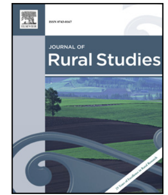
Journal of Rural Studies 76 (2020) 49–57

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Rural Studies

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jrurstud



Social inclusion in an alternative food network: Values, practices and tensions

Estelle Fourat[a,*], Catherine Closson[a], Laurence Holzemer[a], Marek Hudon[a,b]

[a] Centre d'Etudes Economiques et Sociales de l'Environnement (CEESE-ULB), Avenue Jeanne 44 – 1050, Bruxelles, Belgium

[b] Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management (ULB), Belgium

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Alternative food network
Consumer food cooperative
Social inclusion
Food democracy
Equality
Participatory action research

ABSTRACT

The paper explores the challenges faced by a consumer food cooperative to combine social inclusion and embeddedness in its urban environment with the standards of food quality it targets. While the difficulty to make alternative food networks (AFN) socially accessible is well documented in the literature, little is known about the organizational practices to foster inclusion in AFNs. Based on over 100 participant observations of meetings held at the cooperative and food activities with members of community organizations, our research has produced understanding on how a participative process - through collective decisions, exchange of knowledge and commitment to workslots - could facilitate or restrain social inclusion. Results suggest that the promotion of the value of sociocultural equality in access to quality food for the largest number is hindered by differences of food, consumer and participation cultures between members and non-members of the cooperative. The value of sociocultural equality in access to quality food is pragmatically challenged by the practice of social inclusion regarding the food supply and the participation in voluntary work.

1. Introduction

Alternative food networks (AFNs) are generally characterized by short food supply chains (Aubry and Kebir, 2013), close spatial proximity between farmers and consumers, specific retail venues and a sustainable food commitment (Jarosz, 2008). Those emerging food supply chains often aim to offer alternative food markets to standardised industrial food supply systems (Murdoch et al., 2000; Renting et al., 2003; De Bernardi and Tirabeni, 2018). AFNs are hinged on new forms of political association and market governance and are embedded in local social networks (Whatmore et al., 2003; Goodman et al., 2012).

AFNs—as part of a necessary food transition trend—foster social values such as conviviality, knowledge sharing (Chiffoleau et al., 2017), ethical relationships with producers (Goodman and Bryant, 2009; Forssell and Lankoski, 2015), and solidarity with the poorest (Paturel, 2015). However, like any project that strives to deal with sustainability in a global way, AFNs are often hampered by substantial tensions between economic, environmental and social dimensions, especially with regard to social inclusion (De Bernardi and Tirabeni, 2018).

Few publications to date have focused on these tensions within AFNs and their ability to promote social inclusion. We decided to study this issue in a consumer food cooperative (CFC) being set up in a Brussels' very multicultural neighbourhood, and for which solidarity is paramount amongst the five founding values.[1] For the cooperative, 'solidarity' generally means the inclusion of neighbourhood residents (very socioeconomically and culturally heterogeneous) and accessibility to sustainable food [2] for all [3]. It thus adopted a participatory not-for-profit model (each member of the cooperative being committed to a monthly workslot of 2.45 h) supposedly ensuring affordable selling prices and sociocultural equality in access to food for all involved. The cooperative also benefits from a group of volunteers responsible for 'social diversity', and it became a partner in a participatory action

* Corresponding author. EHESS - Institut de Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur les enjeux Sociaux (IRIS), France.

E-mail addresses: efourat@gmail.com (E. Fourat), cclosson@ulb.ac.be (C. Closson), lholzeme@ulb.ac.be (L. Holzemer), mhudon@ulb.ac.be (M. Hudon).

[1] The cooperative's five founding values are: sustainability, solidarity, participation, transparency and cooperation.

[2] We use that term whereas it has been pointed out in the literature that sustainability dimensions, as theoretically put forward by scientists and politicians, are sometimes contradictory (Darmon et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2016) and are complicated for consumers to put into practice in so-called 'conventional' agrofood systems, while also complicating decision making, particularly as the term does not make common sense, nor is it used by highly educated people.

[3] On its website, the cooperative points out that it is, "aware of the cultural and socioeconomic diversity within the Brussels community", and it is, "working towards providing broad access to sustainable food. Through food, the cooperative is a hub for sharing and exchange that will foster diversity and mutual aid and strengthen the social fabric of our city."

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.03.009
Received 9 May 2019; Received in revised form 3 February 2020; Accepted 26 March 2020
0743-0167/ © 2020 Published by Elsevier Ltd.

research project focused on the issue of social inclusion in AFNs.

This paper focuses on the 'social inclusion' practices of the CFC—which aim at ensuring sociocultural equality in access to quality food. To what extent can the CFC's value of 'equality' help fulfil the objective of equal access to quality food?

Based on more than 100 participant observations of food activities and meetings and on around 15 comprehensive interviews, we analyse the main difficulties encountered to make AFNs more socially inclusive and how democratic values and new forms of governance—through participation—could guarantee or foster this social inclusion—and eventually sociocultural equality in access to food. We argue that the value of 'equality' holds substantial potential in its focus to sociocultural inclusiveness practices through a participative model which enables its adaptation. Yet it has its limitations on the idea of an equal participation to volunteer work and by advocating equal margins on all products, wiping out the possibility of enhancing the accessibility of specific products.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. The next section reviews literature findings with regard to commitments of AFNs to sustainability, to eventually raise questions on their social accessibility and inclusion. Section 3 presents hypothesis that had guided the qualitative methodology and the research setting, before section 4 discusses the results (i-e values around social inclusion and the cooperative, practises and decision-making regarding the ability of the cooperative to facilitate social inclusion, vis-à-vis the food supply and the participation in the cooperative). The final section then discusses the extent to which the practice of social inclusion in an AFN through the values of "equality" helps sociocultural equality in access to quality food.

2. Context and theoretical background

2.1. What characterises alternative food networks?

A substantial body of the social science food literature produced since the early 2000s has been focused on investigating 'alternative' food networks (AFN). Consistent publications (Venn et al., 2006; Deverre and Lamine, 2010; Maye and Kirwan, 2010; Goodman et al., 2012; Forssell and Lankoski, 2015) have stressed the diversity of 'alternative' production and distribution practices but Slocum (2007) described four types of AFN in the North American context. The first category pools organizations that support local farmers, such as farmers' markets and community supported agriculture. The second are non-profit organizations that work on food education, cooking demonstrations and disease prevention. The third are environmental groups advocating organic, free-range hormone- or antibiotic-free meat and open areas for raising livestock. And the fourth type represents organizations that advocate workers' and producers' rights and/or social justice and food security for oppressed groups, like urban gardening for community building. Scholars draw particular attention to their social, ethical and geographical characteristics—briefly, AFNs seek to create more social interactions between producers and consumers, combined with a strong emphasis on localisation and product quality. The notion of 'proximity' could embody the essence of AFNs (Paturel, 2010; Maréchal and Holzemer, 2015; Barbera and Dagnes, 2016; Hashem et al., 2018), i.e. short physical distances and direct and close relations between producers and consumers in the sense of trust and fairness (Callon et al., 2002).

2.2. Alternative food networks through the lens of sustainability

Sustainability [4] is paramount for AFNs as they share same attributes (Kloppenburg et al., 2000): 'ecologically sustainable', 'sustainably regulated', 'economically sustaining', 'knowledge/communicative', 'proximate', 'participatory', 'just/ethical', 'sacred', 'healthful', 'diverse', 'culturally nourishing', 'seasonal/temporal', 'value-oriented', and finally 'relational'.

AFNs effectively contribute to food system sustainability in different ways. Forssell and Lankoski (2015) identified some key contributions of AFNs to environmental sustainability (e.g. through the reduced physical distance in AFNs or the organic requirements for production), to economic sustainability (through production methods or new forms of governance and strong relationships meant to improve producers' livelihoods and of those involved in the network), and finally to social sustainability (through reduced distances in AFNs, and strong relationships between producers and consumers). Moreover, so-called 'natural' foods (unprocessed, free of additives, organic, etc.) and so-called 'local' fresh foods could contribute to consumer health (thought to ensure 'freshness', thus retaining more nutrients than food transported over long distances). Lastly, AFNs are believed to have positive effects on food cultures thanks to the focus on territorial embeddedness, which contributes to the preservation of regional and traditional food cultures and their diversity. All of these direct links indicate that AFN sustainability expectations are well grounded.

However, AFN sustainability is also the focus of greater criticism in a number of articles. First, AFN sustainability dimensions could be contradictory, e.g. the nutritional appropriateness with respect to the economic and environment dimensions, because a balanced diet requires a higher quantity of more expensive foods (Darmon and Drewnowski, 2015; Jones et al., 2016; Reynolds et al., 2016). Secondly, the fundamental notion of 'local' anchorage (Born and Purcell, 2006; Barbera and Dagnes, 2016) could be based on a romanticized view of the countryside and nature (Maye, 2013: 384) and even be counterfactual since cumulated local transportation could produce a high environmental impact (Born and Purcell, 2006). Thirdly, AFNs could be based on an imaginary of sustainable and quality relations, with producers since they may involve unethical conditions of production (Goodman and Bryant, 2009), or labour-intense activities carried out by the actors (Bruce et al., 2017). Fourthly, AFNs have not yet verified linkages with respect to several of their benefits, such as labour rights, higher incomes for producers, affordable foods due to the reduced value chain distance (Hinrichs, 2000; Guthman et al., 2006), or high-quality relations and information exchanges (Tregear, 2011). If AFN define a new morality of what is 'good' food by promoting the new ethics of profit, taste, choice and cheapness of food, 'organic', 'local' or 'fair trade' food have also become now equally a part of more conventional food systems (Goodman et al., 2010). Across a collection of scholar papers, Goodman et al. (2012) questioned if these alternative economic networks can still be regarded as 'political imaginaries of sustainable', socially just and re-localized food systems or if their capacity for social change is exaggerated. We will reflect on these questions in this paper, specifically regarding its social dimension.

2.3. From social embeddedness to accessibility of AFNs

Three theoretical concepts dominated an 'early phase of AFN

[4] In the 1980s 'sustainability' emerged as a symbol of social change which involved promoting meaningful change in agriculture and food systems. Ever since it has been challenged due to conflicts over values and a lack of consensus

(*footnote continued*)
on definitions. Here is a definition that provides the three pillars of 'sustainability': *"Economic issues include the incomes and livelihoods of producers and others involved in the network, employment and local economic development, particularly in rural areas. Social issues include labor rights and the safety of workers, consumer health, food culture, and the accessibility, availability, and affordability of nutritious food. Environmental impacts of food production, processing, packaging, distribution, and consumption, in turn, have to do with the use of resources and with pollution and damage to the soil, water, and air (including greenhouse gas emissions), biodiversity and ecosystems, and animal welfare."* (Forssell and Lankoski, 2015, p. 65, p. 65)

scholarship' (Maye, 2013): *short food supply chains* (SFSCs), stressing the proximity between producers and consumers; *conventions* [5] associated with specific norms, values and organisational forms of each food network, such as tradition, trust and place, ecology, price and value for money; and finally the *social embeddedness* notion inspired from the seminal contribution of Polanyi, which recognizes that AFNs are economic models embedded in a complex hub of social relations. Within the AFN context, *social embeddedness* assumes that social relations are part and parcel of the genesis of all food alternatives (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2009), and imply participation, reciprocity and trust values. AFNs thus represent collectives for community-building and social cohesion in which the practice of producing or distributing 'sustainable food' enables the expression of alternative values about society, environment and economy.

Social cohesion was further defined by Paturel (2015) through three criteria: *social links* which focus on interconnection and cooperation and induces trust, *social networks* which depend on human and territorial resources, and finally *participation* involving individual commitment. In fact, AFNs have significant participation outcome benefits such as improving the social agency, confidence and self-esteem of participants (Kirwan et al., 2013). A comparison of over 100 collective food buying groups revealed that the main social network activities are sharing of resources with other AFNs and the dissemination of information about sustainable foods (Dedeurwaerdere et al., 2017). As well, social relations, as fostered by a participatory context, has stimulated the evolution of practices and knowledge, and notably the creation of a labelling system for local food markets (Chiffoleau et al., 2017).

Nonetheless, the emphasis on social cohesion does not prevent social inequality within AFNs. Actually, individuals involved in AFNs tend to have medium and higher socioeconomic backgrounds (Hinrichs and Kremer, 2002; Dupuis and Goodman, 2005; Slocum, 2007; Macias, 2008; Kirwan et al., 2013). These individuals have often knowledge regarding nutrition, health and environmental issues, and they are generally wealthy enough to buy organic food. Moreover, there is a dominant gender driver to such collectives, i.e. gardening, cooking and distributing food for others are the reflection of women's care practices (Jarosz, 2006). AFNs are places where alternative food practices are implemented and are socio-physical clusters that are often referred to as 'white food spaces' (Slocum, 2007). AFNs inevitably contribute to the separation of food provisioning practices and in turn of people with consumption habits that differ from those of the usual customers.

Whereas quite early, AFNs stood for locally-based and bottom up solutions to improve food security for vulnerable people living in areas lacking food stores offering a wide variety of food at affordable price for them. Therefore, new production and distribution approaches such as community gardening or community supported agriculture (CSA) schemes were initiated to solve issues of access to food for vulnerable populations (Allen, 1999; Hinrichs, 2000; Wrigley et al., 2003; Short et al., 2007). Researchers had evaluated accessibility via four criteria (Short et al., 2007): *location* of small retailers within walking distance, ***affordability***, ***nutritional adequacy*** and ***cultural acceptability***, e.g. the presence of foods specific to the needs of a particular cultural group, including the language spoken to customers. According to Paturel (2015), accessibility to all is possible under three conditions: it must not be designed specifically for deprived populations in order to guarantee its economic and social viability; a broad range of social actors and networks must be involved; and the participation of all the actors is crucial. Barbera and Dagnes (2016: 325) claim that accessibility refers to the sales point and its convenience, for instance in terms of opening hours and location, and also to the agrifoods, which must be available for everyday consumption at affordable prices.

The implementation of these initiatives in the most popular neighbourhoods in collaboration with social, nutrition and health education services, appears to be a key innovation (Macias, 2008), and a food-access 'democratization' response (Noel and Darrot, 2016) to food insecurity. Income and education influence food choice (Ver Ploeg and Wilde, 2018) which explains that deprived populations tend to have less access to quality food because animal proteins, fresh vegetables and fruits are the most expensive foods (Darmon and Drewnowski, 2015)—though this pattern is variable to sociocultural contexts depending on food taboos (Fourat and Lepiller, 2017). Consequently, AFN accessibility to the most deprived people requires solidarity mechanisms such as staggered payments, differentiated basket prices, subsidized baskets, as implemented in the French community supported agriculture network (Amap) or in social grocery stores (Paturel, 2010). The desire for democratization and the need to move beyond a niche is symbolised by the shift from 'alternative' to 'localized' food networks (Maye, 2013), which helps examine their ability to generate equitable community-level food security. Considering that sustainable food systems with equitable environmental reliability, social justice and economic viability concerns can generate conflicts over values and counter-effects, the 'food democracy' concept helps examine whether pragmatic solutions could reduce social inequality and create sustainable food systems (Lacy, 2000; Hassanein, 2003). This concept implies that every citizen has an equitable contribution to make through participation.

2.4. Accessibility, diversity, inclusion and inclusiveness of AFNs

Several concepts have emerged from the quest for more democratic access to food. A recent review revealed that they are non-exclusive and linked: *"Diversity is described as a community resource. Inclusion is highlighted as a community process, and inclusiveness is described as a community outcome."* (Talmage and Knopf, 2017). Different indicators are required for their measurement. Diversity can be viewed in terms of demographics, while inclusion is defined in terms of processes to reach diversity through greater access and pathways to community. Access thus appears to be a key indicator of social inclusion and is made possible through members' voting rights, decision-making, democratic processes, volunteering, voting, collaborations, etc. Finally, inclusiveness as an outcome is tied with high democratic values and social empowerment and measured in terms of equity, equality, eligibility, employment, etc. Therefore, as a policy concept, *social inclusiveness* expresses the willingness to acknowledge the diversity of needs and abilities of people (Van Herzele et al., 2005). Consequently, *participation* is necessary for short supply chains to be accessible to all (Paturel, 2010) and it has become a 'practical route' to implement social inclusion, as defined by Hinrichs and Kremer (2002).[6]

While the difficulty of making AFN socially accessible is well documented, little is known about the organizational practices to reduce inequalities in access to AFNs and their ability to cope with pragmatic difficulties. Can democratic values and new forms of governance—through participation—guarantee or foster social inclusion? Here we explore this question by looking at how a CFC displays its value of equal access to quality food, while highlighting the difficulties of putting this value into practice with regard to the food supply (the

[5] In convention theory, conventions are social norms and values which bind people through related conventional practice and routines.

[6] "Social inclusion (…) can be defined as an ongoing and reflexive process of full and engaged participation by all interested social actors, regardless of their socioeconomic or cultural resources. Social inclusion is based on simultaneous consideration of the whole (i.e. community) and its various constituent parts (e.g. different classes, age groups, genders, etc.) as a process, it is premised on respectful interactions between different groups and a focus on mutual empowerment. Participation is often seen as the most obvious and practical route to social inclusion and has become a priority of many endogenous development projects. Such projects actively seek broader based participation from local people to share the presumed benefits of their project more widely, but also to build public support and legitimacy." (Hinrichs and Kremer, 2002, p. 68, p. 68)

range of products, prices, labelling) and workslot participation.

3. Materials and methods

The case study focuses on a CFC [7] located in northern Brussels, in the multicultural district of Schaerbeek. In 2018, the census of population of Schaerbeek and Saint-Josse counts - including nationality at birth - respectively 37 and 25% of Belgians, 24 and 26% of European foreigners, 39 and 49% of non-European foreigners (IBSA, 2018). These figures do not comprise the so-called 'invisible' persons such as undocumented or asylum seekers (Hermia and Vandermotten, 2015). Compare to Brussels' average, the district has a very low level of employment under 44% and a higher level of lone parents.

The CFC in its current format opened officially in September 2017 after 4 years of development. Its size passed from one hundred members in the first years to more than 2000 members in 2018. The panel of members did not reflect the cultural diversity of the neighbourhood but a slight diversification of the socioeconomic profiles since data indicate the modification of the members [8]. In fact, in January 2018, 20% of the new members preferred to buy only one social share instead of four as recommended by the CFC which represents 12% of the total members (see Fig. 1). This increase was mainly due to new members coming from geographic sectors in greatest and moderate socioeconomic difficulty (representing respectively 16% and 10% of members). Also, the proportion of new members living in Schaerbeek has considerably improved (from 37% in 2016 to 58% in 2018) as well as in Saint-Josse (from 5% in 2016 to 10% in 2018). Furthermore, 62% of the total members were less than 40 years old, 42% of the members were 28–35 years old, while 8% only were 60 years or over (Teichmann, 2018).

As a food cooperative, only 'member-owners' (who hold a share in the cooperative) can shop (including his/her household) and take part in decisions, while non-members are welcome to visit the store but may only shop for a 1-month test period. Since the outset, the cooperative has been flaunting five core values in its statutes and communications to stakeholders—these five values encompass the recurring features of AFNs. The first value is '*sustainability'*, whereby local producers, seasonal and bulk food, and a high proportion of organic and/or fairtrade products are prioritised. The second value is the *participation* of its members through decision-making and voluntary work (monthly workslot of 2.45 h). During each workslot, members perform a variety of grocery store duties such taking payments from customers and stocking goods on shelves, while also helping with invoice checking, etc. The third value is '*cooperation'* since it is a social, not-for-profit cooperative that also promotes cooperation between consumers and producers and the exchange of tools through open licences. The fourth value is *transparency* with regard to management and prices to producers. And last but not least, the fifth value is '*solidarity'*, whereby sustainable food is made accessible to the largest number and the cooperative serves as a hub where social relations and cohesion are fostered. The Social Diversity Committee brought together members concerned about 'solidarity' and were involved in awareness-raising activities, ranging from overseeing food store visits by schools and local community organizations, to workshops in the food store kitchen, etc. Its activities have been further integrated into other committees, such as the "conviviality committee" or the "visits committee", and into the general functioning of the cooperative as for the time management for example.

This paper is based on the results of a 3-year (2015–2018) *participatory action research* (PAR) project that led to the development of a specific methodological approach and production of qualitative material. The specific PAR approach was first initiated by Lewin (1946) who, by studying group dynamics, determined that change is stimulated by the collective. Then *action research* became *participatory* once democratic processes were involved and the notion of shared knowledge was embedded (Freire, 1974). The PAR approach is therefore designed to favour action plans addressing social issues through collective experience (Paturel, 2015; Chiffoleau et al., 2017). Researchers took part in the food cooperative governance either as members of the Social Diversity Committee or by attending meetings. They managed to maintain the necessary distance especially in action research (Friedberg, 2000), remaining observers, not leaders, while eventually sharing views and proposing actions during meetings. The research programme also included participant observations of activities on food with several groups of people (6–14) made up of members of community organizations (but not of the coop), active in the neighbourhood and involved in medical care, literacy, continuing education, further named 'participants'-. Once the decision of partnership between the cooperative and the social partners was taken, then an operational activity framework was set up with each organization.[9] Food activities were co-created by researchers, members of the Social Diversity Committee of the CFC and groups of community organizations.

These activities included group discussions using tools (photo language, packaging decryption, blind tasting, etc.), cooking workshops, excursions to farms, gardens or markets. Each group chose different activities but all visited the CFC and participated to at least one shift. The aim of these activities was to raise discussions on the conventional food system and on issues encountered by people on buying quality food at affordable prices, on lack of transparency of the system, on social environment's influence, etc.

The assumptions that had guided the participative methodology were: 1) the participation to food activities would foster mutual exchange of knowledge, reflect the ability to transform food practices of participants and become member of the CFC; and 2) the discussions during activities would help the CFC to better understanding participants' food and purchasing practices and opinions regarding volunteer work, and to eventually increase its attractiveness and sociocultural equality in access to quality food.

Overall, 100 participant observations have been done, covering 77 such activities with groups (see Table 1) along with 23 activities associated with the CFC functioning. In total 120 participants have been involved in the activities. If data regarding the ethnicity, socioeconomic and sociodemographic information about the participants were not computerized at the demand of the partners for reasons of privacy, the panel of social partners (see Table 1) indicate the sociocultural backgrounds targeted by the CFC. Groups mostly included 25 to 55 year-old immigrant women, often unemployed, sometimes widowed or single parents, and not familiar with such buying practices. This did not constitute a research bias since women are generally more involved in food and care practices than men and therefore have a lot to share, notably on the difficulties they face regarding changing food habits at home.

The fieldwork was also enriched by additional interviews conducted with members of the cooperative [10] and of community organizations who had participated to food activities. The aim of these interviews was to grasp the meaning they gave to their food purchasing, storing and cooking practices, and to get their opinions regarding the capacity of

[7] It is the first food cooperative that was recently opened. But in late 19th century, food cooperatives emerged on the economic scene to cope economic crises.

[8] The policy of members' privacy does not allow to produce ethnicity, sociodemographic, socioeconomic statistics on the cooperative's members.

[9] A minimum of six activities were planned with each partner, roughly within a 2 month interval. This program was designed to allow to time between activities. The program of the two last groups was extended to more activities over a longer period in order to boost confidence and offer more time to assess potential practice changes, inertia or resistance.

[10] Due to their transversal nature, certain aspects of governance and communication are also included, but without us detailing them in full.

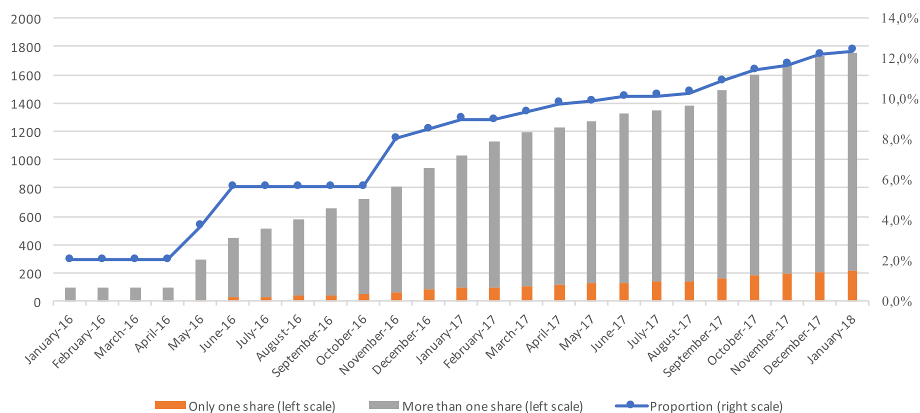


Fig. 1. Evolution of members and shares.

Table 1
Social partners focus and corresponding number of observant participations.

Number of observation participations by groups specificities		
professionnalization programs	6	8%
high school students	7	9%
literacy programs	20	26%
senior activities	6	8%
health promotion	10	13%
permanent education	10	13%
french learning	18	23%
Total	77	100%

alternative food networks to be accessible to all. Material included audio recordings and transcripts of discussions during activities, in-depth interviews and field notes, communication tools (flyers, website), reports, statutes of the CFC, minutes of general assembly meetings. All of the discursive material was coded in the NVivo software package. The tool allowed organising the data collected in categories such as "Food Activities", "The cooperative", "Food habits and other practices", "Food systems", "Food items and categories", "Norms and values" (positive and negative opinions toward the previous categories). Each generic category was divided into subcategories. For example, "The coop" included verbatim regarding its location, organization, participation process, products/prices, the shopping experience and the model's values. We compared verbatim between the coop's members and the neighbourhood residents non-members involved in the activities, in order to reveal convergences or divergences of meanings given to food purchasing and cooking practices and their opinion with respect to the capacity of the CFC to be accessible to all. We did not produced comparative statistics on these discursive data because 1) they mostly represent the voice of non-members during activities but less CFC members, so figures wouldn't have been representative 2) Topics discussed have emerged and been influenced in the context of the PAR, in which researchers intervene in discussions and make proposals of interpretations and solutions to be discussed.

4. Results

In this section, we present our findings on organizational practices to foster inclusiveness in AFNs. In the first section, we discuss the values and meanings attached to the cooperative through justifications by members. The other sections highlight practices and decision-making processes regarding the ability of a CFC to facilitate social inclusion—vis-à-vis food supply (items sold, labelling, prices) and work-slot participation (2.45 h of work monthly) —and analyse the tensions and issues that we observed.

4.1. Multifaceted expression of the social inclusion value

We thus explore in this section how the participative model is embedded in strong values and whether values associated with social inclusion are shared by various actors and displayed or put in action.

The social dimension was part of the genesis of the CFC project. Founders claimed that the cooperative was imagined as an alternative that would be able to "break walls between communities". The first founders were men and women between 25 and 30 years old at that time, very educated, holding masters in sociology, anthropology, and communication. Living in Schaerbeek, sharing the same house, having completed their studies and earning not much money, they wanted to create a less competitive and more inclusive world, including for them. They already had an experience in creating an alternative social network with a local, were could be organized all kind of activities in group (bicycle repairing, debates, movies screening, etc). They made it imperative that the cooperative should not reproduce society's inequalities. Yet each member has his/her own way of justifying affiliation because it: is an "alternative to the capitalist system", a "collective and participative system", embodies "solidarity and social cohesion", "accessibility to all", is an "encounter with others"; and finally it sells "sustainable good quality food". Some stress that it is a place to encounter others, to procure quality food, while others highlight volunteering as an alternative to the dominant system.

To interpret this diversity of values and characteristics attributed to the cooperative, we embrace Vermeersch's (2004) 'set of values' notion (translated from the French '*répertoire de valeurs*') that she developed while studying contemporary volunteer action as an identity mechanism framework. Transposed in a CFC, the set of values enables individuals to express/find meaning in compliance with their own individual viewpoints on their action. In the CFC, we observed that *Equality* can represent the set of values that unites all of those mentioned previously. In the cooperative context, equality implied for members the possibility for individuals of different cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds to participate, along with a desire to encounter/see everyone united for the sake of building an alternative model to the unsatisfactory dominant one, while offering accessibility to all and solidarity by providing a safe and more transparent food environment. The foundation of Equality in the CFC is an equal vote for each member – independently of his/her number of shares - at the general assemblies to decide the functioning of the CFC (purchasing criteria, working rules, etc.).

> "There was a question of equality. We did not want to recreate within the supermarket inequality between those who had more money and those who worked for cheaper prices. So there was a philosophical question behind it. We decided that everyone should work and that there wouldn't be any differentiation between those who worked and those who don't." (a cooperative member,

interview)

The modalities of promoting equality started very early in the development of the CFC with a Social Diversity Committee whom members were in charge of introducing the CFC to neighbourhood residents of creating links by organising food activities, and of reporting to the CFC learnings about their needs, desires and opinions. Beyond the differences noted with regard to the set of values, our results echo those of Vermeersch (2004) who found that volunteers agreed on a 'pragmatic ethic' in adapting their actions to the conditions of their feasibility, efficiency and satisfaction and that all gave priority to action. In fact, the following paragraphs detail two practices of the CFC: the choice of the food sold, labelling, prices, and also the participation in CFC's workslots. We explore how the participative model—through collective actions and discussions, proposals and decisions between members—facilitates its adaptation and produces social inclusion, while also creating tensions and revealing and/or inducing the model's shortcomings.

4.2. CFC's food supply vis-à-vis participants'demand

Some members of the CFC may be motivated to participate primarily by its values and alternative nature. However, the CFC's attractiveness, as for any food retailer, is still mainly dependent on the goods it sells and the prices it charges. *"We think that via cheaper prices, we will create a truly mixed cooperative which will attract people who are not only attracted by the values but simply by the prices and the quality of products."* (a cooperative member, interview).

The number of items offered for sale has increased in phases and the CFC now offers around 2000 items. These included most of the departments usually found in a mid-sized shop: fresh and grocery products, beverages, ready-to-eat dishes, cleaning products and cosmetics. With a good selection of fruit and vegetables, much of it local, bulk goods, and more than 80% of its products organic and/or fair trade certified, the food quality was closer to that of specialty shops, including those marketing organic produce. In seeking to make its inclusion ideal a reality, the founders' group realized the importance of charging reasonable prices and offering a wide range of goods to satisfy the neighbourhood's many different consumer profiles. Accordingly, the cooperative adopted principles reflecting those of its New York reference model: mandatory volunteer work, no dividends and no marketing or advertising expenses. Reducing significantly the cooperative's expenses, these principles able to apply a single, relatively low profit margin [11], thus ensuring a highly advantageous quality/price ratio.

A year after its grand opening, however, despite these proactive choices, the single margin have not sufficed to make the CFC is not that affordable for nearby residents and participants of the activities whose food budgets are often tight. In fact, while strongly committed to locally-sourced and fair prices to the producers. With around two thousand members, the cooperative was a low-volume distributor, and hence cannot obtain the same cost prices and discounts from its suppliers than other food retailers. While the CFC's permanent staff were aware of these pitfalls, their effects were not quantified as the CFC does not do complete regular price comparisons with the competition. However, consumers' views on price have been established in the qualitative research data. In CFC visits held as part of the action research project, many participants were taken aback at the price of eggs, asking "*Is that for one or six?*" They repeatedly pointed out significant price differences for various categories of consumer products (eggs, tomatoes, yoghurt, etc.) in comparison to what they are used to buy. Conversely, already members of the CFC accepted to pay these prices based upon the need to restore equity and give a fair price for producers. *"The objective is to pay less, but there may be products that will seem more expensive to you because of their fair price."* (a cooperative member, interview). On the whole, members and participant who visited the CFC found that it was competitive with respect to other small-scale food alternatives (purchasing groups, cooperative grocery stores, etc.) and sustainable foodstuffs (organic, fair trade, etc.) distributed by mainstream retailers.

However, while prices are seen as a major obstacle, research has shown that there is more to it. First, societal issues related to the food system (impacts on health, environment, etc.)—and hence the sustainable food values advocated by the cooperative—were not justifying such prices, if at all: "*How can people come and shop here* [at the CFC]*?! Don't they know about Aldi?* [big-box stores]" (a participant, in a group activity). Though broadly very distrustful of industrial food, much concerned with health, and insistent that they wanted to eat organic foods, they were not willing to pay for quality or 'organic food' at these prices. The CFC's official objective is not to substitute to public policies but to supply quality food accessible to all, even though as in the case of other AFNs, it fills gaps of public policies.

Secondly, the cooperative looked as foreign to some participants as an Asian or African shop to a European who is faced with illegible packaging or unusual foods. During a visit of the CFC, a young African woman, asked to suggest a recipe to be made with products from the shop, said she was at a loss, as she knew only four vegetables out of the many products on display and didn't find those she was used to cook (manioc, dry fish, etc.) *"Here it is organic, it's very good but I cannot, because of the price but also because there is not everything here for us Africans."* The cooperative's values– promoting organic food and attractive to all– are conflicting since it is complex to reconcile different food cultures and make choices as for example sell organic meat or/and halal meat (Martiniello, 2013).

On the price/product dimension of inclusiveness, for a majority of participants in the activities, shopping at the cooperative meant paying more and changing their eating habits without any clear idea about what individual or collective value is thereby furthered, although studies have shown that the lower the income, the greater is the resistance to change (Caillavet et al., 2006). The CFC's permanent staff and members are aware of this challenge and now try to improve the store's product range introducing foods that were found to be staples for certain cultures (e.g. wheat semolina) and cheaper organic foods. However, these changes are not proceeding smoothly, as they are somewhat at odds with the CFC's founding values. In fact, the requirements of sustainable food supply (fair prices for producers, organic and local food) are uneasy to be fulfilled while the product range is being expanded and tailored to the expectations, food habits and budgets of as many neighbourhood residents as possible.

4.3. Workslot participation issues

The founders wanted an egalitarian system that would not simply replicate socioeconomic inequalities, i-e with wealthy members paying full price and the most vulnerable members forced to do volunteer work to get access to better prices. As in the Park Slope (New York) reference model, participation in the work was therefore made compulsory for all, with a monitoring system set up to enforce this, including penalties ranging from extra shifts to expulsion. The work obligation is twofold: there must be equal investment of time (2¾ hours a month) and skills (interchangeability of workers). All members are thus required to buy a share in the cooperative, which provides them with a membership card and access to the shop as well as a choice of workslot. The member can shop and a maximum of two other adults registered in the household (no limit for persons under 18).

During the discussions with participants in the activities, some (often unemployed) neighbourhood residents expressed an interest in volunteer work for a variety of reasons: to get out and see friends, to have something to do on days, to meet other people, to practise their

[11] The cooperative's margins are 20% on dry goods and 25% on fresh produce and bulk goods. The higher margin in the latter two categories is meant to compensate for greater losses (storage of perishables, handling).

French, to see a store from the inside and learn about the food industry, to make themselves useful, etc. But workslot participation is restrained by several reasons. First reason is that there is a different meaning embodied in the term 'work' used at the CFC. While it means a real and meaningful engagement to tackle world social injustice and participate to an alternative project to the capitalist system, it echoes the situation of unemployment for several participants to activities. Below are extracts reflecting values and opinions differences between a member and a participant:

> "[doing your shift] is being able to give your time for a project, you don't necessarily need to always link what you do to money. I think nowadays we spend less time to meet people, to talk to people, while if you shift at least once a week at the co-op, you can spend time to meet at least 5 to 6 people. You have coffee with them, you chat with them, and learn things too." (a cooperative member, interview).

> "A participant asks to the cooperative member if there is job for them in that shop." (notes, in a group activity).

Secondly, time is a constraint. Many alternative food networks have the same difficulties: participants often experience a physical, mental and emotional overload that keeps them from fully committing to these systems, especially low-income working women with children (Bruce et al., 2017). And even within the cooperative itself, the choice of equality with respect to work creates tensions and frustrations: "*To me this is unfair. I'm on my own and I'm supposed to do as much as a family.*" (a cooperative member, interview). The investment and workload required of those working shifts is considerable, and equal for all, but some individuals are less able to muster the energy or find the time. There are a variety of competing activities and obligations within households, and the resulting tension is harder to manage for economically and/or socially vulnerable households. The cooperative's founding members did anticipate these difficulties and envisaged mechanisms to ease the constraints, mainly through the possibility of occasionally exchanging slots between members and the choice between regular shifts or irregular ones, more flexible and a system of exemption from work for personal reasons, via the honour system.[12] However, despite these accommodations for some, the commitment required by the work system remains a real obstacle to membership. *"To buy food it's easier to choose the supermarket near to you! Because when you get home from work you just have time to shop and cook!"* (a participant, in a group activity).

Thirdly, those doing their first shifts can have apprehensions related to skills and sociocultural differences. Generally, members' mutual support and the super-cooperator's assistance is reassuring, and explanatory documents are made available to everyone (instructions for welcoming members, replenishing the bulk bins, etc.). However, some participants in the activities felt challenged by interactions in French, lacked confidence in their writing or computing skills, etc.

> "She cannot read the labels on the shelf and therefore if the shelf is empty it is difficult for her to restock without knowing which one is spaghetti and which one is penne. " (a cooperative member, in a group activity).

> "Only I don't like to work at the cash desk, I don't like taking on this responsibility. The calculation I don't know. And I'm afraid I'm calculating something, for example someone comes to buy, I calculate something wrong... But to help tidy up, to clean up, to wash the plates, to prepare everything, there I like." (a participant, in a group activity).

These practical difficulties may be compounded by social anxiety at the prospect of meeting strangers, immersion in another community, fear of the unknown, not daring to ask questions or being unable to answer them, etc. Other participants also said they were afraid of being misunderstood and even judged by their community or family, on account of their involvement with this innovative CFC and their lack of arguments to justify their choice in front of them.

As these impediments are identified, through collective action, host of ideas emerge among members, some of which are put into effect and have an impact on cooperative operations, while others come to nothing. Committees and the permanent staff try to make certain communication tools more targeted, simplify some procedures, etc. It is also working on a transitional coaching phase, new members have the chance to meet other members, build trust, learn about the shop, etc. These developments lead to flexibility in terms of time and skills that can be mobilized: some members do more than their mandatory shift, while others give committees the benefit of their individual talents or use them to ease the work of their shift, etc. Similarly, it was suggested it would be more reassuring if some tasks to be done during the shifts were phased in, so as to alleviate any initial misgivings new members could have: hence, they could learn the ropes by stocking shelves, then the bulk bins and fridges, receive deliveries before operating the cash register, etc.[13]

These adaptations are in keeping with 'pragmatic ethics' (Vermeersch, 2004), as the collective adapts its values to what is actually feasible. While they do to some extent constitute departures from the principle of equality among the members, they also make for greater inclusion. Some Social Diversity Committee members would like to go further and propose "*a time-based solidarity system*", which would be tantamount to giving members the choice of giving up some of their equality.

5. Conclusion, discussion and implications

This paper addressed the challenge of social inclusion and to what extent the value of 'equality' help fulfil the objective of equal access to quality food in AFNs through an analysis of a CFC. By applying the combined 'set of values' and "pragmatic ethic" notions developed by Vermeersch (2004), our research findings generated insight on how the participative model helped the CFC display and put into practice its values, as well as on how it induced tensions while revealing the limits of the model itself. The rationale was based on the hypothesis that the participatory process—through collective propositions and decisions, knowledge exchange and workslot commitments—could facilitate social inclusion through equality for the largest number. But the investigation made apparent that promoting social inclusion through that participatory process would not alone guarantee equal access for everyone—the reasons for this lie at the cooperative and individual levels—and could become detrimental to social inclusion.

Choices and decisions to be made to trigger social inclusion in the cooperative were not obvious to all two thousand members who had varying views of equality regarding food systems and volunteer work. In this sense, the equality principle is questionable when analysed in relation to volunteer work and the single margin. While in the name of equality some considered it necessary to reduce the number of workslots for large families because they generally lacked time, some other single people considered it unfair that they would have to do the same amount of volunteer work as large households. The model imposed the same requirements (work for all) and offered the same services (offer

[12] The member submits an exemption request, stating his or her reasons, to the members' office, which rules on it; no proof is necessary. The list of possible justifications for an exemption is open-ended but may include parental leave, bereavement, physical disability, etc.

[13] Yet the founders envisioned an orientation or 'initiation' for cooperative newcomers. That possibility is mentioned in the by-laws (*règlement d'ordre intérieur*) but has not become reality because of the delay in implementing the project. The only orientation so far has been a briefing session.

for all), whereas the cultural and socioeconomic situations differed markedly and eventually increases resources inequalities towards time and participation, and generate feelings of unfairness for some members (Messick, 1995). If shared values are essential in motivating members to participate (Vermeersch, 2004: 704), at least both members and participants shared the same concerns such as being healthy and eating high quality organic food. However, they were not equal regarding the access to these food products. First reason was that they faced inequalities within both society and the cooperative, e.g. with respect to having a job, understanding the (written) information delivered on unfamiliar food, and to matter of purchasing power. Second reason is that social participation of individuals is not within everyone's reach and depends on their resources and the social environment rather than their own individual motivations (Gaudet and Turcotte, 2013).

Related to fair prices and affordability, the single margin applied to all products by the cooperative also had limitations. On the one hand, it blurred consumer habits and references because expensive products with huge margins were generally particularly competitive at the cooperative whereas others were not in comparison to the competition. On the other hand, by advocating equal margins on all products, the cooperative wiped out the possibility of enhancing the accessibility of specific products, e.g. staple food items such as pulses, cereals—the healthiest and most sustainable products.

To overcome difficulties related to practical implementation of the sociocultural equality value, the ‘pragmatic ethic’ led members to make compromises and adaptations to the model, thus reframing the initial vision of equality. For instance, specialized tasks such as translation work, improving the computer system or administrative procedures, hence became recognised as workslots hours, while greater responsibility and power to ‘super-cooperators’ was also assigned. Since recently, it is possible to give shifts between members. Moreover, the value of ‘equality’ has been discussed during a general assembly at the CFC and it has been voted to transform it into ‘equal opportunities’. To serve that purpose, solidarity mechanisms have been under consideration within the cooperative. The latter wishes to establish both internal (e.g. shares and/or baskets subsidized, solidarity fund, differentiated basket prices, staggered payments, etc.) and institutional solidarity (negotiations are under way with the local community organization to grant a monthly purchase amount to some of its recipients based on the social grocery store model). Note that the main difficulty is not fundraising but rather the choice of distribution criteria (who are distributed to and under what conditions).

To conclude, fostering social inclusion faces numerous tensions between values and objectives and cannot guarantee an equal access to all. But the practical experiments of these alternatives can help to encourage a more social and quality food transition as they shed light on social inequalities and consider social ‘equal opportunities’ as a central value. More generally, interventions that foster social change in people's behaviours should not aim at changing their individual choice but rather at producing broader sociocultural, economic and technical transitions that redefine social norms patterns of activities (Vihalemm et al., 2015: 29). And these long term transitions can be achieved only by an increasingly shared responsibility of different actors, such as public administrations, government, business organizations and civic movements.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Estelle Fourat: Conceptualization, Investigation, Resources, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing. **Catherine Closson:** Funding acquisition, Project administration, Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing - original draft. **Laurence Holzemer:** Funding acquisition, Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing - original draft. **Marek Hudon:** Supervision, Conceptualization, Writing - original draft.

Declaration of competing interest

None.

Acknowledgments

We were able to conduct from november 2015 to november 2018 the research program entitled FALCOOP *« Favoriser l'accès à une alimentation durable et de qualité pour un public représentatif de la diversité urbaine par l'implantation locale d'un modèle innovant de supermarché coopératif »* thanks to the INNOVIRIS's financial support. A special thank to all the cooperative members, and to all the participants, who offered their time to participate to the activities and respond to the interviews. Last, but certainly not the least, we owe a debt of gratitude to David Manley and Benjamin Ramsden for proofreading; and to the reviewers for their very qualitative insights.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.03.009.

References

Allen, A., 1999. Reweaving the food security safety net: mediating entitlement and entrepreneurship. Agric. Hum. Val. 16 (2), 117–129.
Aubry, C., Kebir, L., 2013. Shortening food supply chains: a means for maintaining agriculture close to urban areas? The case of the French metropolitan area of Paris. Food Pol. 41, 85–93.
Barbera, F., Dagnes, J., 2016. Building alternatives from the bottom-up: the case of alternative food networks. Agric. Agric. Sci. Procedia 8, 324–333.
Born, B., Purcell, M., 2006. Avoiding the local trap, scale and food systems in planning research. J. Plann. Educ. Res. 26 (2).
Bruce, A., Rebecca, L., Castellano, S., 2017. Labor and alternative food networks: challenges for farmers and consumers. Renew. Agric. Food Syst. 32 (5), 403–416.
Caillavet, F., Darmon, N., Lhuissier, A., Régnier, F., 2006. « L'alimentation des populations défavorisées en France : synthèse des travaux dans les domaines économique, sociologique et nutritionnel », Les Travaux de l'Observatoire national de la pauvreté et de l'exclusion sociale 2005-2006. La Documentation française, Paris.
Callon, M., Méadel, C., Rabeharisoa, V., 2002. The economy of qualities. Econ. Soc. 3 (1/2), 194–217.
Chiffoleau, Y., Millet-Amrani, S., Canard, A., 2017. From short food supply chains to sustainable agriculture in urban food systems: food democracy as a vector of transition. Agriculture 6 (4), 57.
Darmon, N., Drewnowski, A., 2015. Contribution of food prices and diet cost to socioeconomic disparities in diet quality and health: a systematic review and analysis. Nutr. Rev. 7 (10), 643–660.
Darmon, N., Vieux, F., Masset, G., Barré, T., Gazan, R., Pérignon, M., 2017. Quelle compatibilité entre qualités nutritionnelle et environnementale de l'alimentation en France? Le CERIN 154 (février). Available at: https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01594648/document, Accessed date: 9 May 2019.
De Bernardi, P., Tirabeni, L., 2018. Alternative food networks: sustainable business models for anti-consumption food cultures. Br. Food J. 120 (8), 1776–1791.
Dedeurwaerdere, T., De Schutter, O., Hudon, M., Mathijs, E., Annaert, B., Avermaete, T., Bleeckx, T., de Callataÿ, C., De Snijder, P., Fernández-Wulff, P., Joachain, H., Vivero, J.-L., 2017. The governance features of social enterprise and social network activities of collective food buying groups. Ecol. Econ. 140, 123–135.
Deverre, C., Lamine, C., 2010. Les systèmes agroalimentaires alternatifs, vol. 317. pp. 57–73 Une revue de travaux anglophones en sciences sociales, Économie rurale.
Dubuisson-Quellier, S., 2009. La Consommation Engagée. Les Presses de Sciences Po, Paris.
Dupuis, E.M., Goodman, D., 2005. Should we go "home" to eat?: toward a reflexive politics of localism. J. Rural Stud. 21, 359–371.
Forssell, S., Lankoski, L., 2015. The sustainability promise of alternative food networks: an examination through "alternative" characteristics. Agric. Hum. Val. 32, 63–75.
Fourat, E., Lepiller, O., 2017. Forms of food transition: growths and limits of animal-based food consumption in France and India. Sociol. Rural. 57 (1), 41–63.
Freire, P., 1974. Pédagogie des opprimés. François Maspero, Paris.
Friedberg, E., 2000. Faire son métier de sociologue, surtout dans l'intervention. In: Kuty, O., Vrancken, D. (Eds.), La Sociologie et l'Intervention. Enjeux et Perspectives. De Boeck, Paris, pp. 111–130.
Gaudet, S., Turcotte, M., 2013. Sommes-nous égaux devant l'« injonction » à participer ?Analyse des ressources et des opportunités au cours de la vie. Sociol. Soc. 45 (1), 117–145.
Goodman, M., Bryant, R., 2009. The Ethics of Sustainable Consumption Governance: Exploring the Cultural Economics of 'Alternative' Retailing. Environment, Politics and Development Working Paper Series. http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/sspp/geography/research/epd/working.html.

Goodman, M., Maye, D., Holloway, L., 2010. Ethical Foodscapes?: Premises, Promises and Possibilities. Environment, Politics and Development Working Paper Series. http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/sspp/geography/research/epd/working.html.
Goodman, D., DuPuis, M., Goodman, M., 2012. Alternative Food Networks: Knowledge, Practice and Politics. Routledge, London.
Guthman, J., Morris, A.W., Allen, P., 2006. Squaring farm security and food security in two types of alternative food institutions. Rural Sociol. 71 (4), 662–684.
Hashem, S., Migliore, G., Schifani, G., Schimmenti, E., Padel, S., 2018. Motives for buying local, organic food through English box schemes. Br. Food J. 120 (7), 1600–1614.
Hassanein, N., 2003. Practicing food democracy: a pragmatic politics of transformation. J. Rural Stud. 19 (1), 77–86.
Hermia, J.-P., Vandermotten, C., 2015. The world in Brussels, Brussels in the world. Brussels Studies [En ligne], Fact Sheets, n° 94, mis en ligne le 27 novembre 2015, consulté le 14 octobre 2019. http://journals.openedition.org/brussels/1319.
Hinrichs, C., 2000. Embeddedness and local food systems: notes on two types of direct agricultural market. J. Rural Stud. 16, 295–303.
Hinrichs, C., Kremer, K.S., 2002. Social inclusion in a midwest local food system project. J. Poverty 6 (1), 65–90.
Institut Bruxellois de Statistique et d'Analyses (IBSA), 2018. Nationalities and Nationality at Birth. http://ibsa.brussels/themes/population#.XbFfuZMzZ0u, Accessed date: 16 October 2019.
Jarosz, L., 2006. Nourishing women: toward a feminist political ecology of alternative food netw. In: Orks. Paper Presented at Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Chicago, IL.
Jarosz, L., 2008. The city in the country: growing alternative food networks in Metropolitan areas. J. Rural Stud. 24 (3), 231–244.
Jones, A.D., Hoey, L., Blesh, J., Miller, L., Green, A., Fink Shapiro, L., 2016. A systematic review of the measurement of sustainable diets. Adv. Nutr.: Int. Rev. J. 7 (4), 641–664.
Kirwan, J., Ilbery, B., Maye, D., Carey, J., 2013. Grassroots social innovations and food localisation: an investigation of the Local Food programme in England. Global Environ. Change 23, 830–837.
Kloppenburg Jr., J., Lezberg, S., De Master, K., Stevenson, G.W., Hendrickson, J., 2000. Tasting Food, tasting Sustainability: defining the attributes of an Alternative Food System with competent ordinary people. Hum. Organ. 59 (2), 177–186.
Lacy, W., 2000. Empowering communities through public work, science, and local food systems: revisiting democracy and globalization. Rural Sociol. 65 (1), 3–26.
Lewin, K., 1946. Action research and minority problems. J. Soc. Issues 2 (4), 34–46.
Macias, T., 2008. Working toward a just, equitable, and local food system: the social impact of community-based agriculture. Soc. Sci. Quat. 89 (5), 1086–1101.
Maréchal, K., Holzemer, L., 2015. Getting a (sustainable) grip on energy consumption: the importance of household dynamics and 'habitual practices'. Energy Res. Soc. Sci. 10, 228–239.
Martiniello, M., 2013. Immigrant integration and multiculturalism in Belgium. In: Taras, R. (Ed.), Challenging Multiculturalism. European Models of Diversity. Edinburgh University Press, pp. 120–137.
Maye, D., 2013. Moving alternative food networks beyond the niche. Int. J. Sociol. Agric. Food 20 (3), 383–389.
Maye, D., Kirwan, J., 2010. Alternative Food Networks. http://ijsaf.org/archive/20/3/maye.pdf, Accessed date: 23 May 2018.
Messick, D.M., 1995. Equality, fairness, and social conflict. Soc. Justice Res. 8 (2), 153–173.
Murdoch, J., Marsden, T., Banks, J., 2000. Quality, Nature, and Embeddedness: Some Theoretical Considerations in the Context of the Food Sector. Econ. Geogr. 76 (2), 107–125.
Noel, J., Darrot, C., 2016. Des systèmes alimentaires relocalisés plus durables : vers un accès à une alimentation de qualité pour tous. Réseau International de Recherche sur les Organisations et le Développement Durable Available at: https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01349972/document, Accessed date: 9 June 2019.
Paturel, D., 2010. Circuits courts et équité sociale. Revue économique et sociale 68 (4), 61–70.
Paturel, D., 2015. Circuit court et cohésion sociale : un exemple de co-construction d'indicateurs sociaux 2010:68::83. https://www.e-periodica.ch/cntmng?pid=res-001, Accessed date: 23 May 2018.
Renting, H., Marsden, T.K., Banks, J., 2003. Understanding alternative food networks: exploring the role of short food supply chains in rural development. Environ. Plann. 35 (3), 393–411.
Reynolds, C., Buckley, J.D., Weinstein, P., Boland, J., 2016. Are the Dietary Guidelines for Meat, Fat, Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Appropriate for Environmental Sustainability? A Review of the Literature. Apple Academic Press.
Short, A., Guthman, J., Raskin, S., 2007. Food deserts, Oases, or Mirages? Small markets and Community Food Security in the San Francisco Bay Area. J. Plann. Educ. Res. 26, 352–364.
Slocum, R., 2007. Whiteness, space and alternative food practice. Geoforum 38 (3), 520–533.
Talmage, C., Knopf, R.C., 2017. Rethinking diversity, inclusion, and inclusiveness: the quest to better understand indicators of community enrichment and well-being. In: Kraeger, P., Cloutier, S., Talmage, C. (Eds.), Community Quality-Of-Life and Well-Being. New Dimensions in Community Well-Being, pp. 7–27.
Teichmann, A., 2018. Bees Coop in Brussels, A Cooperative Model of Sustainable Food, By and For Everyone? Mémoire de Master dirigé par Marek Hudon. Bruxelles. Université Libre de Bruxelles.
Tregear, A., 2011. Progressing knowledge in alternative and local food networks: critical reflections and a research agenda. J. Rural Stud. 27 (4), 419–443.
Van Herzele, A., De Clercq, E.M., Wiedemann, T., 2005. Strategic planning for new woodlands in the urban periphery: through the lens of social inclusiveness. Urban For. Urban Green. 3 (3–4), 177–188.
Venn, L., Kneafsey, M., Holloway, L., Cox, R., Dowler, E., Tuomainen, H., 2006. Researching European 'alternative' food networks: some methodological considerations. Area 38 (3), 248–258.
Ver Ploeg, M., Wilde, P.E., 2018. How do food retail choices vary within and between food retail environments? Food Pol. 79, 300–308.
Vermeersch, S., 2004. Entre Individualisation et participation : l'engagement associatif bénévole. Rev. Fr. Sociol. 45 (4), 681–710.
Vihalemm, T., Keller, M., Kiisel, M., 2015. From Intervention to Social Change. A Guide to Reshaping Everyday Practices. Ashgate Publishing Limited, Famham.
Whatmore, S., Stassart, P., Renting, H., 2003. Guest editorial: what's alternative about alternative food networks? Environ. Plann. A 35, 389–391.
Wrigley, N., Warm, D., Margetts, B., 2003. Deprivation, diet and food retail access: findings from the Leeds 'food deserts' study. Environ. Plann. A 36, 151–188.