



The participatory construction of new economic models in short food supply chains

Yuna Chiffoleau, Sarah Millet-Amrani, Adanella Rossi, Marta Guadalupe
Rivera-Ferre, Pedro Lopez-Merino

► To cite this version:

Yuna Chiffoleau, Sarah Millet-Amrani, Adanella Rossi, Marta Guadalupe Rivera-Ferre, Pedro Lopez-Merino. The participatory construction of new economic models in short food supply chains. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 2019, 68, pp.182 - 190. 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2019.01.019 . hal-02628196

HAL Id: hal-02628196

<https://hal.inrae.fr/hal-02628196>

Submitted on 22 Oct 2021

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial 4.0 International License

The participatory construction of new economic models in short food supply chains

Yuna Chiffolleau^{a*}; Sarah Millet-Amrani^b; Adanella Rossi^c; Marta Guadalupe Rivera-Ferre^d; Pedro Lopez Merino^e

^aINRA

UMR Innovation, 2 place Viala, 34060 Montpellier Cedex 2, France
yuna.chiffolleau@inra.fr

^bINRA

UMR Innovation, 2 place Viala, 34060 Montpellier Cedex 2, France
sarah-millet.amrani@supagro.fr

^cUniversity of Pisa

Department of Agriculture, Food and Environment,
Via del Borghetto 80 56124 Pisa, Italy
adanella.rossi@unipi.it

^dUniversity of Vic, Spain

Chair in Agroecology and Food Systems for Social Transformation,
C/ de la Laura, 13, Vic 08500, Spain
martaguadalupe.rivera@uvic.cat

^eINRA

Unité Ecodéveloppement, Site Agroparc, 84 914 Avignon Cedex 9, France
Pedro.Lopez-Merino@inra.fr

*corresponding author

The participatory construction of new economic models in short food supply chains

Abstract:

While a number of works question the alterity of alternative food chains, little has been said about the social processes under which new economic models are, or may be, developed within the broader movement around 'short food supply chains' (SFCs) in Europe. Considering SFCs as economic organisations, we propose an analytical framework based on New Economic Sociology and Convention Theory, enriched by Social and Solidarity Economics, to capture the social construction of new economic models in such chains. We apply this framework to two case studies: an open-air market promoting short food supply chains in France, and a partnership between an agricultural cooperative and several solidarity purchase groups (GAS) in Italy. Analysing the trajectories of the two initiatives, we highlight the processes through which new economic models are jointly built via interactions between different actors. Our results open two lines of discussion: one concerning the 'new economic models' that emerge from the two cases, a second regarding the actors' participation in elaborating and enacting these new models.

Keywords: short food supply chain, economic organisation, trajectories, participation, case study

1. Introduction

Over the last few decades in Europe, the food sector has witnessed a profusion of initiatives bringing producers and consumers close (or closer). From 'alternative food networks' (or systems) contesting the mainstream agro-industrial model (Renting et al., 2003) to traditional 'short food supply chains' experiencing a revival in Europe (Kneafsey et al., 2015; Chiffoleau, 2017), all of these initiatives, regardless of their origin or initial intention, present a common point: a 'promise of difference', compared to long supply chains. That is 'a promise of another mode of organising production, exchanges and/or food consumption, and the promise of associated benefits' (Le Velly, 2017). The general organisation of alternative or short food systems has thus been extensively described (Deverre and Lamine, 2010), feeding a debate about their 'alterity' (Holloway et al., 2007; Constance et al., 2014). These works, nevertheless, say little about the social processes which have built their alterity, whether 'strong' or 'weak'. Little is said about the tensions that may have emerged, the compromises that have been made during this construction, especially with regards to the economic dimension. This longitudinal approach, which is attentive to the social processes underlying the economic dimension, proves useful, not only to better understand the emergence of 'hybrid' food systems, which combine alternative and conventional attributes (Le Velly and Dufeu, 2016), but also to explore the transformative potential of a diversity of short food supply chains, beyond those classified as alternative (Kneafsey, 2015).

In this paper, we propose to analyse the social construction of 'new' economic patterns which differ from the mainstream model in two cases of market initiatives based on close relations between producers and consumers: an open-air market in France, and a partnership between a cooperative and several GAS (*Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale* - solidarity-based purchase groups¹) in Italy. We use here the notion 'short food supply chain' (SFC) to address these two initiatives as well as all the 'alternative' food systems (or networks) mentioned in the literature, as the common feature they all share is that they reduce the number of intermediaries between producer and consumer even though their alterity may

¹ Self-organised consumers' groups who manage a direct relation with farmers along ethical principles.

be discussed. Then, considering SFCs as economic organisations, we use the two cases to highlight how, and under which conditions, they evolve as social spaces where new economic models are discussed and jointly created over time, addressing new indicators of wealth (Gadrey and Jany-Catrice, 2006) beyond mere turnover. The original aspect of our contribution is thus to explore some of the paths through which ‘another economy’ (Laville and Cattani, 2005) is being built in short food supply chains, as well as to propose criteria on which ‘new economic models’ can be analysed and assessed in, and from, these chains. Moreover, by showing how these economic models are fuelled by and dependent on the interactions between ‘skilled’ and ‘unskilled’ actors, our work opens new perspectives for food democracy. This notion, which appeared at the end of the 1990s, refers in broad strokes to a condition in which citizens regain control over their food and their food systems (Lang, 1998). Whether considered from a regulatory perspective (*ibid.*), or in concrete local situations (Hassanein, 2003), food democracy refers to the capacity of citizens to take part in the decision-making about food production and consumption practices. Nevertheless, the way this participation can be expanded beyond ‘enlightened’ citizens and build new economic patterns still needs to be explored (Booth and Coveney, 2015).

In the first section, we briefly go back to previous works on the economic dimension of alternative food networks, local or short food supply chains, to stress how this dimension has been analysed and to position our own contribution. In the second section, we introduce our framework of analysis, combining contributions from sociology and economics. In the third section, we present the trajectories of two SFCs as economic organisations confronted with challenges and designed by social interactions. In the fourth section, by comparing the two cases, we open two lines of discussion: the first one about the ‘new’ economic models that are set up through the two initiatives; the second about the nature and the role of participation in the construction of new economic patterns.

2. The economic dimension of SFCs as described in the literature: a review

Studying the economic dimension of SFCs is not an easy task since markets are conceived as complex social spaces in which different actors interact and may jointly define essential issues regarding the process of selling and buying (White, 1981). In the food sector this conception results in the active construction of networks by various actors of the agrofood chain, such as farmers, food processors, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers (Renting et al., 2003). Over the last few years, scientists have become increasingly aware of the need to look at these initiatives due to their capacity to generate change, as spaces to define and experiment with innovative socio-economic patterns from a dynamic rather than a static perspective (Brunori et al., 2011). Consequently, SFCs have been studied to assess new relationships among producers and consumers in which both willingly become active components of new supply and demand systems as well as new frameworks to create a common understanding of food. Renting et al. (2003), who analysed the contribution of SFCs to rural development in Europe, proposed two dimensions to describe these chains: one concerning their organisational structure and the specific mechanisms entailed in these to extend relations over time and space; another concerning the different quality definitions and quality conventions involved in the construction and functioning of the chains. These two dimensions have thus been widely studied in different European countries and for different types of SFCs (Kirwan, 2006; Brunori et al., 2011; Maye, 2013).

Most of these socioeconomic analyses, however, do not develop the economic dimension to the same extent as other general 'socio-economic' characteristics (Roep and Wiskerke, 2012). Indeed, although Hinrichs, in 2000, in line with the notion of social embeddedness as developed by Block (1993), proposed to qualify alternative food networks through 'marketness' (the relevance of price consideration) and 'instrumentalism' (the importance of individual motivations), the works which have followed tend to focus on inter-personal relations between producers and consumers (Sage, 2003; Chiffolleau, 2009). They thus lead mostly to broad economic claims about the contribution of SFCs to additional income and employment in rural regions, providing new resources for local economies, enabling synergies with other regional economic activities, and often favouring increased job satisfaction and organisational capacity within rural communities (Roep and Wiskerke, 2006; Tregear, 2011). In assessing local food initiatives in Canada and their transformative capacity from a social economics perspective, Connelly et al. (2016), for instance, overlooked strict economic processes, such as the definition of prices in SFCs. However, from the consumers' perspective, prices, as a reflection of access to food, are a key element to consider, even for those who care about food security and nutritional health within alternative food schemes (Dowler et al., 2011). Hebinck et al. (2015) thus state that the rich literature on alternative agri-food networks has shown its analytical and theoretical limits by its lack of market analysis. This literature still focuses mainly on community building as an outcome of the re-socialisation and re-spatialisation of food (the two dimensions of Renting et al., 2003). However, according to Hebinck et al., the 'crucial point is the creation of new markets'. We could add: what do we expect from these new markets? Do they really set up 'new' economic models? In a micro-economic perspective focused on farms, indeed, some works point out that the economic benefits of SFCs are not obvious. These chains are not always profitable for farmers, especially when the total working hours are taken into consideration (Capt and Vawresky, 2014). Moreover, when SFCs can procure a fixed, decent and, in some cases, higher income (Schmit et al., 2016), it can also represent difficult labour conditions and a low quality of life for farmers, something that has been termed 'self-exploitation' (Galt, 2013). While an excessively narrow economic vision of SFCs, focused on the financial dimension, would not allow for this issue to be understood, the social dimension must still be put in perspective with concrete economic characteristics. More connexions have to be developed with economists using input-output models to measure the potential 'ripple effect' of these SFCs' economic activities in the local or regional economy (job creation, income growth, or increased tax revenue...), especially given that these works also highlight the importance of collecting appropriate data (Henneberry et al., 2009; Schmit et al., 2016).

A growing number of works thus propose to both question the strict economic components of SFCs and to deepen the interplay between the economic and the social aspects. New research is developed to analyse the co-production of value in innovative organisational arrangements around regional or local food, as food hubs (Berti and Mulligan, 2016) or mid-scale chains (Stevenson et al., 2011; Fleury et al., 2016), especially for procuring school food, or CSAs in expansion (Le Velly and Dufeu, 2016). These cases are often assessed or discussed with regard to the notion of values-based chains (Conner et al., 2011), thus enlarging the scope of interest to non-economic values. They also revive the previous debate on 'hybrid systems', not only showing how these mid-scale SFCs combine conventional and alternative attributes, but also deepening the economic issues (Le Velly and Dufeu, 2016).

Nevertheless, the development of a SFC, and its economic organisation in particular, necessarily induces choices, negotiation between different values, compromises between economic and non-economic objectives, and even sacrifices. These aspects have been explored in this literature on SFCs

less than their final result, which has been studied as values-based chains or hybrid systems. In line with previous works addressing the interplay between the economic and the social aspects in SFCs, yet with closer attention to the social processes through which the SFC's economic orientation, practices and characteristics are discussed, shaped and possibly maintained or transformed as an alternative model, we thus propose a specific analytical framework to capture the social construction of new economic models in SFCs.

3. SFCs as economic organizations: a combination of lines of research

Although recent works on SFCs both address the interplay between the economic and the social aspects, and economic issues, more attention must be paid to their social construction, especially regarding the economic dimension. SFCs must be further analysed as economic organisations in which basic economic features such as prices, margins, governance structure, etc. are defined and negotiated throughout their trajectory. To capture their potential as 'new' economic models, new criteria must also be looked at, from ones which are important for the actors themselves to others which may be instrumental in evaluating and illustrating the conditions under which the systems can replicate. An adequate framework is required to analyse the social processes through which various actors organise themselves over time into an economic structure capable of coordinating different values systems and to address, and produce different types of wealth.

Both economics and sociology have made major efforts in theorising economic organisations beyond the Walrasian view of market equilibrium. Among the most prominent examples, the New Institutional Economics (NIE) approach finds its roots in Coase's classic "The nature of the firm" (Coase, 1937) - and in the subsequent contribution by Alchian and Demsetz (1972) -, as well as in Williamson's (2002) relatively recent research programme on governance structure. It pioneered the incorporation of social and legal norms into economic analysis. However, NIE does not take into account the plurality of values in economic activities and remains weak in understanding the process of the social construction of economic organisations (White, 1981). Instead, it focuses on the optimal governance structure (market or hierarchy) for specific contexts. To overcome this limitation and to analyse the social construction of economic models in SFCs, we propose combining the New Economic Sociology (NES) and Convention Theory approaches. This combination – while still rare – holds promise for assessing economic organisations (Favereau and Lazega, 2002; Jagd, 2007). In doing so, we use NES and Convention Theory in a different angle from what has been done in previous works on SFCs. Moreover, as alternative economic models are at stake, we propose to enrich this combination with inputs from Social and Solidarity Economics.

NES is mostly known through the works of Granovetter who – prior to Block –, revitalised the notion of 'embeddedness' originally proposed by Polanyi (1944) from his research on the labour market in the 1970s (Granovetter, 1973). As we noted in the literature review, this notion appeared as particularly relevant to analyse the interplay between the economic and the social aspects in alternative food networks, as well as to highlight, or to relativize, the strong connection of these networks with close inter-personal ties (Hinrichs, 2000; Chiffolleau, 2009). More broadly, in NES, economic actions, as with every action, are considered to be embedded in social structures, and to come naturally with non-economic objectives. Regarding our research question, above all, NES assumes that economic organisations emerge from social relationships, including interpersonal relationships, and that social relationships make organisations evolve, as sources of resources and constraints, thus shaping specific –

and not systematically optimal – practices and rules (Granovetter, 1985). Such a perspective pushes the analysis of the social construction of economic organisations towards the analysis of the role of the social interpersonal relationships in their (innovative) trajectory. It also highlights the types of relationships from which alternative economic models are shaped. Nevertheless, NES does not pay close attention to values, although they are specific resources or constraints around which economic actors may disagree, debate, and find compromises in order to coordinate their actions. Convention Theory allows these challenges in the life of the economic organisations to be captured and the compromises between different conventions which underlie the economic coordination to be clarified.

As previously mentioned, Convention Theory has also been used in the literature on agro-food systems (Ponte, 2016), including farmers' markets (Kirwan, 2006), generally to describe different kinds of SFCs using Boltanski and Thévenot's classification of 'conventions' (2001): market, industrial, domestic, etc. Conventions consist here of collective representations, shared systems of values, used by actors to justify as well as to evaluate economic actions. Beyond this application, this theory is more broadly a way to understand the process of coordination between actors, carrying different values, in the construction of economic organisations (Gomez and Jones, 2000): conventions are also shared systems of values mobilised or produced to solve coordination problems between different economic actors in an uncertain environment (Young, 1996). They continually move as economic life regularly encounters situations in which actors learn and evolve, facing trade-offs between various values when regarding especially the quality of goods and exchange relationships. These challenging moments lead either to conflict or to compromise which implies a process of negotiating and reconsidering conventions (Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2005) from 'what is suitable' for each one (Thévenot, 1990). When challenging moments occur, the process of negotiation and the compromise that emerges inform us, beyond the actors' participation, of who the privileged actors are, what their priorities are, and how they apply them concretely.

While NES and Convention Theory both recognize that economic and social dimensions are intertwined in an economic organisation, Social and Solidarity Economics allows research to move forward when 'alternative economic models' are concerned. Indeed, practitioners and scholars of this applied field of research advocate assessing economic activities also through 'new indicators of wealth', which enlarge the economic objectives beyond conventional attributes (fair trade beyond turnover...), express social goals (well-being, justice, equity, etc.) and design an expanded vision of the economy (Gadrey and Jany-Catrice, 2006). In the case of an economic organisation, such a perspective calls for the embedded practices and the rules through which both larger economic and social ends are targeted, negotiated and achieved by its actors, to be taken into account.

By combining these lines of research and following an economic ethnography perspective (Henrich et al., 2004), we describe the construction of two SFCs considered as economic organisations: an open-air market in France, and a partnership between an agricultural cooperative and several GAS in Italy. We analyse the social construction of the two SFCs in terms of practices and rules embedded in interpersonal relations, and forged from the challenges and the compromises between conventions. We focus on how actors organise their economic activities and collectively draw up an alternative economic model of organisation, in which different values are discussed, various conventions are mobilised, several kinds of wealth are expected, produced and/or shared between the different stakeholders (producers, consumers, intermediaries), including external members indirectly involved or affected by the SFC (e.g. local citizens, public institutions, researchers and so forth).

We selected these SFCs for two main reasons: first of all, they imply traditional economic organisations (an open-air market in France and an agricultural cooperative in Italy), suitable to explore some of the paths through which SFCs can produce alternative economic models from conventional structures. Secondly, we had the opportunity to observe these two cases for several years, from the beginning (and with direct intervention in the French case), which enabled us to better capture the relations which were behind the economic dimension, and especially to pay close attention to consumer participation. Our analysis thus relies on longitudinal case studies, based on i) interviews with stakeholders and other concerned actors, at different stages in the trajectory of the organisation, ii) participatory observation during meetings or social events involving the organisation, and iii) secondary data processing (internal reports, communication tools, articles in newspapers...).

4. Two stories towards a ‘new economy’

4.1. Renewing the traditional open-air market economic pattern: the Grabels market case

‘Grabels market’ is an open-air market created in 2008 in the small town of Grabels (7,000 inhabitants) located in the suburbs of the city of Montpellier (500,000 inhabitants) in the south of France. By implementing a market in Grabels, the newly elected local authorities (municipality) aimed at reviving its dormant peri-urban town, giving middle to low-income inhabitants the opportunity to obtain fresher and better products at reasonable prices, while supporting local small-scale sustainable agriculture. The local authorities thus did not intend to implement either a farmers’ market or an organic one, the former seen as unable to cover demand all year long², the latter as too elitist. Interested by the works of a researcher from the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) concerning short food supply chains, the local authorities contacted this researcher and decided to develop a ‘hybrid’ open-air market, which both mixed producers and resellers, and encouraged short food supply chains and local products. The project also started with the help of a civic association linked with the local authorities through political ties. The latter favoured high licensing standards concerning ‘sustainable agriculture’: small-scale agriculture from the neighbouring countryside, seasonal products, no GMOs, no industrial production or industrial processes, ‘almost organic’ agriculture, a short distance between the production site and Grabels, ‘respect for quality’, ‘respect for consumers’, affordable prices, as well as decent working conditions. However, implementing the market was challenging and required its first compromises between ‘what was suitable’ (Thévenot, 1990) for the local authorities and what emerged as feasible locally: faced with the difficulty of finding small-scale local producers from the neighbouring countryside, who were both few in number and already selling their entire production in other short food supply chains, the initiative had to start with middle-sized producers engaged in *agriculture raisonnée*³ from the plains, seeking diversification, as well accepting the inclusion of intermediaries. However, the condition remained that the majority of their goods had to come from their own production, for farmers, or directly from local farms, for resellers. This compulsory requirement is not commonplace in traditional open-air markets in France. Moreover, in a region historically specialised in wine growing, the local authorities realised the need to allow for longer distances to procure meat, and extending it from the initial target of 30 km to 150 km.

² Farmers’ markets in France are distinguished from traditional open-air markets by prohibiting resale, which limits the capacity of farmers to procure everything that the consumers want. Farmers’ markets in France are thus mainly seasonal or one-time markets.

³ Method of farming in which phytosanitary treatments are implemented after observation and only if justified.

The local authorities, nevertheless, decided to draft a charter to be signed before entering the market, as an 'investment of form' (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991), in Convention Theory's terms, defining the minimal criteria to be respected. Anxious to meet the consumers' expectations, the mayor also decided to share the responsibility of managing the market with a committee bringing together the local authorities, certain consumers, and sellers along with collegial governance. He insisted on selecting 'ordinary consumers', 'who were representative of everyone', 'who usually shop in supermarkets' and who were not known for their specific involvement in sustainable food practices (Chessel, 2012). The committee was thus composed of three colleges (local authorities, consumers, sellers), with three members per college, and two 'experts', consisting of the researcher from the INRA and the civic association. Its role was to assess and validate the demands of new suppliers to enter the market, to ensure their compliance with the charter, as well as to take all the needed decisions to ensure that the market functioned properly.

In 2010 the market faced two new challenges: first, a number of consumers complained about the prices being 'too high'. The committee decided to compare prices between the market and other points of sale. The discussion regarding the data collected highlighted that consumers of the committee did not take the origin and the quality of products into account, thereby comparing 'incomparable products'. The discussion was an opportunity for consumers within the committee to learn how prices are set, what is behind a price in terms of farming systems, production costs, and access to subsidies. It was also an opportunity for sellers to better understand their customers' economic constraints. One consumer from the committee, however, proposed two solutions, along the lines of the market convention (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991): to open the market to more suppliers, in order to increase competition and decrease prices; and to sell more second-class products that were less expensive. Indeed, in order to make the market viable for sellers, the committee had initially decided to propose one seller per product. The re-emergence of one of the founding rules of mainstream economy, competition, was however kept in check by new knowledge acquired by the local authorities and the consumers within the committee: they were now aware of the difficulties of the producers participating in the market, representatives of 'middle-agriculture' which perform less and less in long food supply chains (Lyson et al., 2008). The collective decision was thus to improve the price comparison⁴ and to communicate about the quality-price ratio instead of reverting to the competitive rules which are the norm in other open-air markets in France. At this stage, from the political economy viewpoint for enterprises by Convention Theory, the farmers and their farms became, for the others, 'common goods' (Eymard-Duvernay, 2002) which had to be preserved, rather than actors with opportunistic strategies (which would involve setting high prices in response to a high demand). This thus illustrated how to enact, and not only claim, a 'civic convention'. The committee also decided against asking for second-category products, which were considered as disrespectful to producers making progress towards higher quality products. This could also be understood as the introduction of the domestic convention. While higher than in other short food chains⁵, however, the use of the market remained low among low-income individuals.

⁴ Which showed that the market was, on average, a little less expensive than the supermarket regarding a basket of basic products (3 kilos of mixed fruits and vegetables, 4 slices of ham, 2 hamburger steaks, 6 eggs, 0,5 kilo of bread) of same level of quality (middle-range), from local origin (in market case) or from France (in supermarket), and in high season of production (for fruits and vegetables).

⁵ According to a national consumer survey in which the INRA took part in April 2013. This higher use may be explained by the fact that while low-income consumers from Grabels still put forward the price as the main disincentive to buy more products in the market, they did not stress the market as 'elitist'. The national survey indeed showed that

Secondly, some consumers developed mistrust regarding the origin of the products, with a rumour circulating that the products actually came from wholesale markets (as in most traditional open-air markets in France). The local authorities had the idea to signal, through colours on the product labels on each stand, where the products came from, and the number of intermediaries involved. As consumers of the committee became more knowledgeable, they proposed to further add information concerning food quality on the labels. The researcher from the INRA helped to conceive the experimentation, interested by its general scope in a national context of confusion between short food supply chains and organic food⁶. The implementation of this labelling system nevertheless created tension between those (including the civic association) arguing that short chains had to function on trust, and others requesting objective supervision by an independent external organisation. The researcher suggested implementing a local participatory guarantee system, such as the ones developed in other countries like Brazil and certain European states (Loconto and Hatanaka, 2017). While promising, the idea however remains however difficult to implement in these countries, either because control is a touchy issue or require high skill levels. In Grabels, the committee faced the same difficulties. In practice, the most efficient solution was the social control amongst sellers themselves: each one had to label his/her own products, while other sellers, observing each other in the marketplace, could later inform the committee about any 'inconsistencies'. While in this practice one could see a return to the 'market law', the committee itself evoked the emergence of a co-joint responsibility concerning the market and in building its reputation (Akerlof, 1970). Moreover, the labelling system appeared as a source of knowledge exchange within the committee about added value share prior to the point of sale: for all products on resale, coming either from short or long supply chains, sellers were invited to let the others know about the price paid to the producer at the beginning of the chain. Green salads were taken as example: producers are paid about €0.20 in long chains, €0.60 in short chains, and consumers pay €0.80 to €1.20 in each case. The committee thus proposed to publish this information in the city's newspaper, which was accepted by the mayor who took the occasion to endorse and develop a discourse on 'food democracy', first evoked by the researcher. For Grabels' inhabitants, short food supply chains with one intermediary thus appeared as not only a process of buying and reselling, but as a form of economic cooperation amongst local farmers or between local farmers and resellers, compared with resale of goods procured in long supply chains that is common in French open-air markets. At the same time, by validating resale from long supply chains, consumers understood they helped alleviate economic risks for producers, providing them a source of stability in their business model. Fostering trust and the acknowledgement of specific individuals, the labelling system thus reinforced the domestic convention in the market, when other certification forms may instead have favoured the industrial convention (Sylvander, 1997). From 2018, this participatory labelling system is promoted by the general direction of INRA and is in the process of spreading to about 30 territories in France.

4.2. Expanding the GAS model: the Adesso Pasta! project in Italy

the elitist image of short food supply chains, maintained by the media in France, was a major disincentive for low-income consumers to shop in short food chains (Loisel et al., 2013).

⁶ The national consumer survey conducted in 2013, mentioned in the previous footnote, confirmed this statement: 50% of people purchasing in short food supply chains thought that the products they purchased in these chains were organic.

The Adesso Pasta! (AP!) project is the result of cooperation between *La Terra e il Cielo*⁷ (T&C), an agricultural cooperative located in the Marche region in Central Italy, producing high-quality organic pasta, and 50 GAS, equally distributed between seven regions of Northern and Central Italy. This cooperation was designed through a long participatory process: during the 2008-2009 campaign, T&C launched an experiment aimed at making costs transparent to its customers, while setting a stable and fair price for farmers, thereby freeing them from market uncertainties⁸. At the same time, T&C had exchanges with two GAS in Northern Italy about the possibility of involving them in their production activities more closely in order to develop a more stable collaborative relationship between the parties. This interaction resulted in the idea to jointly promote the AP! project, involving the two GAS and the cooperative.

The project developed around defining all the operational and financial aspects related to wheat cultivation and processing as well as pasta distribution. This cooperation progressively evolved into a 'civic convention' (in the sense of Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991): in 2010, the cooperative and the two GAS decided to join in a "Pact of Solidarity Economy". Through this formal agreement, the parties aimed at jointly carrying out a fair supply relationship, inspired by the principles of price transparency and fairness of payments, into the broader frame of principles of Social and Solidarity Economics. The pact established a commitment to purchase a certain amount of production during the year, partially paid in advance, at a price agreed upon among the parties. The pact also established that a small percentage of the price (involving producers and consumers in equal measure) would be set aside aimed at creating a fund to support solidarity economy projects (*Solidarity and Future Fund*), not necessarily in the cooperative territory, thereby strengthening the civic convention under which it was founded. The pact was presented at a national scale within the Italian Solidarity Economy Network (RES) and, more specifically, to the other GAS that were already customers of T&C. Twenty-nine of these GAS joined the project and started to manage their relationships with the cooperative through the pact.

Over the years, the definition of the economic components of the pact has been subject to refinement, hand in hand with the growing interest in cost transparency as a basis for learning and cooperation. The first step was still to define a fair price for the farmers' grain, sufficient to properly remunerate all the production factors (including the cost of farmers' labour), without depending on global markets trends, and to share unexpected difficulties. The costs were estimated by taking into account the variety of situations among farmers (e.g. different size and setting) and evaluated collectively by the two parties (GAS and T&C) at the end of each cycle to consider any adjustment needed. The price of pasta was then calculated through a detailed analysis of all the costs related to the production and distribution stages. Over time, the categories of costs have been expanded to include fixed prices as well, making consumers more aware about how the cooperative is managed.

In addition to evaluating costs, other aspects were considered as important to the integrity of the pact: i) defining the extent to which economic risks were to be shared; ii) choosing selling solutions more suitable to the GAS organisation (e.g. type of delivery or billing); iii) defining the level of the GAS' involvement in managing the delivery activities or, alternatively, the related monetary value to be assigned to T&C (e.g. higher prices for particular packaging requirements; discounts for cooperation in managing delivery). All these aspects well illustrate the effort to optimize the economic components while pursuing the goal of an innovative, close relationship between the two parts. The discussion and

⁷ The cooperative involves about 120 organic cereal farms.

⁸ Those years were characterised by strong price fluctuations, in many cases due to financial speculation.

acceptance of all these points required consumers to better understand the ancillary issues related to production, such as the uncertainty of farming, and some critical aspects of the economic management, such as the cooperative's needs for internal investments. In its turn, and in order to put in practice, through the pact, the idea of re-embedding the production activity into a community dimension, T&C had to 'open the firm' and provide all the information needed to define the solidarity price. Furthermore, T&C and the GAS agreed on the idea of the previously mentioned *Solidarity and Future Fund*. From 2008 to 2015 the fund assigned about 20,000 euros to solidarity economy initiatives. The beneficiaries were selected collectively by the GAS and T&C during the annual assembly. This illustrates how the construction of the special economic relationship and the particular management of the value created are grounded on shared learning, in turn enabled by closeness and social embeddedness.

At the end of 2015, the growing complexity of managing the pact, due to the increased number of participants from different geographical locations, as well as to the demanding activities of revising the agreement, led to the decision to entrust this task to a third party, responsible for mediating the relationship between the many GAS and T&C. *CO-energia – Collective Projects of Solidarity Economy*, a second-level association established in 2010, was chosen for this purpose. In addition to promoting awareness on social and solidarity economy, the mission of this association is to manage supply chains potentially operating at a national scale, thus with a level of complexity not manageable by a single GAS. The presidents of the first two GAS involved in the AP! project were among its founders.

Despite the loss of the GAS direct participation, the newly configured relationship with the cooperative reinforced the project: *CO-energia* assumed a key role in guaranteeing the functioning of the social pact, managing its complexity and overcoming some weaknesses that had emerged over time. Among these there were the cooperative's difficulties in meeting the increasingly diversified requests from the GAS, each of them managing its pact by adapting it to specific exigencies. Another problem related to a certain irregularity in the purchasing volumes by some GAS, with the consequent weakening of the pact in economic terms. To overcome this deficiency, particular emphasis was put on the GAS' purchasing commitment by introducing a minimum amount per year. In this process, one might see a return to the market convention, to face a certain decline in the civic convention. Convention Theory also allows this to be understood as a new compromise, in addition to the previous one involving certain GAS (namely the local ones) whose members used to combine the civic and domestic conventions, the latter underlying the specific requests to 'their' cooperative. Although the pact was tightened up, it was complemented by an increased effort to make the terms of cooperation even clearer.

The new civic-market-domestic compromise further evolved in 2017, with the creation of the *Adesso Pasta!* trademark, jointly owned between T&C and Co-energia - a choice that emphasizes the significant cooperation around a new economic pattern between an enterprise and a civil society organisation. The launch of the trademark was accompanied by the following statement, which encapsulates the willingness to actualise a socially embedded alternative model aimed at social purposes while still managing economic aspects: "*It is with pride and satisfaction that we communicate this step forward, which goes beyond the logic of the pure "free market", anticipates new logics and pathways of economy from the bottom, aligns and integrate the roles so far distinguished of consumers, producers and traders, and contributes to the idea of a community that takes care of common goods and is committed to building a different world*"⁹.

The experience gained through the pact and the related label, where the latter is conceived as a tool to spread knowledge of this innovative model, is more recently leading to further consolidate the

⁹ Francesco Tampellini - CO-energia President; Bruno Sebastianelli - T&C President (press release).

approach, giving rise to new, shared commitments along the supply chain. It is the case with the project to use the mechanism of the Solidarity Fund to finance participatory research and facilitation activities needed to experiment with wheat varieties and populations more suitable to organic farming but which are not currently available on the conventional seed market. The objective is to make consumers aware and available to support, through the economic valorisation of the final product (pasta), the whole farming-food system and its approach to genetic resources. Again, one can grasp here the willingness to combine the management of economic aspects with the pursuit of social objectives and, in doing so, prioritising (civic) collective over individual interests. The adoption of the pact model has been assuming a key role in the Italian Solidarity Economy Network as one of the most advanced form of cooperation between producers and consumers.

5. Discussion and perspectives

5.1. *Towards a 'moral economy'?*

The comparison of the two stories shows how the development of new economic patterns is embedded in social relations, which provide – in both cases – the ground for trust, transparency, mutual acknowledgment and learning. These latter aspects reflect social ends that are (or become) important for the actors, while at the same time enacting the principle of new economic models that address new indicators of wealth, and designing new types of 'market relations' between farmers, consumers and intermediaries (Gadrey and Jany-Catrice, 2006). On the other hand, trust, transparency mutual acknowledgement and learning are also factors for how the two economic organisations perform, as pointed out in New Economic Sociology (NES) (Uzzi, 1996): in the both cases, economic activities generate a growing profit¹⁰ for the suppliers (farmers, resellers, the cooperative) and quality products are theoretically affordable for all types of consumers. Apart from specific market relations, the two stories highlight a set of practices and rules reflecting how the economic models that have been built in the two cases, while different, mix alternative and conventional economic considerations, as well as social concerns. In this sense, the two stories allow a set of criteria to be defined from which alternative economic models can be described and assessed in, and from, short food chains (see table 1).

Defining this set of criteria based on the trajectory of the two cases gives us the opportunity to return to previous works on SFCs, mentioned in our literature review, which concerned the construction of new supply chains, and stressed the need to coordinate governance, embedding, and marketing (Roep and Wiskerke, 2012). Looking further into this coordination by combining NES with Convention Theory, our cases show how 'dis-embedding' the economic pattern from personal relations through 'investments in form' (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991) in governance or marketing – such as the minimum purchasing amount in the Italian Pact or the labelling system in France – is important not only to achieve the economic objectives but also to re-embed the project in ties more suitable to economic performance (Grossetti, 2008): from disengagement to reengagement through the modified Italian Pact; from mistrust to trust through the French labelling system.

Moreover, as in Civic Food Networks (CFN) (Renting et al., 2012), the new economic patterns developed in the two cases are characterised by the blurring of the distinction between producer and consumer roles as being at opposite ends of the chain. Their common actions related to food (comparison of

¹⁰ Due to the attachment and increase of faithful consumers and to the reduction of costs thanks to a better knowledge of them and to new cooperation relations favoured by the economic organisation.

prices, calculation of costs...) set up shared goals and supported the gradual shift from utilitarian-private visions to economic models based on solidarity and the defence of common goods, in line with processes of moralization of economies. Their discussions and negotiations about prices, in particular, are central to establishing a new economic model enacting social sustainability values, as in the case of Values Based Supply Chains (VBSC) (Stevenson and Pirog, 2008). Farmers are no longer price takers, as in conventional chains, nor are they just price makers as often occurs in direct selling; in turn, consumers are aware of the meanings behind the prices they agree to pay. In the Italian case, the price is the result of intense interaction between the cooperative and the consumers; moreover, it includes a contribution to external solidarity economy projects, showing that producers and consumers both agree to accept other 'costs' to pursue social goals. In the French case, faced with mistrust, farmers had to explain how they set their prices. This transparency made the consumers and the local authorities legitimise the prices set by farmers, as a way not only to cover production costs but also to support 'middle-agriculture' from the civic convention perspective. In that sense, common economic principles emerge from the two cases, consisting of building a business partnership based on normative values and economic concerns as in VBSC (Laursen and Noe, 2017) and on suitable coordination mechanisms (Bloom and Hinrichs, 2011). In that sense, the new economic models produced from these two SFCs may be further discussed in the perspective of a 'moral economy' as debated in the Anglo-Saxon literature to define exchanges 'justified in relation to social or moral sanctions, as opposed to the operation of free market forces' (Galt, 2013). However, the specific manner in which new practices and rules are put in place in each case (see table 1), under-researched in VBSC, also appears as a main issue in the development of a new (food) economy which should take into account and respect specific contexts and diversity (Blay-Palmer and Donald, 2006), as well as different sets of principles as highlighted in Social and Solidarity Economics (Laville et al., 2015).

Table 1. Comparison of the two SFCs through the 'new economic model' analytical criteria.

Criteria of analysis	Grabels market	Adesso Pasta! Project
<i>'Market relationship'</i>	Trust, transparency, mutual learning and acknowledgment	
<i>Governance and decision-making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collegial governance committee • Participatory guarantee system • Sellers oversee each other's consistency and transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee including the cooperative and the GAS, then a committee including the cooperative and a nation-wide civil society organisation where the GAS take part in the internal governance
<i>Price setting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producers as price-makers initially, though validated by consumers and local authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint construction, based on fairness and cost transparency
<i>Value sharing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labelling system favouring transparency on margins in different forms of resale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prices including both farms' and the cooperative's costs • Contribution to Solidarity and Future Fund
<i>Risk sharing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance by consumers of longer supply chains to alleviate the economic risks for producers (guarantee of sale and turnover, even if their production is low) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prices also including fixed costs and pre-payment by consumers • Minimum purchasing amount • Pact
<i>Managing internal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One seller per product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-door and pooling of benefits

<i>competition</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New membership dependent on the viability of each stand 	through the cooperative
<i>Economic accessibility</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective evaluation of the affordability of the products • Consideration by consumers of the quality-price ratio rather than the price alone • However, still few consumers with limited resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite the careful evaluation of costs and the contribution to the Solidarity and Future Fund, affordability of the final product

5.2. Enlarging the field of food democracy: collective learning and inclusion of non-specialists in the decision-making process

Delving deeper into the models, these two trajectories highlight how new economic patterns are jointly built by different actors, including individuals who are not specialists in agriculture, food or economics (e.g. 'ordinary' consumers and representatives of the local authority in the French case). They also show how the participation of certain actors may pose challenges to the development of an alternative economic model. For instance, in the Italian case, the possibility for the GAS members to take part in producers' activity resulted in an excessive level of freedom of choice, creating difficulties for the collective project and leading to the adoption of a new rule (minimum purchasing amount).

These results thus open a second line of discussion, concerning participation, first in relation to previous research on alternative food systems. CSAs in North America and equivalent systems in Europe (AMAP in France, GAS in Italy...) are often presented as examples of participatory food systems in which consumers take part in the socio-economic organisation of the chain while sacrificing their personal preferences (no choice for what is delivered) (Goodman et al., 2012). In these systems, however, consumers most often abide by the rules and principles set by their skilled founders¹¹. This puts the capacity of non-specialists to build new models of organisation or to take part in the process of their development into question, especially when tackling complex domains such as the economy.

This perspective addresses more general works on 'participation' in collective actions, pointing out how this process may be reduced to manipulation or assimilation when individuals lack the skills or relevant knowledge (Friedberg, 1996). Considering collective actions aimed at developing food democracy, Hassanein thus stresses that education in agriculture and cooking, as well as in the culture and practice of democracy, is needed in order to empower consumers to take part in developing solutions to common problems (Hassanein, 2003). However, in the Grabels market case discussed in this paper, comparing the prices of 'incomparable products' (with different origins and production methods) by 'unskilled' consumers results a structuring moment in the joint construction of a new economic pattern by favouring an in-depth learning process, even for the farmers. Similarly, in the AP! project, the involvement of consumers in considering all the aspects of production processes affecting price becomes an important opportunity of learning which strengthens pre-existing favourable attitudes. Nevertheless, from a growth perspective, consumer involvement in management, while a distinctive feature of these new organisational models, "may pose new challenges, such as the dilemma with

¹¹ In France, the AMAP movement was jointly built with the NGO ATTAC, well known for its opposition to the mainstream economy and its proposal to apply taxes on international financial transactions (Zimmer, 2016).

respect to the need for greater professionalism and efficiency, and the will to explore new conceptions of enterprise, which may include also the societal actors” (Rossi, 2017, p. 11). Mixed participation of both specialists and non-specialists is thus a complex element for proper management but is an essential issue to implement a new vision of SFCs as economic organisations which create added value by embodying values and promoting learning.

General research work on participation in collective action has also shown that both individual and collective interests must be considered for the development and success of collective action (Friedberg, 1996). The decline of cooperatives in Western Europe can in fact be partly interpreted as a failure in considering both these levels of interests (Touzard and Draperi, 2003). This calls into further questioning the process through which food goes beyond individual interests and becomes a ‘common good’ (Eymard-Duvernay, 2005; Vivero-Pol, 2017), related to other common goods such as agriculture, the landscape and territory. The Solidarity and Future Fund in the AP! project, dedicated to financially supporting local projects that preserve local resources, is an interesting concrete economic tool to foster this process which results, through shared learning, in an alignment of individualities around the collective interest.

6. Conclusion

The economic dimension of SFCs, within a European context marked by a profusion of initiatives aimed at bringing producers and consumers closer, still feeds a debate focused on its alterity (Le Velly, 2017), leaving its social construction under-researched. From an original framework, based on New Economic Sociology and Convention Theory, enriched as well by Social and Solidarity Economics, we have analysed the social construction of two ‘alternative’ economic models in two cases of SFCs. We described how new practices and rules were designed by social interactions – especially knowledge exchanges – through trajectories comprised of challenges and adaptations. Based on the two case studies, we have proposed a set of criteria from which alternative economic models could be described and assessed, in SFCs, and potentially in other food chains. Their two trajectories also lead us to explore the modalities and challenges of participation in the construction of new food economies, thus opening a new dimension for food democracy. The two case studies thus show that there is no single right way to organise the new food economy, although the articulation of different capacities and perspectives is a significant factor which may contribute to uncovering and understanding what is behind the food economy, especially from the perspective of common goods.

Focusing on the social construction of SFCs as economic organisations, our contribution finally returns to the initial debate: in the interactionist and constructivist perspective we propose, the ‘hybridity’ of short food systems highlighted in other works is re-conceived as the result of the interaction among actors with different interests and as solutions to economic coordination problems found through participation. Still exploratory, our work thus calls for further research to compare diverse ‘hybrid’ SFCs and to analyse how the participation of actors in the economic dimension may induce a higher transformative potential, even when participation is combined with conventional rules. Considering that SFCs are diversifying across Europe and now include the mainstream industry (Kneafsey, 2015), their hybridity, as a feature, may be a less important aspect to be assessed than the transformative paths that they are able to induce.

References

- Akerlof G. A., 1970. The Market for Lemons: Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 84 (3), 488–500.
- Alchian A., Demsetz H., 1972. Production, information costs, and economic organization. *The American economic review*, 62(5), 777-795.
- Berti G., Mulligan C., 2016. Competitiveness of Small Farms and Innovative Food Supply Chains: The Role of Food Hubs in Creating Sustainable Regional and Local Food Systems. *Sustainability*, 8, 616.
- Blay-Palmer A., Donald B., 2006. A tale of three tomatoes. The new food economy in Toronto, Canada. *Economic geography*, 82(4), 383-399.
- Block F. L., 1990. *Postindustrial possibilities: a critique of economic discourse*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bloom J. D., Hinrichs C. C., 2016. Informal and formal mechanisms of coordination in hybrid food value chains. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 1(4), 143-156.
- Boltanski L., Thévenot L., 1991. *De la justification*. Paris, Gallimard.
- Booth S., Coveney J., 2015. Food Democracy: From consumer to food citizen. London, Edition Springer, collection "Public Health".
- Brunori G., Rossi A., Malandrini V., 2011. Co-producing transition: Innovation processes in farms adhering to solidarity-based purchase groups (Gas) in Tuscany, Italy. *Int. J. Sociol. Agric. Food*, 18, 28-53.
- Constance, D., Renard, M.C., Rivera-Ferre, M.G. (ed.), 2014. Alternative Agrifood Movements: Patterns of Convergence and Divergence. *Research in Rural Sociology and Development*, 21.
- Capt D., Wavresky P., 2014. Determinants of direct-to-consumer sales on French farms. *Revue d'Études en Agriculture et Environnement*, 95(3), 351 -377.
- Chessel M.-E., 2012. *Histoire de la consommation*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Chiffolleau Y., 2009. From politics to cooperation: the dynamics of embeddedness in alternative food supply chains. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 49 (3), 218-235.
- Chiffolleau Y., 2017. Dynamique des identités collectives dans le changement d'échelle des circuits courts alimentaires. *Revue française de socio-économie*, 18, 123-141.
- Coase R. H., 1937. The nature of the firm. *Economica*, 4(16), 386-405.
- Connelly S., Markey S., Roseland M., 2016. Bridging sustainability and the social economy: Achieving community transformation through local food initiatives. *Critical Social Policy*, 31, 308.
- Conner, D. S., Nowak, A., Berkenkamp, J., Feenstra, G. W., Van Soelen Kim, J., Liquori, T., & Hamm, M. W. (2011). Value chains for sustainable procurement in large school districts: Fostering partnerships. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 1(4), 55–68.
- Deverre C., Lamine C., 2010. Les systèmes agroalimentaires alternatifs. Une revue de travaux anglophones en sciences sociales. *Economie Rurale*, 317, 57-73.
- Dowler E., Kneafsey M., Lambie H., Inman A., Collier R., 2011. Thinking about 'food security': engaging with UK consumers. *Critical Public Health*, 21(4), 403-416.
- Eymard-Duvernay F., 2002. Conventionalist approaches to enterprise. In Favereau O., Lazega E. (eds), *Conventions and structures in economic organizations: markets, networks and hierarchies*, Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 60-78.
- Eymard-Duvernay F., Favereau O., Orléan A., Salais R., Thévenot L., 2005. Pluralist integration in the economic and social sciences: The economy of conventions. *Post-autistic economics review*, 34(30), 22-40.
- Favereau O., Lazega E., 2002. *Conventions and structures in economic organization. Markets, Networks and Hierarchy*. Cheltenham, UK, Northampton, USA: Edward Elgar.
- Fleury, P., Lev, L., Brives, H., Chazoule, C., Desolé, M., 2016. Developing Mid-Tier Supply Chains (France) and Values-Based Food Supply Chains (USA): A Comparison of Motivations, Achievements, Barriers and Limitations. *Agriculture*, 6 (3) [online].

- Friedberg E., 1996. *Power and rules: The organisational dynamics of collective action*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Gadrey J., Jany-Catrice F., 2006. *The new indicators of well-being and development*. New York: Palgrave/McMillan.
- Galt R. E., 2013. The Moral Economy Is a Double-edged Sword: Explaining Farmers' Earnings and Self-exploitation in Community-Supported Agriculture. *Economic Geography*, 89(4), 341-365.
- Goodman D., DuPuis M., Goodman M.K., 2012. *Alternative food networks. Knowledge, practice, and politics*. London: Routledge.
- Gomez P. Y., Jones B. C., 2000. Crossroads-conventions: an interpretation of deep structure in organizations. *Organization Science*, 11(6), 696-708.
- Granovetter M. S., 1973. The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380.
- Granovetter M. S., 1985. Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American journal of sociology*, 91(3), 481-510.
- Grossetti M., 2008. Réseaux sociaux et ressources de médiation dans l'activité économique. *Sciences de la société*, 73, 83-103.
- Hassanein N., 2003. Practicing food democracy: A pragmatic politics of transformation. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 19(1), 77-86.
- Hebinck P.G.M., Ploeg J.D. van der, Schneider S. (Eds.), 2015. *Rural development and the Construction of New Markets*. Abingdon: Oxon.
- Henneberry S. R., Whitacre B., Agustini H. N., 2009. An Evaluation of the Economic Impacts of Oklahoma Farmers' Markets. *Journal of Food Distribution Research*, 40, 64-78.
- Hinrichs C. C., 2000. Embeddedness and local food systems: notes on two types of direct agricultural market. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 16, 3, 295-303.
- Holloway L., Kneafsey M., Venn L., Cox R., Dowler E., Tuomainen H., 2007. Possible food economies: a methodological framework for exploring food production-consumption relationships. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 47, 1-18.
- Jagd S., 2007. Economics of convention and new economic sociology: Mutual inspiration and dialogue. *Current Sociology*, 55(1), 75-91.
- Kirwan J., 2006. The interpersonal world of direct marketing: examining conventions of quality at UK farmers' markets. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22 (3), 301-312.
- Kneafsey M. (dir.), 2015. *EIP-AGRI Focus Group Innovative Short Food Supply Chain management. Final report*. Brussels, European Commission, 80 p.
- Lang T., 1998. Towards a food democracy. In Griffiths S., Wallace J. (eds), *Consuming passions: Cooking and eating in the age of anxiety*, Manchester: Mandolin, 13-24.
- Laursen K. B., Noe E., 2017. The hybrid media of economy and moral: A Luhmannian perspective on value-based-food-chains. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 56, 21-29.
- Laville J.-L., Cattani A. D. (dir.), 2005. *Dictionnaire de l'autre économie*. Paris, Editions Desclée de Brouwer.
- Laville J.-L., Young D. R., Eynaud P., 2015. *Civil Society, the Third Sector and Social Enterprise*. London: Routledge.
- Le Velly R., 2017. *Sociologie des systèmes alimentaires alternatifs. Une promesse de différence*. Paris, Presses des Mines.
- Le Velly R., Dufeu I., 2016. Alternative food networks as "market agencements": exploring their multiple hybridities. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 43, 173-182.
- Loconto A. M., Hatanaka M., 2017. Participatory Guarantee Systems: Alternative Ways of Defining, Measuring, and Assessing 'Sustainability'. *Sociologia ruralis*, 58 (2), 412-432.
- Loisel J-P., François M., Chiffolleau Y., Hérault-Fournier C., Sirieix L., Costa D., 2013. La consommation alimentaire en circuits courts : enquête nationale. Research report, Projet Casdar CODIA, Paris, Gret – INC - INRA.
- Lyson T. A., Stevenson, G. W., Welsh R. (eds), 2008. *Food and the mid-level farm. Renewing an agriculture of the middle*. Cambridge, Mass., London, England: The MIT Press.
- Maye D., 2013. Moving alternative food networks beyond the niche. *Int Jr of Soc of Agr & Food*, 20, 383-389.

- Polanyi K., 1944. *The great transformation: Economic and political origins of our time*. Rinehart: New York.
- Ponte S., 2016. Convention theory in the Anglophone agro-food literature: Past, present and future. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 44, 12-23.
- Renting H., Marsden T, Banks J., 2003. Understanding alternative food networks: exploring the role of short food supply chains in rural development. *Environment and Planning, A*, 35, 393-411.
- Renting H., Schermer M., Rossi A., 2012. Building Food Democracy: Exploring Civic Food Networks and Newly Emerging Forms of Food, Citizenship. *Int. Jnl. of Soc. of Agr. & Food*, 19(3), 289-307.
- Roep D., Wiskerke J. S. C. (eds), 2006. *Nourishing networks: Fourteen lessons about creating sustainable food supply chains*. Doetinchem: Reed Business Information.
- Roep D., Wiskerke J.S.C., 2012. On Governance, Embedding and Marketing: Reflections on the Construction of Alternative Sustainable Food Networks. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, 25(2): 205–221.
- Rossi A., 2017. Beyond Food Provisioning: The Transformative Potential of Grassroots Innovation around Food. *Agriculture*, 7(1), 6.
- Schmit T.M., Jablonski B.B., Mansury Y., 2016. Assessing the Economic Impacts of Local Food System Producers by Scale: A Case Study From New York. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 30(4), 316-328.
- Stevenson, G. W., Clancy, K., King, R., Lev, L., Ostrom, M., & Smith, S. (2011). Midscale food value chains: An introduction. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 1(4), 27–34.
- Stevenson G. W., Pirog R., 2008. Values-based supply chains: Strategies for agrifood enterprises of the middle. In Lyson T.A., Stevenson G.W., Welsh R. (eds), *Food and the Mid-Level Farm: Renewing an Agriculture of the Middle*, Cambridge, UK: MIT Press, UK, 119–143.
- Sylvander B., 1997. Le rôle de la certification dans les changements de régime de coordination : l'agriculture biologique, du réseau à l'industrie. *Revue d'économie industrielle*, 80, 47-66.
- Thévenot L., 1990. L'action qui convient. In Pharo P., Quéré L. (eds), *Les formes de l'action*, Paris, Editions de l'EHESS (Raisons pratiques, 1), p. 39-69.
- Touzard J.-M., Draperi J.-F., 2003. *Les coopératives entre territoires et mondialisation*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Tregear A., 2011. Progressing knowledge in alternative and local food networks: critical reflections and a research agenda. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 27(4), 419-430.
- Uzzi B., 1996. The Sources and Consequences of Embeddedness for the Economic Performance of Organizations: The Network Effect. *American Sociological Review*, 61, 674-698.
- Vivero-Pol J.L., 2017. Food as Commons or Commodity? Exploring the Links between Normative Valuations and Agency in Food Transition. *Sustainability*, 9.
- White H. C., 1981. Where do markets come from? *American journal of sociology*, 87(3), 517-547.
- Williamson O. E., 2002. The theory of the firm as governance structure: from choice to contract. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 16(3), 171-195.
- Young H. P., 1996. The economics of convention. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 10(2), 105-122.
- Zimmer M., 2016. *Mouvements sociaux et économie solidaire. Penser les interactions à travers l'exemple de la consommation*. Thesis in Sociology. Paris: CNAM.