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Brief information about the Swedish Rural Network

Who are the members of the Rural Network?

As a part of the Rural Development program a formal network has been constituted. All actors who operate at the national level and whose activities contribute to the success of the Rural Development Programme, are welcome to join the Rural Network. We have almost 100 members already, and the number is still increasing.

What is the purpose of the Rural Network?

The Rural Network shall reinforce the implementation of the Swedish Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. The purpose of the Network is to contribute to a holistic view by

- widening the exchange of information, experiences and methods;
- reinforcing the national actors' dialogue with the local and regional actors who take part in the implementation of the Rural Development Programme;
- reinforcing the dialogue and cooperation with actors in other countries; and
- reinforcing the link between rural policy, regional growth policy and environmental policy.

Secretariat and steering group of the Rural Network

The Rural Network has a Secretariat situated at the Board of Agriculture, that is the National Network Unit. The unit consist of four employees and recourse persons from network members. The Board of Agriculture is also the management authority of the Rural Development Programme.

The Network also has a steering group consisting of 12 actors, who are member organisations in the Network. These are (elected for 2007 and 2008): The University of Agricultural Sciences, The Federation of Swedish Farmers, The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, The Federation of Private Enterprises, The Swedish Federation of Rural Economy and Agricultural Societies, The Village Action Movement, Leader, a youth network called U-land, The County Administrative boards, The Rural Development Agency, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and The Board of Agriculture. The Board of Agriculture chairs the steering group.

The steering group identifies important areas and themes that the Network wish to engage in, but also expresses its opinion about network activities proposed by and carried out by members.

Network activities – network cheques

The network must work on a wide basis in order to reach its goals, and it is therefore important that all members get involved. This can for instance be done by members:

- cooperating in an exchange of information,
- allowing people within the organisation to work with mobilisation and inspirational activities.

For members, some costs of network activities can be covered by the Rural Network's budget through the so-called network cheques. Already some 35 network activities are being financed by network cheques.



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas

Leader in the Rural Network

Leader is an important part of the Rural Development Programme. Therefore, it is important that the Leader Network constitutes a natural part of the Rural Network, like a sub network. The Rural Network has aimed certain measures at the Local Action Groups (LAGs), for instance in the form of network cheques for international exchange of experiences and preparation for cooperation projects, as well as mentor support for new LAGs. In addition, the Rural Network arranges two large meetings every year for the LAGs, with the aim of encouraging an exchange of experiences and present good examples.

Other activities will be training courses related to partnership, innovation, transnational cooperation etc. A Leader of the Year Award will also be organised.

More information about network cheques and current activities is available on the website of the Rural Network:

www.landsbygdsnatverket.se

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