

International Agribusiness
2016 - 2017

Een samenwerkingsverband van slatelers binnen het hydroponic systeem in Suriname en een analyse van het rendement



Afstudeerverslag ter verkrijging van
de graad van Bachelor of Applied Technology (B.Tech.)
in de studierichting International Agribusiness

Stippel, S.

Paramaribo, 5 mei 2017

Summary

This thesis researched the challenges and opportunities of the attempts of cooperation by hydroponic growers. In order to encourage the cooperation an economic analysis was prepared to assess the impact on the return on investment by an individual lettuce entrepreneur compared to a member of a hydroponic cooperative.

Research into the kinds of cooperation and research methods is carried out. It was decided to do a survey which was carried out in three districts: Paramaribo, Wanica and Para. Fifteen hydroponic growers participated in this study. Information was collected on, inter alia, the mutual cooperation, the economics, the production and marketing.

Hydroponic growers took initiatives to address their problems regarding expensive inputs and high cost of investment. First they organized themselves first in an association and at a later stage to form a cooperative. Both attempts were not successful. These producers have generally no sound justification of the cost price of lettuce. On this basis it was decided to carry out research with the problem definition *“Are there economic benefits as a member of a hydroponic cooperative and what is the cost price of hydroponic grown lettuce and the return on investment?”*

A majority of the growers says still to be motivated to work under certain condition together in a cooperative. The findings of the research illustrate however that growers were not ready to work together and also had insignificant understanding and knowledge about the salient/relevant features of the cooperatives. In Suriname, cooperatives can be developed in a sustainable manner, if three essential conditions are met, specifically: credit, availability of inputs and marketing, where training, education and extension services (drivers) are needed.

The research has also shown that most of the lettuce in hydroponic, is produced year round according to the Nutrient Film Technique (NFT) system. The majority of farmers grow hydroponic lettuce as a part-time activity. Because no grower could provide comprehensive information regarding the cost price of lettuce or could tell how profitable hydroponic lettuce was, the economics of hydroponic lettuce was also examined. On the basis of the economic analysis the calculated cost price per piece of lettuce is about US\$ 0.21 (SRD 1.60) and the selling price US\$ 0.59 (SRD 4.50) per piece of lettuce. The rate of return on investment is 377%. In the scenario where the producer is a member of the cooperative, the cost price US\$ 0.01 (SRD 0.08) is lower and the return on investment is 37% points more than by an individual grower.

It is recommended that the government, in particular the Department of the cooperatives at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery (LVV), stimulates cooperatives and facilitate agricultural entrepreneurs with adequate training and guidance to help them achieve their economic goals in an efficient way. Finally, it is recommended that the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (HI & T) takes an active role towards the improvement of market access for lettuce in the region.