

## List of Proposed Master's Thesis Topics

<b>Value Chains and Rural Development in Agriculture and Forestry (VCR)</b>	
<b>Topics and further information</b>	<b>Contact and Geography</b>
<b>Rural Economics - Switzerland</b>	
<p><b>Sans Papiers: 'Invisible' agricultural wage workers</b> They do not appear in any statistics on agricultural wage workers and discussions about agricultural wage workers exclude them. However, Sans Papiers, illegal immigrants, are welcome on Swiss farms as wage workers. This thesis aims at better understanding the working and living conditions of this group as well as the situation of the employers, the farmers, who are as well are engaged in illegal practices.</p>	Sandra Contzen Switzerland
<p><b>Farm transfer: financial, social and familial challenges</b> The transfer of the business from one generation to the other is a fundamental element of family farming. Although lived by all farmers, the process is complex and implies several challenges with which the involved people have to deal. Despite the existence of a broad range of academic literature and practical information, knowledge lack on social, familiar and far reaching financial aspects of farm transfer. The thesis is part of the project 'Hofnachfolge360' of HAFL and provides qualitative insights in the above-mentioned aspects of farm transfer by carrying out three wages of qualitative interviews with farmers and farm successors. The results are used for the development of tools for a holistic planning of farm transfer.</p>	Sandra Contzen Switzerland
<p><b>Regional business models for food production and marketing in an alpine tourism region</b> Local and regional markets max represent interesting income sources for farms. Tourism regions in the Swiss Alps are very interesting for selling Swiss food products as these products can be exported (invisibly) via the touristic demand. The goal of this MT is to analyse and optimize existing regional business models in the Swiss Alpes and to develop new ones.</p>	Andreas Hochuli Switzerland
<p><b>Potentials for cooperation between agriculture in mountain areas and alpine tourism</b> In this MT, the value chains of milk and meat in two chosen tourism destinations of the Swiss Alps (Jura Arc) are analysed. Study goal: To show which incentives need to be given to local farmers that they deliver their products to regional customers and buyers. An adequate data collection method is to be developed and implemented. Data evaluation and a literature review are further important.</p>	Andreas Hochuli Switzerland
<p><b>Public preferences for agriculture: an evaluation of agricultural policies in Switzerland</b> Multifunctional agricultural systems aim at establishing a balance between traditional commodity support and payments to produce non-market goods such as food safety, food security and environmental amenity. In fact, there is a general trend in agricultural policies towards payments that are less coupled with production decisions. According to the OECD, in the European Union, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, payments without production requirements accounted for between 6% and 10% of gross farm receipts in 2015-17. The optimal supply of these</p>	Filippo Lechthaler Switzerland

<p>non-market goods, however, presents a challenge not least the elicitation of consumer demand for those goods. Although the architecture of agricultural policies is of highest importance for rural development, there is surprisingly little known about public preferences on the allocation of public funds to non-market goods in agriculture. This master's thesis aims at exploring the role of public preferences in the agricultural reform process in Switzerland. The study will include primary data collection (survey) and analysis to assess what consumers want from agriculture in Switzerland.</p>	
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Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<b>Rural Economics - International</b>	
<p><b>Designing and evaluating an agricultural program to improve households' food and nutrition security in Côte d'Ivoire</b>            There is an increasing trend in agricultural policies to target health-related outcomes which is driven by the importance of agriculture for food security, dietary quality and nutrition. Such programs are particularly relevant for sub-Saharan Africa where undernutrition remains a major concern and where the agricultural sector is dominated by small-scale producers. However, there is little farm-level evidence available that proves the direct link between agricultural support to smallholders and improved nutrition for the farming households. This Master Thesis aims at developing an agricultural program and monitoring framework tailored to small scale farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. The study will include primary data collection and analysis to describe farm production and management characteristics and to assess potential impacts of agricultural support on the farm households' food and nutrition security.</p>	<p>Filippo Lechthaler Côte d'Ivoire</p>
<p><b>Cost Benefit Analyses of development projects</b>            Comparison studies with various institutions, sectors and projects, identifying best practices but also pitfalls, recommendations for the development community in terms of methods for analysing cost effectiveness of development cooperation.</p>	<p>Dominique Guenat t.b.d.</p>
<p><b>Fairtrade certifications in the Organic Banana Value Chain in the Dominican Republic</b>            Fairtrade certification is viewed positively by consumers in Europe. Yet for developing countries, certifying producers requires a significant investment. In the Dominican Republic, most of the labor in the banana sector comes from the Haiti. Migrant workers play an important role in this industry. However, once the migrant workers get a contract and a legal status required by the Fairtrade certification, they abandon the sector and move to more profitable non-agricultural activities. The banana sector is greatly affected by the lack of stable, reliable labor. The thesis will look in depth at the economic and social impact of Fairtrade and the flow of labor.</p>	<p>Ingrid Fromm Dominican Republic</p>
<p><b>Exploring alternative livelihood opportunities for fishermen and landless people in coastal areas in Myanmar, by maintaining and sustainably using the unique biodiversity.</b>            Helvetas - Gulf of Mottama Project (GoMP): One of the project aims is to promote alternative livelihood activities by farmers and landless family (mainly fishermen). Current situation is that most of the farmers are</p>	<p>Alessandra Giuliani Myanmar</p>

<p>breeding small livestock (goats and pigs) to obtain additional income and some of the landless family members migrate to Thailand in search of better income opportunities. Some of the beneficiaries of theGoMP don't have farm land due to limited land available, landslides or the fact that their main income activities is fishing. Especially the fishermen will face the consequence of introducing more sustainable fishing practices in the Gulf of Mottama. Roughly one third of the total population are fishermen and half of total population are landless in the project area. Therefore, we do need to find alternative livelihoods. This study will conduct a research in the different value chains for fishermen in the area (e.g. income from present fishing practices, working as a paid labour on rice farms, fish processing value chains, income from tourism opportunities and other off-farm alternative income opportunities. This topic will consider the effects the introduction of sustainable fishing methods will have on the income for fishermen and will consider appropriate value chains and the potential income opportunities of these alternative livelihoods. By analysing these different options the project aims to reduce migrant population and to get a stable income for fishermen while sustainably managing the natural resources in the Gulf of Mottama.</p>	
<p><b>Benefit-Cost Analysis of the Ideal Farmers</b>          Compare the investment needed to install an irrigation system with all the benefits gain from the increase in the productivity (investment return) and elaborate a type of orchards design.          Goal: Increase agricultural productivity with the promotion and installation of irrigation systems as well as agroecological and orchards management trainings          Work and life context of the student          The student will stay mainly in the ASECSA head office and in the "Tecnología para la salud-TPS" workshop (located 20 minutes away), with field trips of several days or weeks. It is also possible to extend the field stay, according to the student thesis definition. The student will join a dynamic group of 7 people in the head office (between 25 and 55 years old), 5 young technics and supporters that work in several communities. The only language from the team is Spanish.          The accommodation in Chimaltenango could be in a family house or we offer a lodging service as well in the ASECSA head office. ASECSA will support in this regard.          Location: Chimaltenango (1 hour from the capital and 30 min from La Antigua)</p>	<p>Christoph Studer Guatemala</p>
<p><b>Participatory Promotion of New Value Chains for the Diversification of Income (Apple processing, Beekeeping, Agritourism, Medicinal Plants)</b>          FAO is developing, together with other actors such as SDC, an innovative approach of participatory watershed planning and management in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco (GIBV-MA). HAFL, together with the Centre for Environment and Development (CDE) of Bern University, is backstopping this project. The Midelt region, targeted by the project, is one of the poorest of the country. It is famous for its apple production, produced under irrigation. On the other hand, the level of degradation of the natural resources (erosion and deforestation) is extreme, leading to recurrent natural disasters such as floods and decreased productivity. One of the project's</p>	<p>Pascale Waelti Morocco</p>

<p>objectives is to develop promising or new value chains that will contribute to the diversification of income of the local population. Apple is the most important agricultural production, but there is no processing of this commodity and losses are important. Other promising value chains are aromatic and medicinal plants, beekeeping/honey and agritourism. The Master student will support a process of participatory market chain approach to develop or improve one selected value chain.</p>	
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Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<p><b>Animal Science - International</b></p>	
<p><b>Assess role of animal welfare along the small ruminant value chain</b>            The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works to improve food security and reduce poverty in developing countries through research for better and more sustainable use of livestock. ILRI is a member of the CGIAR Consortium which works for a food-secure future. The student would be hosted by the Animal and Human Health AHH program and will be supervised by Dr. Barbara Wieland, and closely work with the AHH team in Ethiopia and national partner organisations of the national agricultural research system (NARS).            The proposed project is aligned to the CGIAR research program on Livestock (CRP LIVESTOCK), which work in different value chains around the world. In Ethiopia, the program has been working on the small ruminant value chain since 2012 and has established close links with the NARS. The value chain work is implemented in 7 sites, with 2 villages each and addresses different challenges along the value chain, incl. feeds, breeding, animal health, food safety, market access etc.            Aim of project: The project aims to identify animal welfare issues along the small ruminant value chain in Ethiopia in different production systems.            The hypotheses are: a) the general knowledge among the different stakeholders is low, leading to unintended poor practices and b) there are different welfare challenges in different production systems (highlands with more sedentary production system compared to agro-pastoralist system in the lowlands)</p>	<p>Nancy Bourgeois Lüthi Ethiopia</p>

Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<b>Crop production - International</b>	
<p><b>Yams value chain assessment in Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso</b>            Yam (<i>Dioscorea</i> spp.) is an underutilised crop despite it feeds 155 million persons in the tropics. More than 90% of the global yam production is in West Africa. The increase in yam production in West Africa over the last decades was mostly realised through increasing the area under cultivation, while tuber yield increased only slightly. Yam requires a very high soil fertility level; hence, it is traditionally grown as the first crop after clearing long-term fallow or primary vegetation, but unfortunately often without any external inputs. This practice has resulted in a significant encroachment in biodiversity rich landscapes and in negative nutrient budgets leading to soil degradation. Although low soil fertility is often mentioned by producers as one of the most important factors limiting yam yields, very little research has been done on this topic.</p> <p>YAMSYS is an inter- and trans-disciplinary project based on a partnership between institutions from Switzerland (ETH, FiBL), Côte d'Ivoire (CSRS, UFHB), Burkina Faso (INERA, UPB), two institutions of the CGIAR system (ICRAF, IITA), yam producers, and other key actors from relevant social systems. The objective of YAMSYS is to develop biophysically, institutionally and economically accepted soil management innovations for increased crop productivity, food security, profitability, and environmental sustainability of yam systems in selected agro-ecological zones of West Africa. YAMSYS has 4 pilot sites representative of the biophysical conditions of the West African yam belt, going from the sub humid forest (South West of Côte d'Ivoire) to the Northern Guinean savannah (Centre South of Burkina Faso) and presenting distinct economic and institutional contexts.</p> <p>The socio-economic work is mainly conducted by two PhD students, gathering and analysing socio-economic data relating to yams production, mainly at the household and community level. To complement this work, YAMSYS is eager to count with the support of a HAFL student to do a 'value chain &amp; market assessment' in the two target countries of the project.</p>	<p>Ingrid Fromm            Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso</p>
<p><b>Pepper production in Kampot, Cambodia</b>            Kampot is famous for the outstanding quality of its pepper. Some even say that it is the best pepper in the world.</p> <p>Mr Markus Lehmann, together with a Cambodian partner Khom Phy, own and run a pepper farm (3ha pepper, farm size 7ha) in Kampot. The production is mostly exported to Switzerland and Europe, and sold through direct (on-line) marketing channels (<a href="http://www.goutduterroir">www.goutduterroir</a> und <a href="http://www.raffinessen.ch">www.raffinessen.ch</a>).</p> <p>Pepper production in Kampot is facing several problems such as poor water management, damages to the crop by termites, poor crop management resulting in low yields. On the other hand, the location is quite favourable, and the local conditions are rather good and unique and therefore the cultivation of pepper quality is good. That is why this small area in the south of Cambodia received a geographical indication. It is possible to produce four kinds of pepper from the same plant with exceptional quality: green, black, red and white.</p>	<p>Dominique Guenat            Cambodia</p>

<p>The pepper production in that region must be organic (because it is in a protected area). All pepper producers are members of a cooperative the role of which is to verify that its members comply with the rules relative to managing the protected area.</p> <p>The proposed MSc thesis may focus on the pepper agronomy, and propose improvements to overcome the mentioned problems, based on literature review, interviews with local pepper producers (including a specialized research centre in Cambodia). Looking into the sustainability of production is also part of the research.</p>	
<p><b>Research about the expected impacts after changing the production patterns from monocultures to diversify production.</b></p> <p>The organization “Aqua Alimenta”, Swiss NGO (from 2012 on)</p> <p>Goal: Increase agricultural productivity with the promotion and installation of irrigation systems as well as agroecological and orchards management trainings</p> <p>The project has 3 main activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local production of water pumps: “Swiss-PEP” technology (simple, with local material, low investment, resistant)</li> <li>• Promotion, planning and installation of irrigation systems: with the support of a technic team. The farmers pay the 50% of the installation cost.</li> <li>• Agroecological field trainings in: a) irrigation techniques b) orchards design, plant protection c) soil protection d) native seeds, reproduction and storage.</li> </ul> <p>Additional topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of marketing strategies of the project towards the participants</li> <li>• Establishment of a social network for the communication with and between the participants and training all the participants in its use.</li> <li>• Develop informatic tools for collecting and processing all the monitored data</li> <li>• Systematization and analysis of the monitored data</li> <li>• Development of the information material for all the participants</li> <li>• Training of the project team in agroforestry and agroecological topics</li> </ul>	<p>Christoph Studer Guatemala</p>

Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<b>Cross-cutting questions - Switzerland</b>	
<p><b>Kann eine touristische Nutzung Landschaften schützen?</b> Wanderwege oder touristische Bahnstrecken, die entlang von Naturmonumenten geführt werden, können eventuell dazu beitragen, dass diese besser geschützt werden. TragenSee- und Flussuferwege oder auch die Berninabahnstrecke dazu bei, dass die Aussichtslandschaften besser erhalten bleiben? Wenn ja, welche Massnahmen müssten ergriffen werden, damit das touristische Angebot nicht zu einer Übernutzung führt?</p>	Karin Zbinden Switzerland
<p><b>Stellenwert des Kulturtourismus</b> Welche Formen von Kulturtourismus gibt es und wie sieht der sozio-ökonomische und ökologische Nutzen aus? Beispiel ist das Origen-Festival in der Surses GR oder auch die Aktion „L’Esprit des Lieux“ von Fribourg Tourismus.</p>	Karin Zbinden Switzerland
<p><b>Einbezug von Zweitwohnungsbesitzern in die Landschaftspflege</b> Landschaftspflege ist aufwändig und durch lokale Körperschaften oft kaum mehr bewältigbar. Gleichzeitig steigt bei Teilen der Bevölkerung das Bedürfnis, sich in gemeinnütziger Weise zu beteiligen und in der Natur aktiv zu sein. Die Frage stellt sich, ob und wie andere Akteure, insbesondere Zweitwohnungsbesitzer, in die Arbeiten zum Erhalt der Kulturlandschaft einbezogen werden können. Gibt es bereits Erfolgsbeispiele eines solchen Einbezugs?</p>	Karin Zbinden Switzerland

Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<b>Cross-cutting questions - International</b>	
<p><b>Piloting the first agritourism initiative in Myanmar, to benefit local communities and supporting sustainable agriculture and sustainable tourism</b> Analysis of possible implementation of a pilot agritourism initiative in Myanmar. MRTI would like to pilot agritourism in Myanmar, and the outcome of the study will help MRTI to lobby for an agritourism system in Myanmar, with guidelines. The research can look into the potential of tea-tourism or coffee-tourism in southern Shan area, known for the production of green tea and lately booming for good coffee quality. The research will be based on interaction with farmers who should be assessed on their interest, and trained on production techniques and sustainable tourism activities, local governmental agencies, other NGOs and INGOs, tour operators/tourism entities, etc...</p>	Alessandra Giuliani Myanmar (Southern Shan)
<p><b>Assessing the environmental and socio-economic impacts of cocoa agroforestry projects</b> In setting is the practice of offsetting a company’s climate footprint within its direct sphere of influence (core business supply chains) so as to generate multiple positive sustainable impacts: more productive ecosystems, improvement of socio-economic conditions as farmers’ wealth and wellbeing, as well as biodiversity conservation and natural resources preservation. The aim of this thesis is to develop</p>	Ingrid Fromm Peru/Honduras

<p>measurement and communication tools to value environmental and socio-economic services generated by community agroforestry projects.</p>	
<p><b>Impact de la médaille du Concours des produits du terroir</b>  <b>SUJETS PRIORITAIRES POUR L'ANNEE 2018-2019</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact technico économique des produits médaillés du Concours (étude consommateur)</li> <li>• Impact des médailles et du Concours des produits du terroir sur les producteurs (évaluation économique, qualité, procès de production, etc.)</li> <li>• Le Concours des produits du terroir comme moyen d'intégration des filières ou produit : adhésion des différents acteurs et impact</li> <li>• Accompagnement d'un médaillé pour l'amélioration d'un ou de plusieurs aspects pour une meilleure commercialisation de son produit : DLC, emballage....</li> <li>• Formulation et caractérisation d'un produit de terroir : ex : Bsissa à base de blé germé</li> </ul> <p><b>AUTRES SUJETS POSSIBLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Etude d'impacts de la labellisation AOC d'un produit agricole sur le développement local d'un territoire.</li> <li>• Analyse diagnostic de la chaîne de valeur figue de barbarie au Centre-Ouest de la Tunisie : les préalables au développement d'un cluster Cactus</li> <li>• Etude de la performance des entreprises créées suite à la labellisation des produits de terroir</li> <li>• Caractérisation, optimisation et valorisation de la pâte de dattes</li> <li>• Extraction d'huile essentielle à partir de plantes sauvages de la région de Tabarka et son utilisation dans des produits laitiers et carnés traditionnels</li> </ul>	<p>Nancy Bourgeois Lüthi Tunisia</p>

Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<b>Food Systems - Switzerland</b>	
<p><b>Sustainable Value Chains – What is the role of social media?</b>            The ongoing digitalization or new technologies, like the Blockchain, can play a crucial role for enhancing transparency in food value chains. A literature review and interviews with farmers, processors and consumers in Switzerland will highlight the opportunities and risks of using innovative approaches to foster sustainability of conventional value chains. The objective is to enhance and monitor the release of information and knowledge management along the value chain, promote cooperation, and strengthen actors at both ends of the chain: processors and consumers. The Master’s thesis will be written in collaboration with practice partners.</p>	Evelyn Markoni Switzerland
<p><b>FoodPreneurs Bern</b>            Äss-Bar, Palette Bern oder Gmüesgarte machen es vor! Sie sind innovative «FoodPreneurs» in Bern, die eine regionale, nachhaltige Ernährung ermöglichen. So vermeiden sie beispielsweise Food Waste oder unnötige Verpackungen. Aber welche Motivationen stecken dahinter? Stossen diese «FoodPreneurs» auf Hindernisse und wie gehen sie mit diesen um? Die Masterarbeit dient dazu, FoodPreneurs in Bern sowie regionale Wertschöpfungsketten besser verstehen zu können. Zudem sollen politische Empfehlungen abgeleitet werden, um Pionierarbeit in Bern fördern zu können.</p>	Evelyn Markoni Switzerland
<p><b>The role of Switzerland in increasing social and environmental resilience in West Africa to secure cocoa supply</b>            The taste for chocolate in emerging markets will continue to increase the global demand for cocoa. However, supply shortages of this pressured commodity are expected as early as 2020. Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire are the world’s largest producers of cocoa, providing 60% of global supplies. Both countries face production bottlenecks that threaten cocoa exports in the coming years. Swiss-based multinationals must go beyond traditional development and CSR approaches to think more creatively about business model innovations that will help smallholder farmers capture more value from the global chocolate market.</p>	Ingrid Fromm Switzerland

Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<b>Food Systems - International</b>	
<p><b>Designing and evaluating an agricultural program to improve households’ food and nutrition security in Côte d’Ivoire</b>            There is an increasing trend in agricultural policies to target health-related outcomes which is driven by the importance of agriculture for food security, dietary quality and nutrition. Such programs are particularly relevant for sub-Saharan Africa where undernutrition remains a major concern and where the agricultural sector is dominated by small-scale producers. However, there is little farm-level evidence available that proves the direct link between agricultural support to smallholders and improved nutrition for the farming households. This Master Thesis aims at developing an agricultural program and monitoring framework tailored to small scale farmers in Côte d’Ivoire. The study will include primary data collection and analysis to describe</p>	Filippo Lechthaler Côte d’Ivoire

farm production and management characteristics and to assess potential impacts of agricultural support on the farm households' food and nutrition security.	
Topics and further information	Contact and Geography
<b>Forestry - Switzerland</b>	
<p><b>Marketing &amp; labelling Swiss agroforestry products</b></p> <p>There is need for innovative marketing strategies to improve the profitability of agroforestry systems. In Switzerland, for example, one of the key drivers of declining cultural landscapes is the low price of the tree products. In an attempt to increase profitability, several food products that originate from agroforestry systems are marketed with a label (e.g. Hochstamm-Suisse, Posamenter etc.). However, there is no overview of the various label products, the label conditions, the advantages and disadvantages of agroforestry label production and the quantities produced.</p> <p>Research tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Identify innovative tree products and marketing strategies that could increase the profitability of agroforestry systems.</li> <li>ii) Create an inventory of agroforestry related label production in Switzerland, including an overview of label requirements, quantities produced, costs and prices (price difference to non-label products). This overview should be a basis for a Europe-wide inventory and overview of agroforestry label products.</li> </ul>	Jan Grenz Switzerland
<p><b>The significance of non-timber products in Swiss forests through the ages</b></p> <p>The work would be done in tandem with an MSc student of a tropical country who would use a similar methodology to assess the significance of NTFPs and the change in their importance for nutrition, human health and other uses.</p>	Jürgen Blaser Switzerland (Togo, Ghana,..)

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