

NON-ECONOMIC DRIVERS INFLUENCING FARMERS' INCENTIVES TO COOPERATE: DO THEY REMAIN ROBUST THROUGH POLICY CHANGES?

by

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Abstract

Research has shown that the structure and strategies adopted by cooperatives can be affected by market characteristics (e.g. deregulated versus regulated markets). This study examined the effects of these market characteristics on non-economic drivers that influence farmers' willingness to participate in cooperation. The example studied was the incentives of ex-sugar beet farmers in the UK to informally cooperate with their neighbors, and whether these incentives changed in response to the EU Sugar Regime Reform of 2006. The method used was regression analysis based on a theoretical behavioral framework. The results revealed that most of the non-economic drivers influencing farmers' incentives to cooperate before and after the reform were not the same. This finding has implications in relation to the theoretical basis.

Keywords: farm supply cooperatives, policy reforms, social-psychological variables