

Farm Women's New Vocational Activities: Prospects and Problems of Women's Cooperatives and Small On-Farm Businesses in Greece

by
Isabella Gidakou
Agricultural University of Athens
Anastasia Xenou and Kalliopi Theofilidou
Extension Service, Ministry of Agriculture, Greece

Journal of Rural Cooperation, 28(1), 2000: 19-37

Abstract

Farm women's pluriactivity is nowadays estimated as a strategic means of upgrading their economic and social position at the farm and the local society's level and of preserving environmental and cultural heterogeneity in rural areas. This paper deals with women's new roles in agro-tourist and handicraft cooperatives as well as in small self-owned on-farm businesses in rural Greece. The aim of the paper is to give a picture of women's participation and attitudes towards these new activities and to investigate the problems and perspectives of these activities to secure a professional identity for farm women. We use data collected on the basis of personal questionnaires of 1,459 farm women who participated in vocational training programs implemented by the Rural Extension Home Economics Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture. The investigation pointed out that women are interested in these jobs. But cooperation as well as activities in personal small businesses face many problems. Till now they cannot manage to offer a stable and sufficient income so as to operate as a serious alternative solution to their employment problem and to be attractive for young women (their daughters) to enter these jobs.