farm. For the purposes of health insurance they are insured as farm heads. Single women and widows may, however, be co-insured as "replacement spouse" without paying any contributions if they work for a farm head whose wife has died or for an unmarried farm head.

Women farmers who are married may be considered as farm heads for the purposes of a pension only if they genuinely work the farm either because they are separated from their husbands or because the husband is affiliated to an agricultural sickness fund as the holder of an agricultural pension. Where pensions are concerned women farmers may also be affiliated as family members. As far as health insurance is concerned, married women farmers are co-insured with their husbands and are not obliged to pay any contributions.

Since 1980 all pregnant women, including, therefore, women farmers, have been entitled to a maternity allowance; to this is added a "birth premium" which was introduced in 1977.

When maternity allowance is being calculated, however, women farmers are treated as non-working women. They receive a flat-rate allowance, whereas all other women who are working and earning a wage receive an allowance

that is based on their actual wage. The flat-rate allowance is set at a level considerably below that arrived at when the allowance is calculated on the basis of the woman's actual wage.

Lastly, it should be stressed that the social security arrangements for agriculture do not provide for any cash benefits in the case of illness.

Netherlands
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Where social security is concerned women farmers are covered by the same arrangements as those applying to other non-wage-earning women.

Couples receive a retirement pension when the husband reaches the age of 65, and single women also receive a pension at the age of 65. A childless widow receives the same pension as a single woman, but it may be paid when she reaches the age of 40. A widow with children receives a pension that varies according to how many children she has, irrespective of her age - ie she receives the pension as soon as she is widowed.

The law on general assistance, which applies to everyone, provides for the payment of benefits to those whose income is below a minimum necessary for survival. In calculating whether a person is entitled to this general assistance, account is taken of the property which he or she owns. This method of calculation undoubtedly acts to the disadvantage of farmers who, although they own the land they work, may have very low actual incomes.

Benefits are available to all those who are unable to work, including the self-employed and their wives.

Health insurance and maternity insurance are available to people whose income is below a certain ceiling; People whose income is above this ceiling may choose between various types of private insurance.

United Kingdom
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The social security position of the woman farmer varies according to her particular situation:

- The woman farmer insured in her husband's name: although she works actively on the farm, the woman who married a farmer before 1977 could choose not to be insured separately and thus not to pay any contributions. She is then treated as a woman not working on the farm. She is entitled, inter alia, to a retirement pension at 60 (if her husband is 65 or over), and, if she is widowed, to a pension which varies according to her age and the number of dependent children.
- The woman farmer insured in her own right: this situation applies both to the farmer's wife who is actively involved in farm work as a partner and to the single woman farmer running her own farm. She pays contributions at the same rate as men and is thus entitled to a retirement pension at 60 whatever the age of her husband, to a widow's pension, a maternity allowance (for 18 weeks) and sickness benefit (for a maximum of 26 weeks), followed if necessary by an invalidity benefit.

- The woman paid a wage by her farming husband: in this case the woman farmer is covered by the same arrangements as all wage-earners.

It should further be pointed out that medical and hospital treatment is available free of charge to all, child benefit is paid for every child and other benefits are available to low income families. These benefits are granted without payment of any contribution.

Women farmers are therefore reasonably well covered in a general way. However, retirement pensions for the self-employed (men and women) are paid at a flat rate, contributions depending on income, while those who have been wage-earners receive a supplement that is proportional to the contributions paid on the basis of their wage.

Some observations on social security cover for women farmers in the Member States of the European Community.

It is undeniably difficult to make any absolute comparison of the different social security systems in the Member States because they have various fundamentally different characteristics.

It is however clear that whatever the legal background to the woman farmer's work on the farm, this work should give her exactly the same social security entitlements as any other person exercising their profession.

Recognition of the work of women farmers means they must be insured in their own right and irrespective of the legal situation surrounding their work. In certain countries, however, women farmers are frequently insured in their husband's name: they are merely "dependants" and they have only secondary rights.

Apart from the fact that in terms of social security, this means that in these specific cases, there is no recognition of the work done by women on the farm, this is a source of discrimination. The most serious evidence of this discrimination is undoubtedly the fact that the woman farmer has no entitlement to any benefit if she is unable to work due to sickness, maternity or as a result of an accident.

If the aim is to provide women farmers with the same social security cover as any other working people, this situation of profound inequality cannot be tolerated.



*It is imperative that women farmers be given rights on their own account. Some countries already have a fair system of this kind; the others should modify their legislation in this direction.*

3.

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Belgium

Vocational training is open both to male and female farmers. In this respect there is no discrimination in law between men and women, whether or not they are farm heads.

There is, however, one form of training that is designed more specifically for women farmers, this comprising everything connected with accounting and the management of the farm on the one hand and the use of farm produce in the home on the other. This training is provided in the form of one-day study sessions, courses and lectures.

Denmark

There is no discrimination between women and men as concerns vocational training in agriculture. Anyone satisfying the conditions for admission to an agricultural college may be taught there.

As far as training for people already working on a farm is concerned, there are no courses designed solely for women or for men; the content of the course alone determines who follows it. Courses are run with the aim of improving the skills of all those working on the farm, whether or not they are owners. Anyone interested in the programme may therefore sign up for it.

The farming organisations have set up various services which are broken down into technical fields such as farm management and accounting, cattle and pig rearing, crop farming, horticulture and home economics. Courses and meetings take place throughout the year in order to allow all farmers and their families to improve their qualifications, regardless of the type of farm they are working.

It is the task of advisers recruited by the Danish farming organisations to provide this training for farmers and their families. These advisers are selected irrespective of their sex and solely on the basis of their qualifications and abilities.

France
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There are at present two paths open to would-be women farmers wishing to receive vocational training; the academic path consisting of technical agricultural teaching and the path of adult education.

Technical agricultural education is available to young women in the same way as it is to young men. Young women account for approximately 40% of all students, but they opt predominately for short courses and specific specialisations such as "home and rural economics", which prepares students for work in country areas but not in agriculture.

Adult education is aimed at both men and women. Women account for 30% of trainees on short courses but they

are concentrated in courses on general training, tourism, accountancy and management, small farms and tax questions. Women account for approx 30-40% of students on long courses. All courses are open to women, but they tend more to follow those which are specifically designed for them. This applies to the 200-hour state-financed courses which aim to provide additional vocational training for young people who have not qualified as agricultural technicians. They are required to follow these courses in order to qualify for certain establishment aids. These courses are also designed for woman farmers who wish to receive technical agricultural training. They attract large numbers of women (the fact that students are paid is undoubtedly not unconnected with this success).

Some courses are run specifically for women; these are designed as a stage on the road towards the integration into all farming activities of women who received non-agricultural training before marrying a farmer.

Federal Republic of Germany
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There is no discrimination in law between men and women wishing to receive agricultural training. Anyone who fulfils certain conditions, whatever their educational qualifications and whatever degree or diploma they hold, is entitled to receive training irrespective of their sex.

The numbers of women who, in choosing the agricultural sector are opting for a profession that has traditionally been a male preserve, is growing all the time:  
Certificates in Agriculture, agricultural engineering, horsemanship, horticulture etc.

There are special training courses for women farmers in the following occupations: domestic science, rural home economics, qualified village helper.

As far as continued training is concerned there is a number of further training centres, some of them run by women farmers' organisations. Male farmers have their own training programme run by the agricultural organisations and various other training centres. There are also continued training courses for farming couples.

Greece

Since 1950 vocational training has been seen as an instrument in agricultural policy. Training programmes are drawn up by the government and comprise two kinds of training;

- strictly vocational training designed for male and female farmers who are interested in the development of the agricultural sector; a wide range of subjects is covered (land cultivation, animal feeding, farm machinery, agricultural technology....);
- home economics training, designed basically for women farmers with the aim of providing them with information on all the questions related to their life in the country. Male farmers are not barred from the programme, as it is directed at all members of the family: it covers agri-tourism, family accounting, weaving, needlework, sewing.....

Attitudes still make men gravitate towards particular types of training and women towards other types; a

special course which was run to teach women to drive tractors aroused a considerable stir - this is a sign that a development in attitudes should be encouraged.

Ireland
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The Council for Development in Agriculture (ACOT) is the body responsible for agricultural training and education. It fulfils this task by providing various services and through colleges for agriculture and rural home economics. Agricultural training has traditionally covered farm management, product marketing and learning the profession itself. In addition, a new programme has been introduced in order to enable students to obtain a Farming Certificate after 3 years' training after secondary education. This course, like all other courses in the agricultural sector, is open both to women and to men. Unfortunately, however, too few women follow training courses in agriculture, while the role of women on the farm is becoming more and more important.

ACOT also runs vocational training courses in farm home management specifically for women farmers. This course covers farm management and accounting, the use of foodstuffs, nutrition, accommodation, equipment, maintenance etc. This type of course is very much appreciated by women farmers, who follow them in large numbers. These courses also serve as a basis for further training, for example in the field of relief services. This training will probably be abolished in 1985 as a result of a government decision: new arrangements are to be made for training, but it seems that there is no intention for the public sector to provide a course of this type. Perhaps they could be envisaged under other forms.....

Italy

There is no discrimination between men and women in the field of vocational training in agriculture.

In addition, training is available to women no matter what their legal position. There are, however, still too few women receiving agricultural training because it is difficult for women to leave the home. Courses should be run in such a way as to make it easier for women to attend (timing, location....), and women would undoubtedly feel more attracted by courses run exclusively for women.

There have as yet been few courses in home economics aimed at gradually encouraging men to participate in domestic work, and they have been attended solely by women.

Luxembourg

The statute book contains no discrimination between women and men as far as access to vocational training is concerned. Equality in terms of training is even explicitly enshrined in and guaranteed by a law passed in 1981.

A recent reform of agricultural training is designed to bring more young women into this kind of study programme.

Moreover, women are firmly encouraged to participate in the activities and seminars organised under the umbrella of continued training and socio-economic information provision. This is a series of seminars organised annually by the Luxembourg agricultural organisation and it covers a wide range of subjects. The seminars may be attended by men as well as women.

Netherlands

Vocational training in agriculture is open to both young men and young women. Young women of school age do not yet know, however, whether they are going to marry a farmer; they therefore choose the occupation which attracts them most. This may be that of the woman farmer but it may be any other occupation.

If they marry a farmer and wish to participate in the work and management of the farm they may follow training courses run by colleges and the agricultural organisations.

United Kingdom

Vocational training in agriculture is available both to women and to men.

If a young woman decides to train in farming, she will encounter few difficulties in obtaining theoretical training: almost all colleges which run courses of this kind are open to women. The few exceptions are usually for reasons of accommodation. She might, however, encounter another obstacle in that most courses take the form of an "open sandwich", with one year at college and then a year on a farm. Before admitting a student to a full-time course the colleges often require them already to have spent a year working on a farm. It is difficult for girls who are not from farming families to find farmers prepared to offer them a job of this kind for a year. If they cannot obtain



this experience they are unable to be admitted to an agricultural training college.

For the woman who has married a farmer and who wishes to play an active role in the business, the situation varies depending on whether or not she lives near a college which runs day-time courses. If she does, she may follow a course and choose the curricula which suit her best. If she wishes to obtain secretarial and accounting skills, she may choose amongst the courses that are usually run by local education authority colleges or private bodies. If the woman lives too far from a training centre, distance learning is available in the form of correspondence courses which are available (like all courses) to both women and men. Other distance teaching methods such as telephone discussions, use of television and video and information technology systems, are being introduced.

Some observations on access to vocational training for women farmers in the Member States of the European Community.

It seems to be true throughout the Community that although in law women farmers may follow the same training courses as men farmers, whether it be further training or basic training, there remain various marked differences in practice:

- as far as further training is concerned, women farmers tend more to take general training courses in accounting or farm management; very few women take technical courses in farm work itself;
- as far as basic training in certain countries is concerned, young women tend not to follow the same paths as young men. This may be explained by purely practical factors such as it being impossible to find a placement supervisor or the fact that there is no accommodation for women in residential colleges. Attitudes also play a major role.

However, the notion that women and men working on the farm should receive comparable training appears to be gaining ground more and more throughout the Community - this is in the interests of the farm itself, initially of its profitability (for example, in order to facilitate its restructuring), but also of its survival (particularly in the case of death, illness or invalidity of one of the two spouses).

4. ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

Belgium

No discrimination is made in agricultural organisations between male and female farm heads. There are even some women family members in the agricultural organisations. Where women are members of these organisations they rarely hold positions of responsibility, except in the women's sections of the organisations, where they hold all the positions of responsibility.

This is also true of cooperatives: few voting members are women farm heads. The situation of family members is considerably more precarious: the statutes of most cooperatives admit only farm heads as members. Wives who help on the farm sometimes represent their husbands, who authorise them to act on their behalf under the general rules on membership.

Denmark

Women in farming organisations have the vote and are eligible for election, but the organisations have few women members. The relevant regulations do not differentiate between men and women or between heads of farms and other farmers, but the figures show that few women stand for election to positions of responsibility in these organisations. Nevertheless, the organisations usually have a home economics committee in which the representatives of countrywomen's associations participate.

In cooperatives, each family farm has one vote. Where a couple is married and the property divided between the two spouses, it is the spouse who owns the farm who has the vote and may be elected to cooperative bodies. Where the two spouses own property jointly, and this joint ownership applies to the farm, the farmer and his wife may both be elected in cooperatives even if the farm only has a single vote. It is, however, still rare for women to be elected to the decision-making bodies of cooperatives, even though it is legally possible.

France

There is no discrimination in law between male and female farmers, whether or not they are farm heads, as regards access to agricultural organisations and unions.

As far as cooperatives and agricultural credit funds are concerned, in 1980 the law officially sanctioned a practice which was widespread; since each farm has a vote it is of little importance whether it is cast by the husband or the wife. Both may be elected to positions of responsibility. This arrangement allows farming couples freely to make their own decisions and choose which member of the couple should represent the farm in the cooperative or agricultural credit fund.

In Chambers of Agriculture both spouses working on the farm are entitled to vote and both may be elected to positions of responsibility.

In the agricultural health insurance fund both husband and wife are entitled to vote.

In spite of these laws there are still very few women in the agricultural organisations: there is only one woman president of a Chamber of Agriculture and this is a very recent development (1983).

Federal Republic of Germany

The law lays down that access to agricultural organisations and cooperatives should be open to women in the same way as men (whether or not they are farm heads). In practice, however, there are still very few women in positions of responsibility.

The statutes of some cooperatives explicitly allow membership only by the farm head (male or female). Others allow several people working on the same farm to be members of the cooperative. Each member pays dues, but each is also entitled to vote. This is the only way that families can all be members of cooperatives.

Greece

The law provides for women farmers to have access to agricultural organisations and cooperatives under the same conditions as men. Since 1982 it has been sufficient for a person to have a very small share in a family farm in order to be admitted to these organisations. It is for this reason that all members of the family

may be members of the various agricultural organisations and cooperatives under equal conditions.

In practice the number of women with decision-making power in the agricultural organisations is small, in spite of a marked increase which is starting to appear.

Italy

There is no discrimination in law between men and women, whether they be farm heads or anyone else working on the farm, as far as access to agricultural organisations is concerned. In practice, however, there are very few women in positions of responsibility in these organisations.

Italian legislation on cooperatives allows only members of the family who have been delegated by the farm head to participate actively. This law runs counter, however, to the provisions of the Civil Code relating to family farms. There is also a proposal that a representative of the family farm appointed by all the other members, whether it be the husband, the wife, a son, a daughter, etc.... should be allowed to represent the farm. This arrangement would be in keeping with the law on the family farm.

Ireland

There is no formal discrimination between women and men: they have equal access to farming organisations and agricultural cooperatives. There are, however, still too few women in decision-making posts and positions of responsibility.

The members of the Irish Farmers' Association are families rather than farm heads. Women therefore have the same rights as men to attend meetings and, if they wish, to participate more actively in the work of the organisation.

Thanks to the work of the National Farm Family Committee, all of whose members are women, and which is one of the sixteen committees of the Irish Farmers' Association, the role of women in farming organisations has expanded considerably. Women's commitment and involvement should however be further encouraged, because women are still under-represented as a result of the prevailing traditional attitudes.

The Irish Cooperative Organisation Society (ICOS), the umbrella organisation for all agricultural cooperatives of Ireland, adopted a recommendation in 1980, laying down that families, and not individual farmers, should have membership of their cooperatives. ICOS is now ensuring the implementation of this provision.

Luxembourg

Generally speaking it is the farm head who is a member of agricultural organisations or cooperatives. He may, however, authorise a member of his family to represent him. Members of the family working on the farm may also attend meetings even if they are not authorised to do so by the farm head; in this case they are not entitled to vote.

The only women who are members of agricultural organisations and cooperatives are therefore women farm heads.

Women farmers (farm heads, wives and daughters) have their own organisation within the main agricultural organisation, with a delegate on the body which acts as a Chamber of Agriculture. They therefore have a say every time a position is adopted, a decision made or any action taken by this body.

Netherlands

Generally speaking women (whether or not they are farm heads) may be members of agricultural organisations in the same way as men.

The members of cooperatives are farm heads. Women may therefore be members in the same way as men if they are farm heads. Women who are not farm heads may participate if authorised to do so by their husbands.

Efforts are currently being made to integrate women more fully into the agricultural organisations and cooperatives.

United Kingdom

Both women and men have access to professional organisations. Membership is usually by farm and the dues paid depend on the size of the farm. Women farm heads may thus be members of farmers' unions. The wife of a farmer or any other member of the family working on the farm may also be a member of a farmers' union upon payment of additional dues which give them the same rights as other members.



In cooperatives, as a general rule, the members are persons - membership of a cooperative is not limited to heads of farms. Several people participating in the same farm may become members of the same cooperative: in such a case, the farm concerned will have as many votes as memberships.

Some observations on the access of women farmers to agricultural organisations in the Member States of the European Community.

An examination of the situation in this area in the ten Member States prompts the following main remarks:

- 1 Access to farming organisations is in the majority of cases restricted to farm heads. In this case there is no formal discrimination between men and women farmers and both have access to these organisations. Throughout the Community, however, the actual situation is that there are very few women farmers in positions of responsibility in these organisations.

There is no discrimination in law but in fact, a clear inequality of opportunity is observed.

- 2 Access to agricultural cooperatives still remains reserved, in most cases, to individuals, and sometimes even to farm heads; this could serve to explain the low membership figures among women farmers. They participate in cooperatives much more readily in those cases where membership is given to farms (and not individuals). Membership for the farm rather than its head is a highly positive development in that it enables the work of everyone on the farm to be recognised. This system could be generally extended and might even be adopted for farming organisations (this is already the case in some countries).

5.

RELIEF SERVICES

Belgium

Farm relief services (services de remplacement - SRA) are provided by groups of full-time farmers who provide paid workers to carry out farm work for farmers who need help. This enables farmers to provide against fluctuations in the labour force and leave the farm for short periods for various reasons.

Each relief service is free to establish its own order of priority for being provided with a relief worker.

If a woman is a farm head she is a member of the SRA in the same way as any other farm head. There is no difference here between men and women in terms of priority in being supplied with a relief worker.

If the woman farmer merely helps her husband on the farm she usually only has seventh place in the SRA order of priority. A typical priority list gives sixth or seventh place to a relief worker being supplied due to childbirth or the woman farm helper being seriously ill, though the relief worker is paid at a lower rate. The typical list gives seventh position to sickness, accident or the death of the woman farm helper, and this entitles the farmer to be supplied with a relief worker paid at the normal rate.

The situation for the woman family member is therefore not the same as that for the woman farm head, and their work is not assessed in the same manner by the relief services.

Denmark

Farm relief services started in the mid-1960s but were for a long time restricted due to their very high cost. Relief service operations have expanded considerably since 1981 thanks to a government subsidy which has allowed the cost of a relief worker to be appreciably reduced.

The aim of farm relief services is to provide a relief worker to carry out farming activities for members of the family in cases of sickness, childbirth, absence through attendance at training courses or holiday.

The system covers the whole of the country and is managed by a committee composed of representatives of the Danish Association for Family Farms. Some services are still provided by independent associations.

Relief services are financed in part by members (contributions and payment for the relief worker and in part by the government through subsidies).

Subsidies may be granted in cases of sickness or childbirth and for training, and to provide training for relief workers and supervisors of the service.

France

Relief services provided by farmers themselves are available to women farmers.

All women, whether or not they are farm heads, are eligible to be provided with relief services on condition that they carry out agricultural work on the farm. A woman's legal status is of little importance in this respect. They simply have to request relief services.

Relief services are provided by the farming profession only for agricultural work. Work in the home is therefore not covered. (There are various ways in which assistance can be obtained for domestic work from the health and social services).

Relief services are available for maternity in the same way as for any other reason (training, holiday, sickness....). It should, however, be pointed out that only maternity entitles women farmers to an allowance covering 90% of the cost of taking on a relief worker; there is, however, a daily ceiling and the allowance is available for a maximum of 28 days. The maternity relief allowance has been available since 1 July 1977. It is financed by the industry and it is paid both where the relief worker has been sent by the relevant agricultural organisation and where he or she has been taken on directly by the woman farmer herself.

Women who apply for a relief worker so that they can follow a course of training or work, for example, as farm organisation officials are provided with relief services at preferential rates.

Federal Republic of Germany

Assistance on the farm is one of the services covered by the social security system for agriculture.

This assistance is available to farmers covered by the system and to spouses working on the farm. If relief services are not available under the social security system a relief worker may be obtained from an organisation to which the farmer belongs, such as a union, church, welfare centre etc.....

Women farmers may obtain the services of family aids to replace them in their domestic work but also to look after the family if they are ill, on a rest cure or having a child. The family aid runs the household, looks after the children and tends the garden.

Greece

Greece has no experience with relief services.

Ireland

Relief services as a whole are at present undergoing restructuring. Relief services are managed by a number of farm relief cooperatives, which are farmer controlled.

Relief services are available for all circumstances (excess of work at peak periods, sickness, holiday, childbirth.....), since a charge is made for them.

As well as these relief services on the farm, relief services for the home are at present being set up. The aim of the services is to provide qualified staff to replace women farmers in their domestic work in order to allow the farm to develop and production to be increased by making it possible for women to participate to a greater extent in the work of the farm.

Italy

Italy has no experience at national level with relief services.

In the Lombardy region, however, a regional law designed to set up services of this kind was recently passed.

Luxembourg

Luxembourg has "exchange and mutual help circles" which are open to both men and women. All members of the family working on the farm may be members of these bodies. These "exchange circles" are private services that are partially subsidised by state grants.

Replacement services take the form of short-term help provided by a relief worker who is sent in in the event of sickness, death, accident, hospital treatment or childbirth or to supplement the workforce if there is an excess of work. The relief worker may also carry out domestic work, and not only farm work proper.

Netherlands

There is a national umbrella organisation covering all the relief services in the Netherlands and this works in close collaboration with the farm organisations. The aim is to provide assistance for farm work.

All farmers and members of the family working on the farm may join a relief service. They pay a contribution which varies according to the assistance they require.

In addition a system of government subsidies enables relief services to be provided at a lower cost in the event of sickness, accident or holidays or to cover absence from the farm due to training.

Relief services are available for all circumstances where they are necessary, but the full rate must be paid and there are no government subsidies.

Relief services cannot provide assistance for domestic work as opposed to farm work. This kind of assistance is provided by a family aid organisation. The farmer is required to pay a fee which varies according to his income. This family aid is, however, available only in cases of genuine need.

United Kingdom

There are no official relief services for agricultural work. Private bodies provide services of this kind but they are expensive. Where there is a regular need for a replacement worker, a less costly method is sometimes used. This consists



of a whole group of farmers taking on a paid relief worker who then works for each member of the group in turn.

In addition, in emergencies the family or neighbours usually help out on a completely informal basis.

For domestic work local authorities are legally obliged to provide home help services to cater for the needs of the local population. This service is, however, designed principally for the chronically ill and the handicapped. The charge made depends on the income of the "customer", so that the average farmer faced with an emergency has to pay as much as if he were using a private service.

In some regions women have formed groups to provide domestic help in emergencies along the same lines as the official home help service but with a greater degree of flexibility.

Some remarks on relief services in the Member States  
of the European Community.

Except in Greece and Italy, which have no significant experience in this area, relief services have gradually been developing, which shows that there is a great need for them throughout the Community.

Women farmers can generally have access to relief services in the same way as male farmers though they are more directly affected by two major problems:

- the state of development of relief services: this varies widely. This situation is clearly detrimental to women farmers as it prevents them from leaving the farm even for professional reasons such as following a practical or theoretical training course or attending union meetings.
- conditions of eligibility to receive relief services: it appears that childbirth and training do not always rank high enough in the list of priorities.

Moreover, the problems facing relief services everywhere and which affect women and men farmers equally should be pointed out: the funding of the training for relief workers and the quality of this training, which, in the interests of efficiency, should be the best possible.

Relief services are usually presented as being necessary for the survival and development of the farm in that they enable men and women farmers to find back-up labour if they have too much work and to cope with any situation if they themselves are unavailable, whether it be voluntary or not.

SECOND PART

By Isabelle von PRONDZYNSKI  
in co-operation with the  
COPA Women's Committee

FINAL REPORT OF THE SEMINAR HELD IN GRADO (ITALY),  
9 TO 14 NOVEMBER 1982, ON  
"THE LEGAL AND SOCIAL POSITION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE"

RESUME

Meeting in Grado (Italy) from 9 to 14 November 1982, at the initiative of the Women's Committee of COPA (Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the European Community), more than 70 representatives of women in agriculture of the 10 Member States of the Community discussed initiatives to be taken at national and European levels to improve the legal and social status of women farmers.

For this purpose, a woman farmer has been defined as follows : any woman engaged in self-employed agricultural activities on a farm, regardless of her marital status and of whether or not she is herself the head of the farming enterprise.

In the participants' opinion, the contents of, and conditions for, the recognition of the occupational status of women farmers should be incorporated into a Community directive which should cover the following aspects :

- legislation on assets (family, undertaking, company),
- legislation on succession,
- tax legislation,
- social security,
- vocational training,
- access to co-operatives,
- access to farming organisations, and
- relief services.

As regards pregnancy and childbirth, women farmers should not be

treated differently from women engaged in activities outside agriculture.

The legal instrument of the directive, rather than the regulation, was chosen, since this fixes the principles which Member States must observe when harmonising their legislation, as well as the results to be achieved, while entrusting them with the choice of the most appropriate means according to their own respective legal systems.

Examining the situation of women with reference to legislation on family assets in general and to legislation on succession, it was found that legislation in many Member States maintains differences of treatment between spouses which are not justified by the interests of the family and its members. No account is taken, in particular, of the contribution in terms of labour and assets by the woman to the holding. This disparity of treatment is particularly serious when the marriage ties end (separation, divorce, death).

It is therefore necessary for Member States to remove from their legislation any provisions giving rise to unjustified disparity of treatment, and to adopt rules on family assets, on relations between spouses and on the rights and duties of parents towards their children which would allow more account to be taken of the woman's contribution to the family for the sake of family unity.

The ideas outlined above also hold for legislation on succession and gifts which should acknowledge in legal terms the contribution made by spouses during married life to forming the personal assets of their respective partners.

As for legislation on the undertaking, it was found that the spouse who works for a family enterprise as a self-employed worker does not often receive a fair return for his or her work. This is all the more serious when one considers that it is not just a matter of work carried out in execution of instructions, but rather concerns the running and management of the undertaking.

Changes to be made, include : the recognition of the status of farmer for both spouses, if both are engaged in self-employed activities on the farm; the spouses' right to joint management, so that each can exercise his or her rights as a farmer; the allocation of profits and of increases in the value of the original assets to all family members active on the farm; joint liability of both spouses.

As regards company law, it seems that, although national legislation does not explicitly prohibit the setting up of companies between spouses, it nevertheless in some cases imposes direct or indirect limitations, likely to discourage their formation in practice. These should be eliminated by the directive.

From the point of view of tax legislation, all obstacles which impede or retard the acknowledgement of spouses' work on the family farm, should be removed.

As for social security, it is considered that legal equality should be achieved by means of amendments to any national legislation which permits a disparity of treatment to the disadvantage of women, either when carrying out independent farming activities or when collaborating on a family farm with other family members. Women should in particular be able to avail of their own independent rights equal to those applying to men, the only legal basis being the women's occupational status.

The directive should ensure that Member States provide an adequate vocational training to farmers, with no distinction being made between women and men self-employed in agriculture; it should ensure continuing adult training, so as to develop farm management techniques and to respond to the possible reconversion of production cycles.

As far as co-operatives are concerned, it was found that women's active participation was very low in almost all Member States, frequently due to the legislative provisions in force. The Community directive should provide for measures aiming at a revision of co-operatives' rules, so as to ensure the active participation of women working on the farm.

This should be achieved by providing that the members of co-operatives should be farms, and not farmers, and that both spouses should be equally eligible to represent the farm in the co-operative.

As for participation in farming organisations and other representative bodies, positive training and information measures would above all appear to be necessary, so that women and men become aware of the role of such bodies and the importance of active participation in them by all those working as self-employed persons in agriculture.

All delegations agreed on the necessity of providing adequate relief services. Only the availability of these throughout the Community will enable women farmers to benefit from maternity leave in respect of their farming activities, and to avail more fully of the possibilities of vocational training. Other needs, affecting both men and women, are : illness, death, absences arising from professional duties or from participation in farming organisations or co-operatives, and holidays.

Without awaiting the future debate on the status of the other members of the farm family, which all participants desired, the above-mentioned measures should be taken immediately so that the occupational status of women farmers can be recognised.

REPORT OF INQUIRY ON THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY  
SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN, PARTICULARLY IN AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CRAFTS

Creation of the European Parliament's Committee  
of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe

Soon after the inaugural meeting of the first directly elected European Parliament, it became clear that a sufficient number of Members were interested in helping to promote the living and working conditions of women in Europe. On 26 October 1979, the Parliament accordingly adopted a resolution creating an Ad Hoc Committee on Women's Rights which was given the specific task of defining the measures to be taken on the basis of the Treaties with regard to questions concerning women.

The Ad Hoc Committee, with its rapporteur, Ms. Johanna MALJ-WEGGEN, undertook the task confided to it, and drafted a comprehensive resolution which, on 11 February 1982, was adopted by the European Parliament.

The resolution contained a large number of recommendations for improvements in the position of women, which could be introduced by means of Community legislation. In order to further pursue these recommendations and to review Community action resulting from the resolution, the European Parliament set up, on 8 July 1981, its first committee of inquiry, the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe.

The Committee consists of 18 Members. It has set itself eighteen priority tasks, and made each of its Members responsible for the study of one particular subject.

Ms. Simone MARTIN, a Liberal from France, was given the task of reporting on problems encountered by women in family businesses such as industries or farming. While preparing her report, she attended



the Seminar organised for the COPA Women's Committee in Grado in November 1982.

Her report was submitted to the Committee of Inquiry and adopted unanimously by it on 26/27 May 1983.

Contents of the Report of Inquiry
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The Report of Inquiry relates to the problems encountered by all self-employed women working together with their husbands in a family business. Nevertheless, it has particular relevance for the agricultural sector, from which it draws many of the examples used.

The Committee, in the introduction to its Report, points out that the needs of the self-employed have been inadequately covered by existing Community legislation.

Turning to the legal status of women, it focuses specifically on self-employed married women whose status raises the principal legal problems - single women generally already having equality with single men.

The starting point should be the legal recognition of women's actual work, whether in the household or the family enterprise.

Too many legal provisions (in the fields of tax, social security, etc.) are either tied to the status of head of an enterprise, or related to the income earned by the persons concerned. Salaries paid by husbands to their wives active in the family enterprise, are too often fixed solely with tax provisions in mind, and do not reflect the true economic value of the work done.

Since social security rights are frequently pay-related, this in turn leads to reduced social welfare benefits.

The Committee recommends that consideration be given to the concept of the "family business" in which all members of the family working in the business would have the status of partners. This would alleviate or eliminate the salary/taxation/social security problems outlined above.

The law on inheritance in certain countries grants rights to descendants which are not accorded to the widow. The Committee argues that the contrary should be the case : where the husband dies, the capital in the undertaking should be assigned to the widow in preference to other possible heirs. In cases where it is desirable for the children to inherit, work done in the past by the surviving spouse must be recognised, e.g. by means of a "deferred salary".

As regards social security, the Committee argues that women working in the family business should have their own rights - at present, this is only rarely the case. Women helping in the family business and without other outside occupations, are not normally considered as being gainfully employed. Their social security rights are derived indirectly from those of their husbands - this can cause serious problems in the case of death or divorce.

Self-employed women should have the same rights to maternity leave as women in other occupations - the idea of parental leave should also be promoted, so that family commitments can be shared in the same way that business commitments already are.

The Committee stresses the importance of vocational training for women in family enterprises. Women who, on marriage, wish to take up their husbands' business, should be able to avail of adequate training to this end. The possibility of drawing on relief services is an important factor in enabling women to leave the enterprise in order to take up training opportunities. It is also necessary to ensure that the tax system does not militate against such training.

The Committee would welcome the establishment of a specific Social Fund quota reserved for the training of women working in family

businesses.

Women are poorly represented in professional organisations, mainly as a result of prevailing traditional attitudes.

The Committee points out that, in certain countries, only the head of the enterprise, usually the man, is eligible to join co-operatives. It favours the system already existing in some countries, where farms, rather than farmers, are members of the co-operative - the farm being represented by any one of the family members active on it.

Finally, the Committee emphasised the importance of relief services, particularly in agriculture where, at any given time, a high proportion of work cannot be postponed. Women, because of their dual role in the business and the household, have greater difficulties than men in leaving the enterprise, even for training purposes, and must be replaced by a relief worker. The Committee recommends that a priority order be established for the allocation of relief services, and for the scale of public contributions to their costs.

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ORGANISATIONS FOR WOMEN FARMERS REPRESENTED IN THE  
COPA WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Introduction :  
The COPA Women's Committee

COPA is the Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the European Community; it could also be termed the "European Farmers' Union". Nevertheless, it shows a significant difference in comparison with most national farmers' associations in that its members are not individual farmers, but farmers' unions from the ten Member States of the European Community; these number 23.

COPA has a large number of working parties, the activities of which are either product-centred or related to more general questions concerning several or all sectors. Many of these are operated jointly with COGECA, the General Committee for Agricultural Co-operation in the European Community.

The COPA Women's Committee is one of the committees responsible for questions concerning several sectors. Nevertheless, it has a privileged position within COPA : its chairman, unlike the chairmen of other committees (with one exception only) is an ex officio member of the COPA Praesidium, the supreme decision-making body of the organisation.

The members of the COPA Women's Committee, as those of other committees, are appointed by the COPA member organisations and represent those organisations in the discussions.

The descriptions following below of the individual organisations represented in the COPA Women's Committee, demonstrates how differently women farmers have organised themselves in the ten Member States of the European Community.

Belgium

Three organisations represent Belgian women farmers in the COPA Women's Committee :

- (i) the Alliance Agricole Féminine (AAF),
- (ii) the Katholiek Vormingswerk van Landelijke Vrouwen (K.V.L.V.), and
- (iii) the Unions Professionnelles Agricoles Féminines (UPAF).

Each of these is an integral part of one of the Belgian farmers' unions which are themselves member organisations of COPA.

(i) Alliance Agricole Féminine (AAF)

The Alliance Agricole Féminine (AAF) constitutes the specialised women's movement within the general activities of the Alliance Agricole Belge, enabling women farmers to fulfil themselves in their entire personality, to examine their problems and to resolve them within a structure and by means of actions which they themselves control.

The AAF sees its political action as taking place within a broader context, aimed at the full personal development of women both from a vocational and family point of view, and in the social and cultural areas. The AAF brings together all those women farmers who wish to undertake effective political action in order to improve the position of women on the family farm and in the national and international community.

The Alliance Agricole Féminine is organised at local, regional and national levels. It has its own committee structure and organises meetings, study days, congresses and training courses.

By delegating representatives, it also participates in decision-making in the Alliance Agricole's General Council and Congress.

(ii) Katholiek Vormingswerk van Landelijke Vrouwen (K.V.L.V.)

The Katholiek Vormingswerk van Landelijke Vrouwen (K.V.L.V.) is an association of Catholic countrywomen in Flanders. Governed by its own statutes, it functions as a division within the Belgische Boerenbond, itself a member organisation of both COPA and COGECA.

Members are organised at local, provincial and national (Flanders only) level, each level electing delegates to the next higher tier. Within the K.V.L.V., the women farmers and market gardeners have a special status which allows them to be represented in all decision-making bodies of the Belgische Boerenbond.

The objectives of the K.V.L.V. are to promote the quality of life of countrywomen in every respect. It organises training courses for its members, and it represents their political interests at national and European Community level.

(iii) Unions Professionnelles Agricoles Féminines (UPAF)

The UPAF is a service within the Unions Professionnelles Agricoles (UPA), a farmers' union covering the French-speaking region of Belgium, which is independent of any party political or denominational ties. Within the UPA, it is the task of the UPAF to cover any policies concerning women or the farm family.

The membership of the UPA consists of farms, not farmers. Any woman farmer active on a member farm (whether or not she is the head of that farm) is automatically a member of the UPAF.

The objectives of the UPAF are political (seeking improvements benefiting farmers and their families), educational and recreational.

Its activities take place within a three-tier structure - at canton, provincial and national level. Each branch has a large measure of autonomy in organising its own activities. At national

level, the UPAF organs are : the President, the Bureau (President, plus the five provincial presidents, plus representatives of the Secretariat), the Steering Committee (25-30 provincial delegates) and the General Council (100 delegates from all cantons).

Representatives of the UPAF participate in all structures of the UPA, and vice versa.

Denmark
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Danish women farmers are represented in the COPA Women's Committee by two organisations :

- (i) Danske Husmandsforeninger Husholdningsudvalget, and
- (ii) De danske Landboforeninger Husholdningsudvalget.

Both of these constitute committees within two respective farmers' unions which in turn are members of COPA.

(i) Danske Husmandsforeninger Husholdningsudvalget

This is the Home Economics Committee of the Danish Family Farmers' Association. Membership of that organisation covers both husband and wife; any women members interested in joining the Home Economics Committee may do so. Some 70 % of the total membership are farming couples, where one or both spouses are active on the farm; 30 % are other rural dwellers.

The Home Economics Committee has its own working structures at local, district, county, provincial and national levels. It employs 25 Home Economics Advisers and two National Advisers.

The aims of the Home Economics Committee are to look after the interests of countrywomen in the spheres of social affairs, domestic science, economics and cultural matters.

Through the Home Economics Committee, countrywomen are represented

in different authorities. Within these organisations and committees, they can influence legislation concerning women, the family, housing, social affairs, education, agriculture, nutrition and consumer policies.

The advisers' function is to advise, educate and inform the members on an individual or co-operative basis; this is carried out by means of meetings, courses, lectures and home visits.

(ii) De danske Landboforeninger Husholdningsudvalget

This is the Home Economics Committee of the Federation of Danish Farmers' Unions. Over 50 % of its members are women farmers, the remainder are other countrywomen.

The Home Economics Committees are organised at national, provincial, county and local levels. At local and provincial levels, 35 Home Economics Advisers are employed by them to support their aims and activities.

It is the aim of the Home Economics Committees to look after the interests of countrywomen and their families in the fields of domestic science, consumer affairs, social and cultural matters and rural education.

Activities are wide-ranging and include the various aspects of domestic science, the discussion of public affairs, and the organisation of study trips within Denmark and abroad. The Home Economics Committees also strive to promote contacts and understanding between town and country people.

France
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French women farmers are represented in the COPA Women's Committee by two farmers' unions, both of which are direct members of COPA :



- (i) Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs (C.N.J.A.), and
- (ii) Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (F.N.S.E.A.).

(i) Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs (C.N.J.A.)

The C.N.J.A. is the organisation of French young farmers and family helpers of less than 35 years of age. Apart from being a member organisation of COPA, it also belongs to CEJA (the European Council of Young Farmers).

Its objective is to represent the interests of young farmers of either sex in all areas connected with agriculture.

The C.N.J.A. has 80,000 members at local level. Its structure provides for 2,800 cantonal centres, 93 departmental centres, 11 regional centres and, finally, the national centre.

This latter is directed by an Administrative Council numbering 41 persons, elected by Congress for a two-year period. A certain number of young women farmers must be elected to both the Administrative Council and the Bureau (15 members elected from within the ranks of the Administrative Council). At least one Vice-President must be a woman; this is also the case at departmental level.

The Working Parties, constituted at departmental level, comprise women's committees studying in detail problems of specific concern to women farmers.

(ii) Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (F.N.S.E.A.)

It is the National Women's Committee of the F.N.S.E.A. which is represented in the COPA Women's Committee. The National Women's Committee represents the women farmers, and the wives and daughters of farmers who are members of the local unions of the F.N.S.E.A.

Within the overall structure of the F.N.S.E.A., women's committees are organised at local, cantonal, departmental and, finally, national level.

The National Women's Committee has 22 members, all of whom are women : 11 regional delegates and their respective alternates. The Vice-President of the F.N.S.E.A. - always a woman - is also an ex officio member of the National Women's Committee.

The National Women's Committee has the dual objective of representing the women farmers in the organisation, and of examining their problems and putting forward solutions. It aims to provide women farmers with a training ground enabling them to take up other responsibilities in agricultural organisations. This has recently led to the election of Mme. Chezalviel, Vice-President of the F.N.S.E.A., to the post of Vice-President of the Assemblée Permanente des Chambres d'Agriculture (Permanent Assembly of the Chambers of Agriculture), the first time that this post has been filled by a woman.

Germany

Deutscher Landfrauenverband e.V. (DLV)

The DLV (German Countrywomen's Association) is an associate member of the Deutscher Bauernverband (German Farmers' Union), the German COPA member. Its representatives are appointed to the COPA Women's Committee directly by the DLV.

The DLV is above party politics and non denominational. Its membership consists of 500,000 countrywomen, 60 % of whom are women farmers.

The DLV represents the interests of women farmers, countrywomen and their families in economic, social and educational respects. It is its aim to improve the quality of life in rural areas. This includes good

living and environmental conditions, a broad range of training facilities, job security, cultural, social and infrastructural facilities as well as the conservation of rural areas and their standards of housing and recreation. It is a particular objective of the association to promote contacts and understanding between town and country people.

The DLV is the umbrella organisation for 16 provincial countrywomen's associations, 293 county associations as well as approximately 11,000 local associations. In 1982, some 50,000 educational events were organised at all levels of the association.

The organs of the association are the Praesidium, the Federal Bureau and the General Assembly.

Greece

Panhellenic Confederation of Agricultural Co-operative Organisations - PASEGES

PASEGES is the Greek national umbrella organisation for agricultural co-operatives, which is also active as the principal Greek farmers' union. It is therefore a member organisation of both COGECA and COPA.

PASEGES has not yet established a Women's Committee or a special service for women farmers. It is represented in the COPA Women's Committee by a staff member also entrusted with other functions in the organisation.

Ireland

Irish Farmers' Association (IFA)

The Irish Farmers' Association (IFA) is the Irish member organisation of COPA; it is represented in the COPA Women's Committee by its

National Farm Family Committee.

Membership of the IFA is a family one - all members of the family are covered by the membership fee which entitles them to one vote. The IFA has 100,000 members throughout the Republic.

Any of these interested in discussing questions and problems concerning the farm family, i.e. rural education facilities, social questions, women's affairs, etc., may join the farm family committees now established in 22 counties (out of 26) - one particularly large county, Co. Tipperary, has two farm family committees.

Each county elects one person to represent it in the National Farm Family Committee which thus has 23 elected members. These could be either women or men, but in practice, they are all women farmers. The Honorary Officers of IFA are additional, ex officio, members of the National Farm Family Committee.

The Chairman of the National Farm Family Committee in turn is an ex officio member of the National Council and National Executive of IFA and thus ensures that farm families are represented in overall decision-making.

The National Farm Family Committee has proved to provide a valuable training ground for women farmers wishing to become involved in other committees - this has already happened in the Poultry, Horse, Rural Development and Communication Committees.

Italy

Confederazione Nazionale Coltivatori Diretti (Coldiretti)

Women farmers are represented in the COPA Women's Committee through the Movimento Femminile (Women's Movement) which is an integral part of Coldiretti, itself one of the Italian members of COPA.

Only women farmers may be members or leaders of the Movimento Femminile; they may be farm owners or farming jointly and must be over the age of 25.

According to its statutes, the task of the Movimento Femminile is to "provide women with socio-cultural training, improve their vocational qualifications and foster their participation in union decision-making and action".

The Movimento Femminile is particularly concerned to obtain recognition of work carried out by women on the family farm, to involve women farmers in local affairs (local bodies, social services, health services, schools, etc.), and to increase the unionisation of women in order to involve them more effectively in economic, social and political decision-making in Italy.

The Movimento Femminile operates at various levels :

- (a) grassroots level : groups;
- (b) provincial level : Provincial Assembly, Committee and Delegate;
- (c) regional level : Regional Assembly, Committee and Delegate;
- (d) national level : National Assembly, Committee, Executive and Delegate.

All the bodies at the various levels are elected. From national to provincial level, there are Secretariats which exist alongside the elected bodies but which have no managerial function. At national level, there is a full Secretariat employing larger numbers of people.

The members and leaders of the Movimento participate not only in the activities organised by the Movimento itself, but also in those run by the farmers' union as such. All delegates at the various levels are automatically entitled to sit on the relevant decision-making bodies of the Coltivatori Diretti.

Luxembourg
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Centrale Paysanne Luxembourgeoise (CPL)

The Centrale Paysanne Luxembourgeoise, itself a member organisation of both COPA and COGECA, is represented in the COPA Women's Committee by means of its Service Activités Féminines - SAF (Service for Women's Activities). The SAF forms an integral part of the overall farmers' union, the CPL.

The SAF was founded in 1977; its objective is to promote the integration of women farmers into the institutional framework of the farmers' union. Its objectives are to encourage increased contacts between women farmers, to take on an educational, training and information function for them, to develop their personalities, and particularly their female characteristics and to improve their living conditions in the broadest sense.

Membership of the CPL covers all family members of the farm. Women farmers and growers can thus become full members. Other women with an interest in agriculture may join as "Friends of SAF" and participate in SAF activities.

The members elect a Women's Committee of 36 persons (3 per canton) for a 2-year term of office which is renewable only once. The Women's Committee prepares decisions and sets guidelines for the SAF as a whole.

The SAF carries out a broad range of educational activities, including courses, travel, visits, etc. It uses its regular columns in the farming journal, "De Letzeburger Bauer", to convey information to its members and other interested persons.

The SAF delegates one person to the body acting as Chamber of Agriculture and thus takes part in preparing its positions on proposed laws and regulations.

Netherlands

There are three organisations for women farmers in the Netherlands :

- (i) Christelijke Plattelandsvrouwenbond (CPB),
- (ii) Katholieke Plattelandsvrouwen Nederland (KPN), and
- (iii) Nederlandse Bond van Plattelandsvrouwen (NBP).

As their names indicate, all three are broadly based countrywomen's organisations rather than associations of women farmers. They co-operate loosely with the three respective COPA member organisations which, among other things, appoint their representatives to the COPA Women's Committee.

The principal distinction between the three countrywomen's associations is that of religious denomination : the CPB is Protestant in outlook, the KPN is Roman Catholic, while the NBP is non denominational. The three organisations co-ordinate their activities in a joint national countrywomen's association (Centrale van Plattelandsvrouwenorganisaties). They also co-operate with each other, and with the women farmers in the three farmers' unions, in the Working Parties on Agriculture established at provincial and national levels. These working parties serve to co-ordinate policy for women farmers and to provide them with some education and training in agricultural and co-operative matters.

(i) Christelijke Plattelandsvrouwenbond (CPB)

The CPB counts 22,000 members, about one-third of whom are active in agriculture. Membership is open to any woman who can subscribe to the aims of the organisation.

Activities of the CPB are related to consciousness-raising, training, development and welfare. To this end, CPB employs a number of socio-economic advisers active in field work. It has also set up working parties dealing with specific subjects ranging from pregnancy and parenthood to development co-operation.

CPB maintains close contacts with the Christian farmers' union N.C.B.T.B.; one representative of the national board of CPB is an ex officio member of the N.C.B.T.B. board.

(ii) Katholieke Plattelandsvrouwen Nederland (KPN)

KPN has some 58,000 women as members, over 45 % of whom are women farmers.

The objective of KPN is to provide opportunities for training, education, development and meetings, in order to enable women to participate more actively in society and the Church and to improve their personal life and that of their family, farm and occupation.

These aims are pursued by means of intensive work, particularly at grassroots level (advisory service and working parties), but also at regional, superregional and national levels.

KPN co-operates closely with the Catholic farmers' union, K.N.B.C.B.; the Chairman of KPN is an ex officio member of the National Bureau of K.N.B.C.B.

(iii) Nederlandse Bond van Plattelandsvrouwen (NBP)

This organisation has 85,000 members in all provinces of the Netherlands except Limburg. Some 25 % of these are women farmers. Membership is open to all women living outside the big cities and prepared to accept the objectives of the association.

It is NBP's objective to encourage the education, training and development of women, so that these can participate more fully in society, particularly in rural areas. It also wishes to promote good relationships between town and country women, farmers and non farmers.

The NBP has set up its own committees dealing with a large number of subjects, ranging from emancipation to gardening, from cookery



to literature. It also organises study trips abroad.

NBP fosters a friendly relationship with K.U.L.C., the non denominational Dutch farmers' union.

United Kingdom
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Women farmers of the United Kingdom are represented in the COPA Women's Committee by two organisations :

- (i) National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI), and
- (ii) Women's Farm and Garden Association (WFGA).

Both of these are entirely independent of the three regional farmers' unions which represent the United Kingdom in COPA; since these farmers' unions have no specific women's committees or services, they nominate representatives of the two above mentioned women's organisations to the COPA Women's Committee.

(i) National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI)

The Women's Institutes have a national membership of some 360,000 women and girls, predominantly but not exclusively from rural backgrounds.

The aim of the WI movement is to provide a democratically controlled educational and social organisation for countrywomen. A wide range of activities is organised at local, county and national level, with the main purpose of improving and developing conditions of rural life. Among these activities are music, drama and arts events, home economics and craft classes, discussions and action on a wide range of public affairs issues in the United Kingdom, European Community and worldwide, international projects and exhibitions.

The WI has more than 450 co-operative markets which sell fresh produce and handicrafts, an adult education centre, Denman College, which runs 240 short-term residential courses for nearly 5,000 students per year, a publishing company, WI Books Ltd., and its own magazine, "Home and Country".

The organisation has a three-tier structure - national federation, county federations and 9,300 local women's institutes. Each part of the organisation is interrelated, but can plan its own programme of activities.

The National Executive is elected biennially by the whole membership, and each institute elects a committee to carry out the day to day running of its affairs.

(ii) Women's Farm and Garden Association (WFGA)

This is an independent organisation of professional women farmers and growers and women engaged in agricultural and horticultural education and advisory services, or working in allied industries. Men are also admitted as members, provided they satisfy the above "professional" requirements.

The aims and objectives of Women's Farm and Garden Association are as follows :

- a. to promote and encourage the study and practice of agriculture and horticulture among women throughout the United Kingdom and overseas and to further and advance the sciences of agriculture and horticulture;
- b. to unite all professional women workers in agriculture, horticulture and allied subjects, and those interested in such work for women, into a strong central organisation;
- c. to help and advise in all matters connected with these professions;

- d. to watch events and to make representations to public bodies on matters relating to agriculture and horticulture, especially with regard to those affecting the interests of women;
- e. to provide opportunity for members' views to be discussed and pooled and to help members to keep in touch with modern trends in their profession, both technical and scientific.
- f. to contribute to the welfare of countrywomen throughout the world by maintaining appropriate international links.

WFGA is a national organisation, mainly administered centrally from a small office by a General Secretary and assistant. There is little regional organisation, but representatives are active in many areas.

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