



# SURVEY INFOGRAPHIC

The survey aimed to assess and identify practices that enhance the appeal and attractiveness of rural products and services to catch the attention of consumers and promote the consumption of rural products, especially the eco and Km0 ones. The survey gathered results from 75 current and prospective rural entrepreneurs in Lithuania, Sweden and Germany. The answers of this survey were collected between January 31 and March 20, 2023. The results should be interpreted with caution, as the sample size of the participants is too small and not representative of the entire population. Therefore, it is important to note that the survey results may not reflect the opinions and experiences of the wider population.

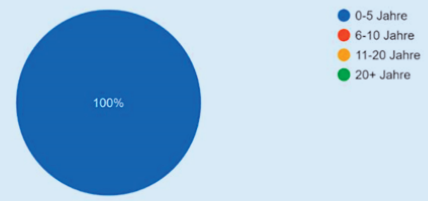
## Status & Business Area



Sektor und Bereich der Geschäftstätigkeit?  
7 responses



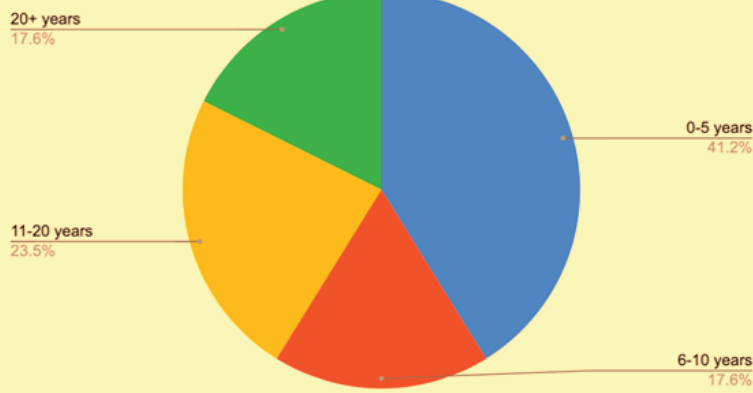
Wie lange ist sie bereits in Betrieb?  
1 response



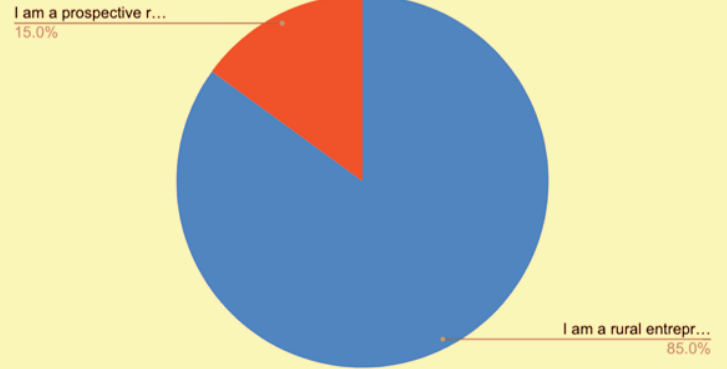
The survey targeted rural entrepreneurs, mostly with 0-5 employees, but some with 6-10 or 11-20 employees, active for 0-20 years. The main business sector was food production, but respondents also had businesses in accommodation, entertainment, financial services, and green clothing/textile. Entrepreneurial activities included gardening, project management, language, circus, drama, and art. Target customers varied across industries and included local consumers, house owners and flat owners, hospitals and industry laundries, children, and companies and enterprises. The survey provides insights into the needs and preferences of rural entrepreneurs and their customers, but the sample size is limited, and the results should be interpreted with caution.



Count of How long has it been operational for?



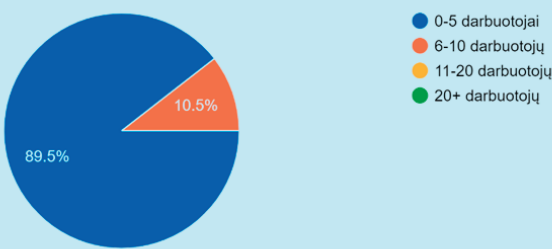
Count of How would you best describe your current status?



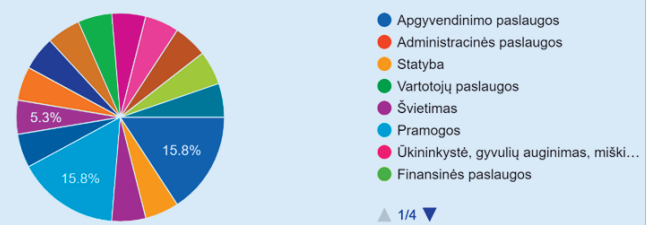
Out of the 20 respondents, 3 were prospective entrepreneurs, and 17 were current rural entrepreneurs. Of the latter group, 58.8% had 0-5 employees, and 41.2% were young enterprises (0-5 years). Most represented businesses were in farming, ranching, and forestry (5/20), with others in accommodation, tourism, retail, education, utilities, coffee and restaurant, arts, and entertainment. The survey provides useful insights into rural business diversity, but the small sample size limits its representativeness.



Dydis  
19 responses

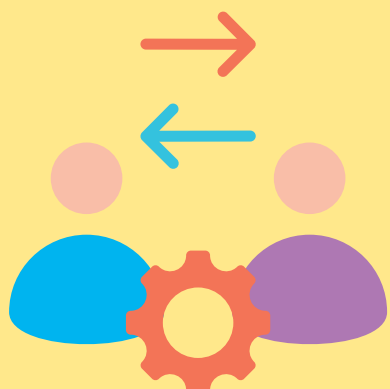


Jūsų verslo sektorius ir/ar veikla  
19 responses



In this survey, 35 respondents participated, with 54.3% being rural entrepreneurs and 45.7% planning to start a business in rural areas. The majority of businesses (89.5%) had 0-5 employees, and 63.2% of participants indicated that their enterprise is young (up to 6 years old). While a few participants were in the same industry (accommodation and entertainment), the survey showed a wide range of industries and areas of business activity, including tourism, agriculture, sewing, ranching, beekeeping, gardening, social services for the elderly, retail, hospitals, education, and construction. However, some rural entrepreneurs lacked knowledge about correctly identifying the industry in which they operate.



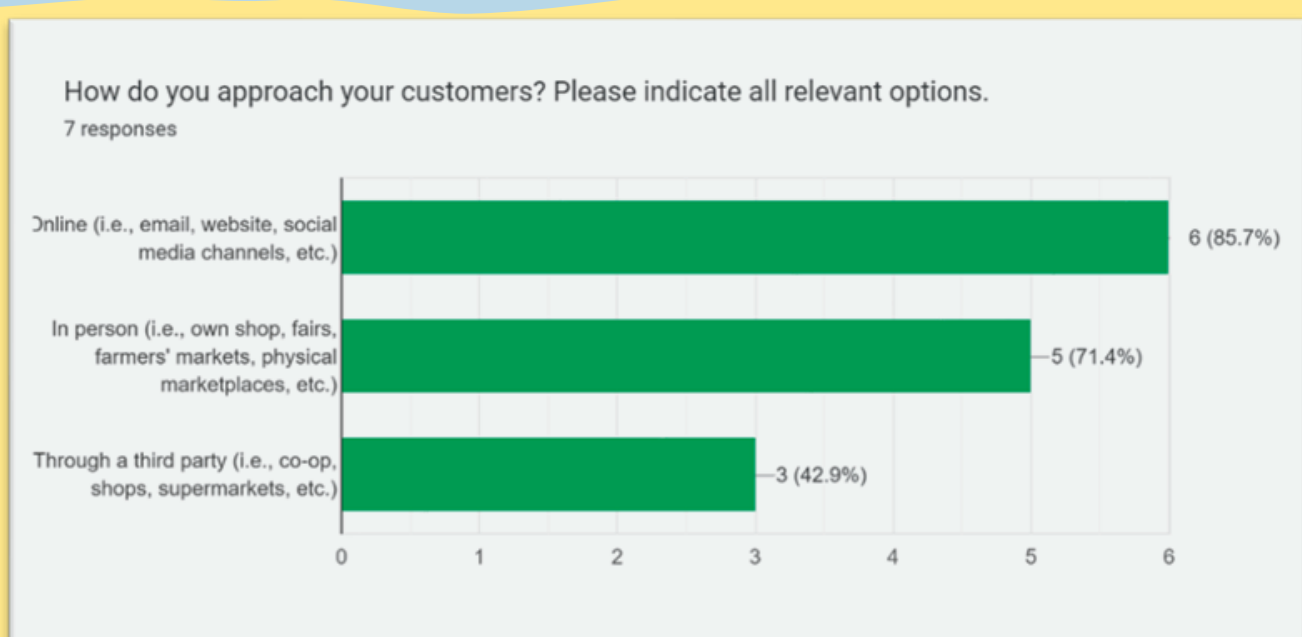


# BUSINESS APPROACH

Strengths, Weakness, Evaluation

## TOMORROW TOGETHER E.V.

Because of digital marketing, most prospective entrepreneurs want to use online approaches. Some of them are comfortable with in person approach as they live and know the rural consumers for a long time. The evaluation differs here from entrepreneur to entrepreneur. They evaluate their business by trust, feedback, customer relations, communication, quality of product, support, and responses. Our responders stated language barriers, the infrastructure of IT, proper marketing, short-term perspective, climate change, centralization, knowledge gap, and lack of employees as their business weaknesses.

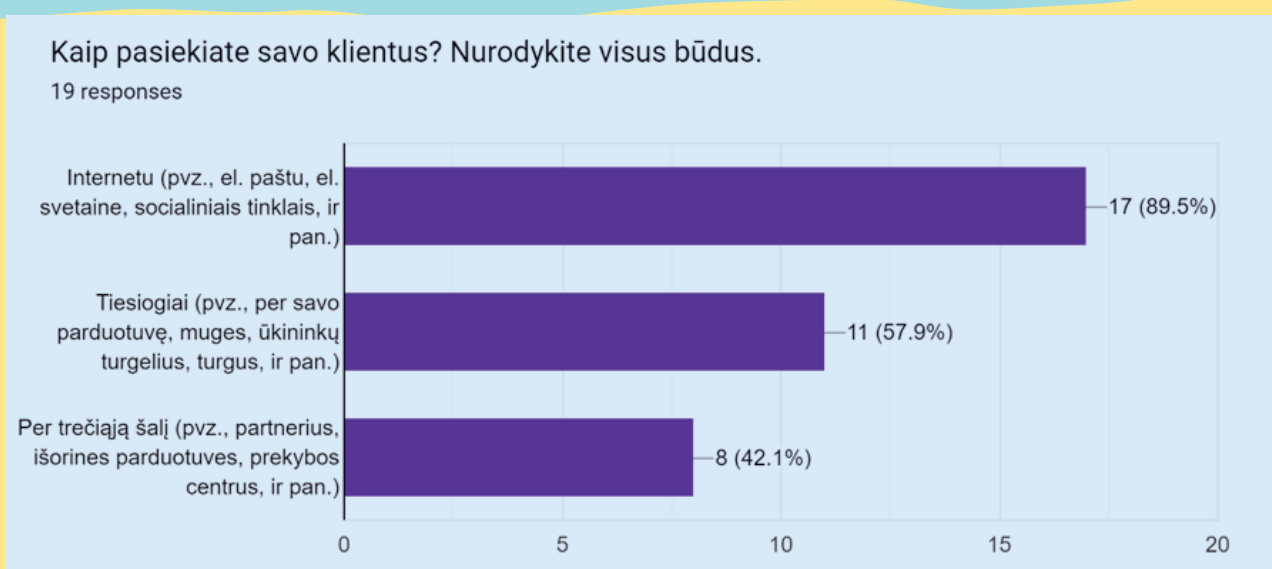


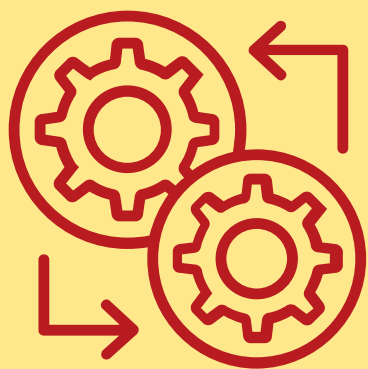
## SWIDEAS AB

The respondents highlighted the strengths of their businesses, such as interdisciplinary approaches, sustainability, unique experiences, and high-quality products. They also identified weaknesses, including price, communication, seasonal fluctuations, small size, and dependence on customer engagement. Some noted challenges related to infrastructure and location, while others recognized the need for better marketing and organizational strategies. Overall, the survey results demonstrate the diverse strengths and weaknesses of rural entrepreneurs and highlight the need for support in areas such as marketing, communication, and infrastructure development.

## LISVA

The majority of rural entrepreneurs use online means to reach customers, while less than half use third-party channels. This suggests a lack of cooperation and potential for increased competitive advantage. When asked about strengths, more than 55% focused on product/service features, indicating a need for strategic planning knowledge. Only 68% correctly identified internal weaknesses such as lack of business management skills or team. The rest identified external factors, indicating a potential lack of understanding of business management and strategic planning.



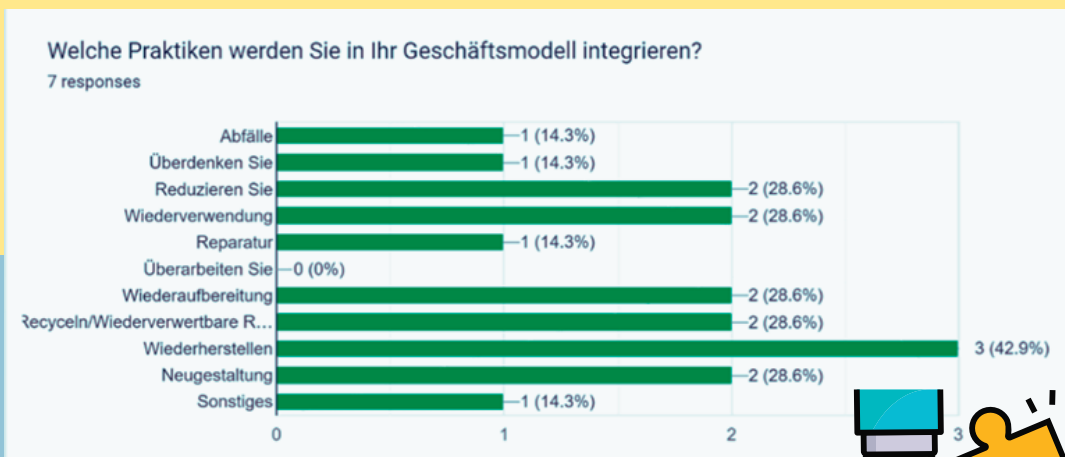


# INTEGRATION WITH CIRCULAR ECONOMY

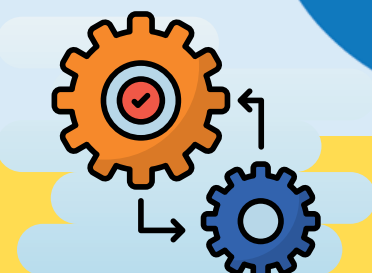
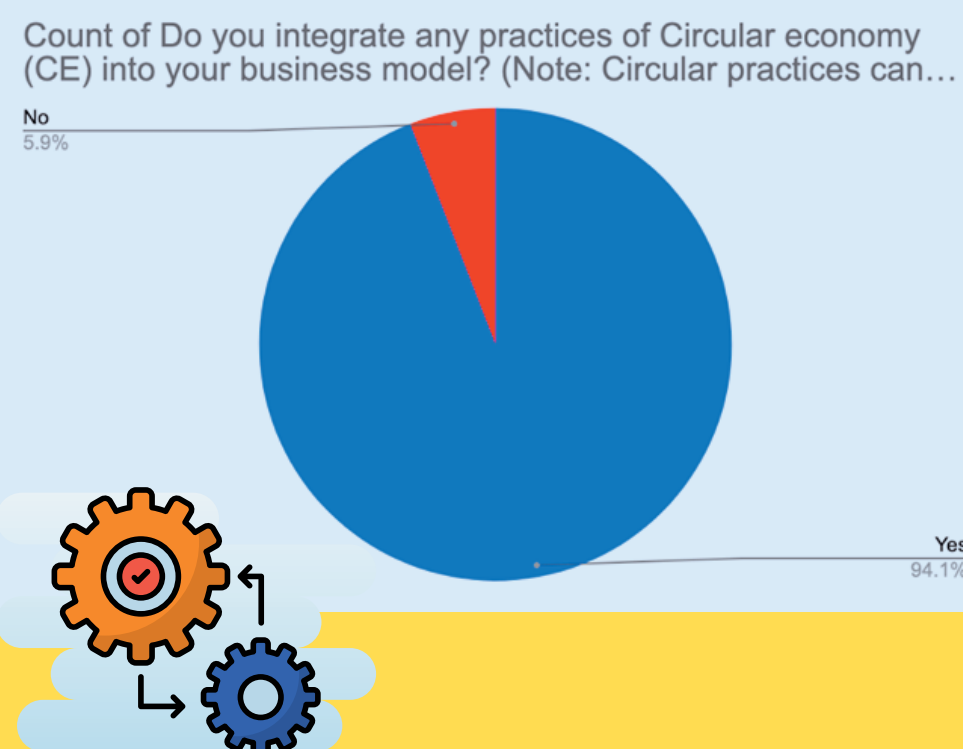
## Practice & Knowledge Improvement of CE



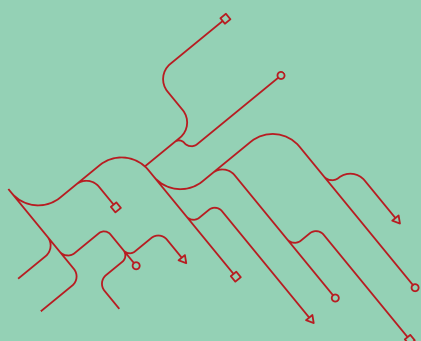
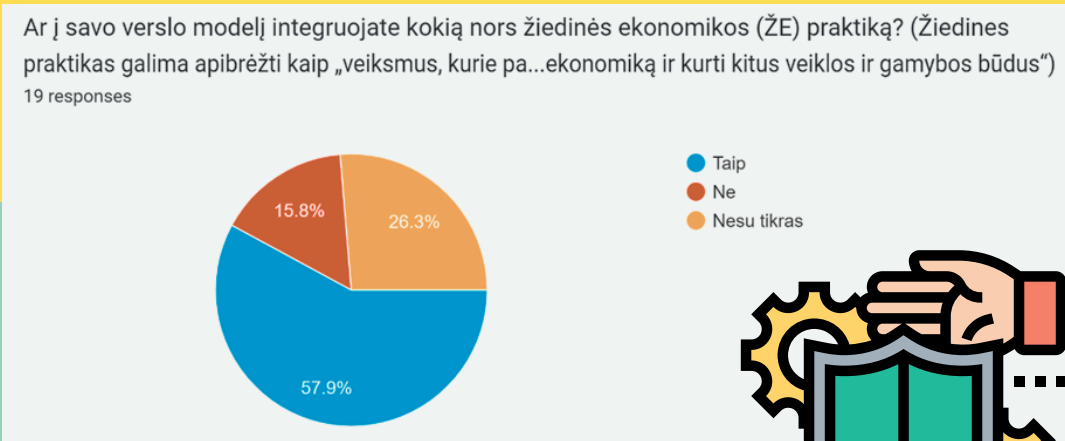
Many entrepreneurs lack knowledge on circular economy (CE) integration, as they responded "not sure". However, prospective entrepreneurs show interest in integrating CE practices, such as refuse (1), rethink (4), reduce (4), reuse (4), repair (1), refurbish (2), remanufacture (4), repurpose (3), recycle (4), recover (4), and redesign (3) into their business model. Entrepreneurs seek to develop their understanding of CE business models, practices for integration, and funding opportunities.

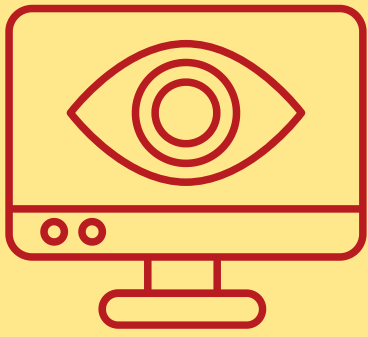


In terms of circular economy practices, the respondents frequently use "reuse", "recycle", and "repurpose". Many expressed interest in learning more about circular business models, integrating circular practices, and finding funding opportunities. Digital technologies are mainly used for online customer outreach and financial organization. Environmental aspects are often emphasized to increase product appeal. Some respondents also faced challenges with regulations and labeling.



The survey aimed to assess rural entrepreneurs' understanding and use of circular economy practices. While the majority (57.9%) indicated they implement circular practices, 25% were unsure. Respondents mostly use reuse, rethink, refurbish, and reduce. They want to learn more about integrating practices, circular business models, and funding opportunities. The focus should be on practical examples and case studies, as respondents show interest in implementing circular practices in their business model.





# DIGITALIZATION

Visibility, Methods, Technologies, Tools



zoom

## TOMORROW TOGETHER E.V.



Entrepreneurs are using digital solutions to increase visibility and sales, while some are focused on making their products more appealing by incorporating qualities like being local, organic, and sustainable. Google Ads can be useful for visibility, but may not be relevant for those with local visibility. By focusing on these values, entrepreneurs can appeal to consumers who prioritize them.



## SWIDEAS AB



Based on the responses of the entrepreneurs, it seems that many are using digital technologies to reach customers and organize their finances. They also believe that highlighting environmental aspects of their products can increase their appeal. Some methods that have been successful include advertising on booking and tourism sites and utilizing social media for word-of-mouth marketing. Entrepreneurs believe that local, organic, and circular methods make their products more appealing, and they suggest that emphasizing sustainability, accessibility, quality, and engagement with local communities can enhance attractiveness to customers.



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# KIND OF PRODUCT/ SERVICE



## TOMORROW TOGETHER E.V.

From the information provided, it appears that the entrepreneurs are primarily focused on serving rural customers through food production and related activities, such as gardening. However, they also offer a variety of other services, including project management, language education, circus, drama, and art. Their target customers include consumers, house owners, and flat owners for accommodation businesses, hospitals and industry laundries for green clothing and textile businesses, children and local people for entertainment businesses, and companies and enterprises for financial businesses.



## SWIDEAS AB



The business offers a wide range of products and services including vegetables, herbs, honey, photography, accommodation in traditional cabins, gardening and forestry work, food and drink, entertainment, and a community for families. Target customers include those involved in permaculture, blended agriculture, and forest management, as well as those needing technical consulting. The company is also involved in the production, transport, and trade of forest products and offers rental and financing solutions for forest machines. Additionally, they are involved in construction, transportation, berry trade, and market trade in food and beverages.

## LISVA

Participants were asked to provide short answers on the products and services they offer. The majority of respondents were able to clearly indicate the products/services they provide, with only a few requiring additional clarification. However, some participants provided answers that focused on their enterprise activities rather than their specific products/services. For instance, mentioning sustainable fashion without elaborating on the specific products/services offered. Overall, the quality of responses was good, indicating that rural entrepreneurs in Lithuania have a good understanding of the products and services they offer.





# CONCLUSION

## TOMORROW TOGETHER E.V.

In conclusion, most of the responders are new entrepreneurs. They are willing to learn CE model and mostly have limited knowledge on it. As a challenge mostly they want to incorporate digital tools as a method to reach their customers as well as for better marketing of their products and services. From the responders of prospective entrepreneurs, it is evident that, they want to enrich their knowledge in CE for their future business.



## SWIDEAS AB

From the results of the survey in the Swedish context, it can be concluded that there already exists a considerable knowledge of circular economy and its practices and are already incorporating a few practices into their models, mainly “refuse” (9), “repurpose” (11), “reuse” (12), “reduce” (11), “repair” (10), “rethink” (9), and “recycle” (13).. Thus, rather than emphasising the basic, focus could be given to the following topics “Which practices could be integrated into your business”, “circular business models”, “The benefits of adopting circular economy business model”, and “How can one find funding opportunities?”.

Related to the digital technologies, it seems like the rural entrepreneurs are already using them to reach customers/consumers and to organize their finances. Thus, focus can be given to more advanced skills, such as ensuring their safety and marketing.

## LISVA

The results of survey showed certain weaknesses of both rural entrepreneurs and prospective rural entrepreneurs, such as poor knowledge of business management and strategic planning methods, in particular on segmentation and evaluation. The results also uncovered areas which should be focused on, namely practical aspects of the topics explored in the survey. The answers showed that around half of the (prospective) rural entrepreneurs surveyed were already implementing or planning to implement circular economy practices, with about 30% of them not being sure about it. These findings suggest that there is a gap between theoretical and practical knowledge, and that concrete, specific information about circular economy practices should be disseminated, focusing on case studies, practical methods and clear ideas that could be implemented by the (prospective) rural entrepreneurs.

