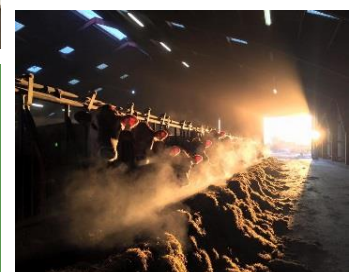


Farmers' Attitude Towards Succession and Unconventional Tenures

*- Providing recommendations on
unconventional tenures for new
entrants*



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TITLEPAGE

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This Master Thesis aims at investigating the motivations and barriers of new entrants and established farmers towards succession and unconventional tenures. Furthermore, recommendations on unconventional tenures for potential new entrants are presented. With regards to barriers towards untraditional succession methods and unconventional tenures, following conclusions were made: Agricultural regulations and legislation stand as great barriers for farmers, decades of agricultural traditions is causing farmers' scepticism, and established farmers find it difficult to relinquish responsibility and hand over the holding to a new entrant. Besides, lack of trust and commitment between established farmers and new entrants too stand as a barrier. A great motivation for new entrants is the feeling of independency. Due to family and agricultural schools having great impact on young farmers' attitude, it is found that new entrants entering untraditional successions or unconventional tenures typically are city dwellers and not rural citizens. Combining the recommendations of the interviewees and the findings from the obtained literature, the authors of this Master Thesis suggests a model for new entrants to follow, enabling them to enter a partnership with an established farmer by adding a 'buy-in' in the business.

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Further, we would like to thank the interviewees of this study, who welcomed us at their agricultural school and on their farms/horticultures when being interviewed, and took time to answer our questions. In particular, we would like to thank Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug and Økologisk Landsforening, especially Lone Andreassen and Bjarne Hansen for meeting us, discussing the project with us, and answering essential questions for this Master Thesis. We highly appreciate all above-mentioned constructive contribution to this Master Thesis.

Front page pictures – From the top: 1. Lars Skytte (1), 2. The two sharemilkers of Bundgaard Sharemilker I/S (2), 3. Dairy cows on their way to the transportable milking station at Bundgaard (3), 4. A selection of commodities from Skyttes Gartneri (4), 5. Field of rhubarbs at Skyttes Gartneri (5), 6. Per Bundgaard (6), 7. Dairy cattle at Bundgaard (7), 8. Gram Slot (8), 9. Svend Brodersen (9), 10. Bjarke Andersen (10), 11. Lars Skytte and two of the successors of Skyttes Gartneri (11), 12. Sanne and Svend Brodersen and Anders Rene Jensen, procurement and marketing director, REMA 1000 Denmark A/S (12), 13. Dairy cattle at Bundgaard (13).

RESUMÉ

Dette specialeprojekt undersøger hvilke faktorer som påvirker nye, unge såvel som ældre, etablerede landmænds motivationer og barrierer for at indgå i generationsskifter og ukonventionelle ejerforhold. Projektet præsenterer derudover anbefalinger for alternative ejerkonstellationer for potentielle nye landmænd. Den teoretiske ramme er Adele Clarks Situational Analysis. Studiets empiriske data er baseret på kvalitative, semi-strukturerede interviews med to landbrugsstuderende, en landbrugsskoleforstander, både etablerede og unge landmænd samt en landbrugskonsulent. Den indsamlede, empiriske data er analyseret efter Adele Clarks situational maps, resulterende i 10 temaer, som sætter den overordnede ramme for analysen. Resultatet af dette studie viser, at stærke landbrugstraditioner samt en overbevisning om at selveje er den eneste rigtige måde, hvorpå en landmand kan drive landbrug, er grundlæggende for de danske landmænds skepsis overfor utraditionelle generationsskiftemodeller og ukonventionelle ejerforhold. Tillid og forpligtigelse mellem den etablerede landmand og den nytilkomne landmand skal desuden være til stede for at imødekomme et velfungerende generationsskifte eller etablere alternative ejerforhold. Derover er det nødvendigt, at den unge landmand føler sig selvstændig og økonomisk involveret for, at være motiveret for at arbejde hårdt. Hvad angår indflydelse, har familien og landbrugsskolerne stor betydning for unge landmænds holdning og indstilling. Det konkluderes ydermere, at landmænd, som indgår i alternative generationsskifter eller ejerformer, typisk er fra mindre byer og altså ikke landsbysamfund. Endeligt konkluderer studiet, at landbrugslovgivning står som værende en væsentlig barriere for mange landmænd når generationsskifte, alternative landbrugskonstellationer og ejerforhold overvejes. Ud fra diskussionen, konkluderes det at landmændene umiddelbart anbefaler fire successionstyper. Forfatterne har ud fra disse skabt en model, der kombinerer modellerne for ukonventionelle ejerformer der blev præsenteret i interviewene og relevant information fra den udvalgte litteratur. Denne model vil kunne præsenteres for potentielle nye landmænd, og guide dem til hvorledes de kan indgå i et partnerskab med en etableret landmand under at tilføjelse af startkapital og på den måde nærme dem et liv som selvstændige landmænd.

ABSTRACT

In this Master Thesis, factors influencing motivations and barriers of new entrants and established farmers towards succession and unconventional tenures are investigated. Furthermore, recommendations on unconventional tenures for potential new entrants are presented. The theoretical framework is based on Adele Clarks Situational Analysis. The empirical data of the study is based on qualitative semi-structured interviews with two agricultural students and an agricultural school headmaster, three established farmers, a young new entrant and an agricultural consultant. The empirical data is analyzed according to Adele Clarks' situational maps, resulting in 10 themes, which frame the analysis. The result of the study shows that decades of agricultural traditions, stating that sole proprietorship and freehold is the only true opportunity of farming, are causing farmers' scepticism towards untraditional succession methods and unconventional tenures. Trust and commitment between the established farmer and the new entrant must also be present in order for a succession or tenure to happen. In order to motivate and empower the young new entrant, he must feel independent and be involved in the investment of the holding. With regards to influence, family and agricultural schools have a great impact on new entrants' attitude towards succession, alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures. Thus, it is found that new entrants entering untraditional successions or unconventional tenures typically are from either smaller towns or cities and not rural communities. Finally, agricultural regulations and legislation also stand as great barriers for entering untraditional successions and unconventional tenures. From the analysis, it is also concluded that farmers currently see four types of unconventional tenures. From these suggestions, the authors have created one, which combine elements of the tenure model, presented by the interviewees and findings from the obtained literature. This model can be presented for new entrants to follow, enabling them to enter a partnership with an established farmer by adding a 'buy-in' in the business and thereby taking steps towards becoming independent farmers.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this section, the background for Danish agriculture will be described, elaborating on economic and environmental relevant aspects, which affect the development of farming. Furthermore, an introduction of alternative agriculture will be presented, followed by a description of alternative farming, food cooperatives and urban gardening. Finally, Økologisk Landsforening and their project Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug will be introduced as well as their role within the field of succession unconventional tenures and alternative agricultural constellations.

1.1 Background

For a long period of time, Denmark has been an agricultural nation (1). In the 1800s, the Industrialization resulted in an increase of food production. Throughout the 1800s Danish agriculture bloomed, more labor force was needed and the capital of Danish agriculture increased. Agriculture was the drive force of the development of Danish society, and until 1850 Denmark held the highest productivity rate in the world. The ability to adapt to the market and thereby shift from growing crops to animal production, which had higher income elasticity than vegetable products, was the primary reason for Denmark's success (1).

The agricultural reformation, continuing throughout the last part of the 1700s until the introduction of the first education reform in 1814, gave farmers more private and economical freedom as well as knowledge, leading to a more effective agriculture (1). Not only did the reform benefit farmers, society too gained advantages from this increasingly effective agriculture. This beneficial link was inevitable due to farming being the crucial driving force in Danish economic development. Besides representing a great deal of the society's earnings base, it also employed a high percentage of the Danish population. Hence, the interests and needs of Danish agriculture were highly valued and taken into consideration when making decisions for the industrial structure of the society (1).

From 1920-1940, a significant increase in agricultural employment occurred (2). After 1940, agricultural employment decreased by 20%, and from 1960 the decline became even more obvious. In the 1960's, the second wave of the Industrialization began and by the end of the 1960's, more people were occupied in industrial work than in agriculture. The countryside experienced depopulation as its inhabitants moved to the larger cities and found work in factories and the textile industry (3).

Since World War 2, the development of Danish agriculture changed drastically. In this period of time, the number of fulltime farms went from being 200,000 to approximately 11,000 (2). The development of Danish agriculture, resulting in fewer yet larger industrial farms, led to a number of challenges in intergenerational farm transfers. Significant among these were the increased costs of the farms, and the downturn in the agricultural market. After the war, Danish countryside experienced depopulation. The younger generation moved from the countryside to larger cities, resulting in an older rural population as well as an increased average age of farmers, see [Figure 1](#). The following financial crisis and the difficulties associated with successions led to empty farms and abandoned villages.

As a result of this, new entrants today are to make great investments when buying a farm, without having the security of a favorable economic climate (2). The reason for this development might be seen in the Industrialization, leading to a larger demand of commodities. Furthermore, *The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)*, which was implemented after World War 2, had a high focus on avoiding shortage of food, resulting in EF (today EU) setting up agricultural aids to ensure Europe's self-sufficiency in commodities (4). Agricultural production increased, leading to problems with production surplus. In 1980, Europe became 100% self-sufficient, increasing the CAP expenses of EU (4). In order to avoid overproduction of commodities, a quota on dairy production was introduced in 1984 (5). Finally, in 1992 the *Mac Sharry reform* was adopted in order to limit the rising production (4). Since then, the CAP has been reformed, introducing environmental demands to the direct aid, and the aid has gone from representing 70% of the EU's total budget to 36% (6). Even though the CAP has been decreased over the years, Danish farmers still depend on the aid. The grant for each individual farmer increases in proportion to the size of his farm, and when looking at the finances of Danish farmers, it is apparent that especially large farms depend on the grant in order to survive (1).

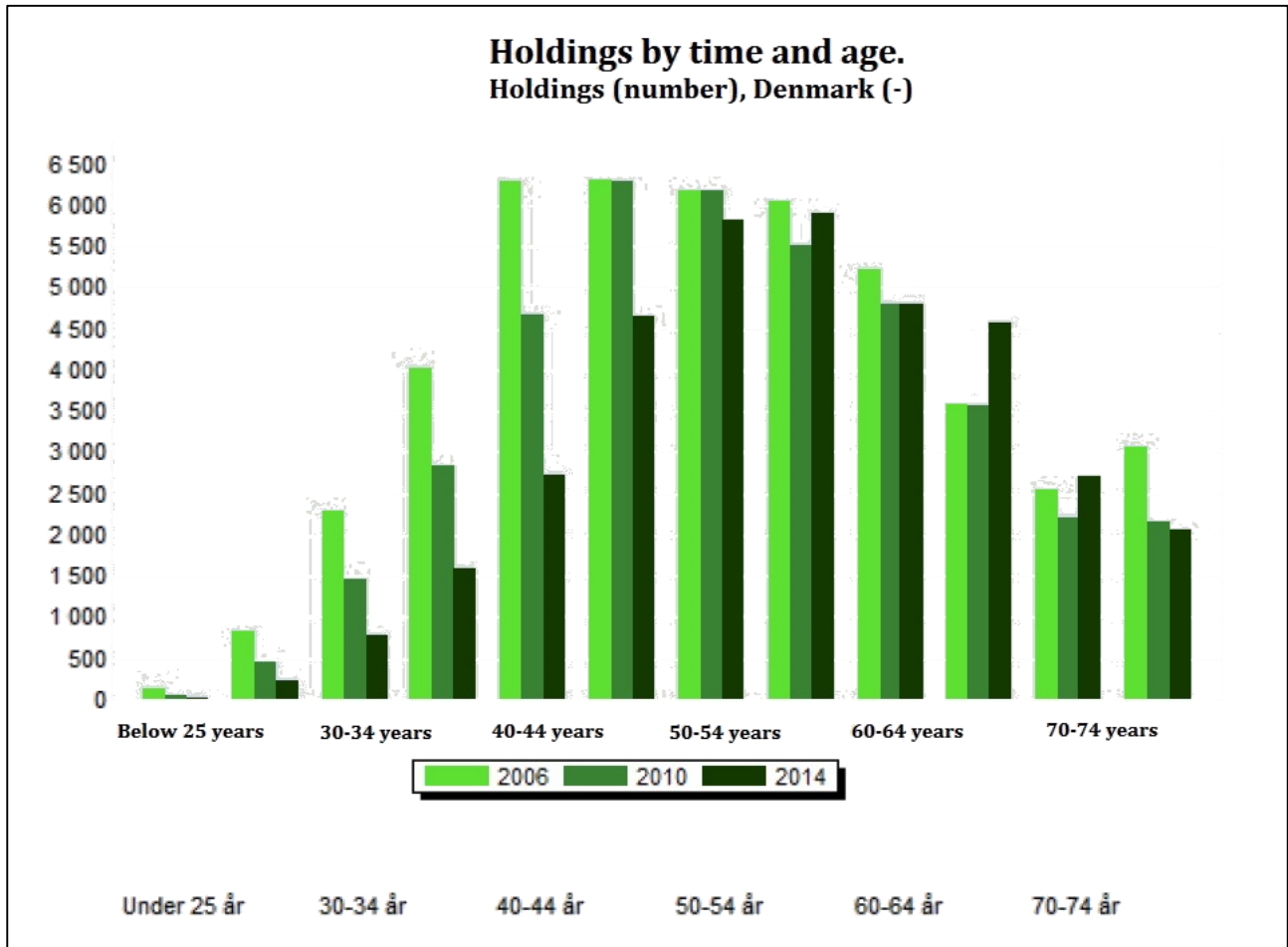


Figure 1 – Danish farms distributed by time and age (7).

From this historical review, showing which factors having influenced the agricultural landscape of Denmark, it is obvious that Danish agriculture does not have the same meaning for Danish economy as it had in the 1700-1800's. At the current time, it represents approximately 2% of the Danish gross domestic product (2) and the sector does not offer more than 3% employment for Danish citizens, see Table 1.

Increasing productivity to provide more food at a lower cost for European countries occurred at the expense of habitat degradation and paradoxically, food over-production (8). Modern agriculture consists of a few, selectively bred crops and animal varieties, giving the best outcome. However, this process also eliminates beneficial grasses, flora and fauna belonging to the ecosystem into which this monoculture is introduced. Woods, hedges, beneficial insects, birds and amphibians have all been removed in order to make room for large hectares of monocultures (8).

Year	Number of farms	GDP in yearly prices (Agriculture)	GDP in yearly prices (Total)	Occupation within agriculture, of total occupation
	1000	Billion DKK	Billion DKK	Percentage
1960	196	5.9	40.5	18.0
1970	149	7.1	112.6	11.2
1980	119	14.9	316.0	8.0
1990	79	26.8	712.3	5.5
2000	55	25.0	1093.3	3.6
2007	45	23.4	1429.5	3.0

Table 1 - Number of farms, gross factor income and occupation in primary agriculture from 1960 – 2007 (1)^{p.4}.

While a tendency amongst consumers to be more aware of this development has risen, probably partly derived from the organic and biodynamic movements, it is also being discussed whether Danish agriculture should be phased out (9) or if the size of the farms needs to be adjusted from being large industrial holdings to smaller family farms, which would be less dependent on CAP and be more resilient to finance and climate crisis (1).

Observing the development of the economy of conventional and organic farms in Denmark throughout the last few years, a tendency is clear: From 2012 to 2014, the profit of conventional farms has decreased, while organic farmers' earnings have increased, see [Figure 2](#). Hence, there is great reason to believe that young farmers will have a brighter future within organic farming than conventional. The debate and the opinions of Danish agriculture vary, and different takes on how to ensure its survival and the opportunities for the successors of Danish farms therefore exist. One suggestion, and the option in which more consumers are willing to invest, is to aim at producing commodities of a higher quality, rather than focusing on quantity, as well as investing in better animal welfare, feeding the animals grass instead of processed forage and aiming at raising exclusive species, providing the consumers higher quality products (10). Besides, a market and a demand seem to be present for farmers within this field (11).

Due to the significantly increase of organic farms, happening from 1989 until 2012, see [Figure 3](#), it seems that organic production has a positive future in Denmark. The number of Danish organic farms has increased in the last 20 years, due to a significant increasing interest in Danish organic food and products, and has created alternative constellations in farming as well as in food supply chains. This has led to higher qualitative products and several more transparent food supply chains (13).

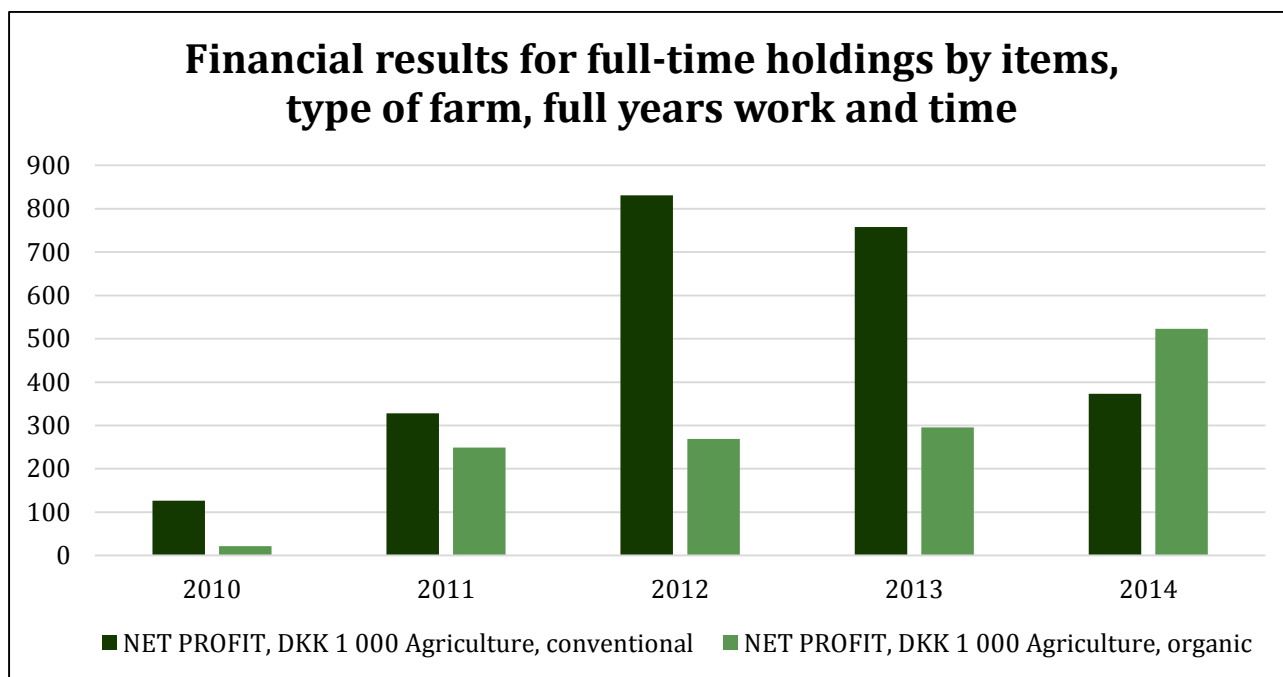


Figure 2 - Income statement of full-time holdings (12).

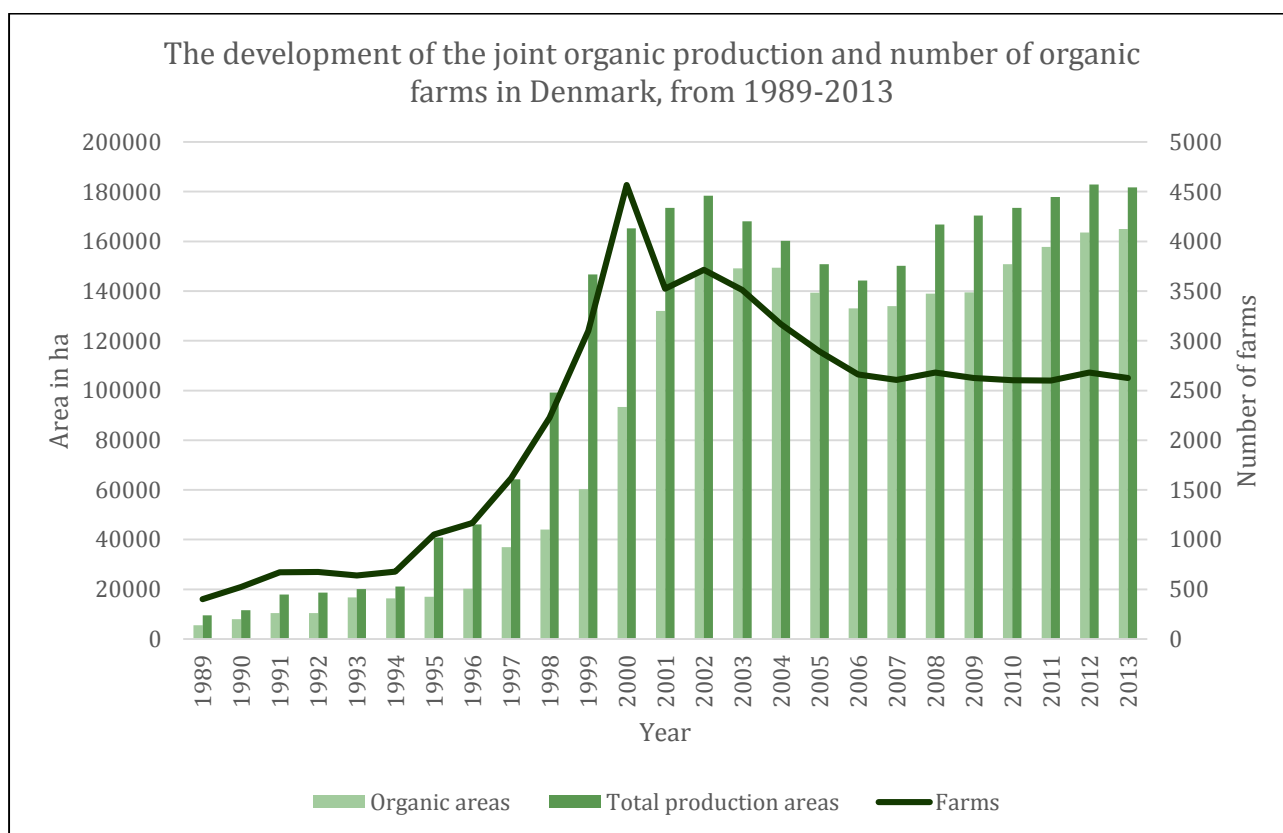


Figure 3 - The development of the joint organic production area and the fully rescheduled organic are in hectares in the period 1989 - 2012 (14).

1.2 Introduction to Alternative Agriculture

Since the 1980's, a showdown with the conventional way of purchasing commodities has occurred. The development has gone from being related to grocery stores to more alternative constellations, such as alternative agri-food networks and initiatives. In the US, this and other developments resulted in the establishment of community farms and similar models of *Community-Supported Agriculture* (CSA) (15). The inspiration for the initial farms came from small initiatives in Europe, but the pace of these movements did not really accelerate until they reached The States. The development over time has resulted in these different types of alternative agri-food networks being spread all over the country, but especially in California these networks are highly clustered, and California is generally considered as the place to look in order to spot new trends and growing ideas (16).

In Denmark, the movement of alternative agri-food networks has also developed over time. Often having roots in the organic way of thinking, alternative agri-food networks and constellations have blossomed during the past decade, now to a point being available for everyman instead of for a small, selected group of people, as they include both health shops, box schemes, farm shops, CSAs, food cooperatives and e-commerce (16).

The increased interest in local and organic food has also been noticed by Danish Supermarkets. Thus, in June 2014 the Danish retailer *COOP* launched their food manifesto *COOP & Co - Sammen om bedre mad* (17). The Manifesto has six bullet points, including an increased focus on organic and local commodities, which they want to give special attention (18). The campaign is built on a survey involving more than 10,000 people, including customers, members as well as staff, and the outcome has been gathered in the Manifesto (18). Taking into account the consumer needs, thereby creating a demand of certain kinds of products, Danish farmers are required to be adaptable and accommodate these needs. *Dansk Supermarked* shows their goodwill towards quality products by cooperating with the company *GoLocal*, providing the customers of *Føtex* a more transparent and shorter distance to the farmer (19). Considering these initiatives, obviously an increased interest and therefore a potential market for new entrants within organic and local products of a high quality in Denmark is present.

1.3 Factors Influencing Succession and Unconventional Tenures

In 2004, agricultural legislation was regulated, allowing farms to be owned by holding companies (20). In 2015, further regulations were made, allowing capital companies such as pension companies and investment trusts to invest in agricultural holdings and even lease the company to a farmer who does not have the necessary capital to establish himself as a freeholder¹ (21). Furthermore, the demand of having a farmer with superior influence over the company board was withdrawn. This means that investors and owners are given equal influence and say regarding operation of the farm. The legislation of preferential treatment when selling land was repealed as well, meaning that trading featured after January 1st 2015 is not to be announced four weeks in advance in order to prioritize neighbors higher than other potentially interested buyers (21).

The increased demand for local and organic products has created a potential market for new entrants to Danish agriculture and established farmers with economic challenges. Furthermore, a great deal of conventional commodities are being exported internationally, and due to an increased competition from countries with lower wages and less environmental and animal welfare regulations, Danish export of commodities is challenged, forcing Danish farmers to compete with prices that result in a small surplus (2). Thus, in a market with few, however expensive farms and a conventional agriculture which is challenged internationally, the new generation of farmers might have to choose alternative solutions with regards to succession, tenure and agricultural constellations.

1.4 Introduction to Økologisk Landsforening and Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug

In Denmark, various alternative solutions are emerging, suggesting different succession opportunities and tenures. In following section, *Økologisk Landsforening* and the project *Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug*, which has been launched partly with the aim of mapping

¹ Danish: *Selvejer*

sustainable alternative successions and tenures, intending to motivate young farmers to choose different paths than traditional ones, will be described before being mentioned further on. Besides, Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug has been of great inspiration for the authors when setting the investigational frame for this Master Thesis, and it is therefore seen as being relevant to present the purpose of Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug.

1.4.1 Økologisk Landsforening

Økologisk Landsforening (ØL), an organization for organic farmers, companies and consumers, is leading the way towards more and better organic agriculture through new and improved solutions and cooperation (22). Their aim for the future is to spread organic production to new fields, markets and people and to create new options for action for all who want an organic lifestyle (22). They want to create involvement, experiences and common ground for attitudes, insight and commitment in organic production. According to ØL, organic agriculture should develop by pursuing the principle of sustainability and increasing the quality of products, profitability for the farmer and the health of nature, climate, earth, animal and human beings (22).

1.4.2 Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug

The story of Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug (DSL) begins in Sønderjylland, close to the German border. Here, two farmers started the company *Jejsing Demeter I/S* in 2007. Later on a union, consisting of five agricultural biodynamic holdings called *Biodynamisk Samvirke*, joined the company (23). In April 2015, the pension company *AP Pension* bought the farms, and the farmers went from being owners to managers of the farms. The aim of this farming community and unconventional tenure was to ensure the biodynamic constellation of the holdings, and through this fund ownership, the economic constellation was ensured (23). The intension of this small project is to include other farms in the community and to open up to the local society,

creating a foundation for cultural, pedagogical and social activities as a part of the agricultural everyday life (23).

Along with *Biodynamisk Jordbrug* and ØL, Biodynamisk Samvirke wrote an application to *Villum/Velux Fonden*, asking for fund support for their project. The application was in 2014, approved with 16 million DKK by Villum/Velux Fonden and this was the beginning of the project DSL (23,24). The aim of DSL is to develop new models for owners as well as cooperational partners and financial solutions. And their goal is to create more value in the organic production and in the local society, establishing "on farm" processing, creating more jobs and supporting the local nature and protection of natural drinking water (24).

One of the reasons for this project being launched is the great challenge which Danish agriculture faces. The most common solution for this problem is to suggest larger productions and de legislation (25). However, looking at the development of Danish agriculture the last 40-50 years, the number of farms has decreased, increasing the production in the remaining farms, see [Table 1](#). This has led to large industrial farms, which are too expensive for the new generation of farmers to acquire (24). With the project DSL, ØL wishes to develop new solutions for the future of socially useful agriculture (24).

From the launch in 2014 DSL has so far presented 11 cases that benefits society by offering either nature preservation, social tasks, a positive relationship between the farm owner and the managing farmer or a relationship to the consumer, making it less risky to produce and sell commodities. DSL has three focus areas, all connected in a model, which the authors of this project redesigned into *Den Samfundsnyttige Ko* (The Socially Useful Cow), see [Figure 4](#). The focus for all three areas is the farmer, who must be central for the case to be considered for DSL. This means that cases potentially considered as being useful for society, such as Danish organic farming prisons (26,27) which do not have private farmers as part of the structure, will not meet the requirements of DSL.

The first focus area of *Den Samfundsnyttige Ko* includes social tasks, nature preservation and waste management. This section covers cases having a social aspect, such as farms that hire academically weak labor or farms that function as recreational spaces for citizens suffering from stress. Furthermore, DSL has included nature preservation in this area. The link between the presence of nature and mental and physical health has been proved to be significant (28,29). The second area is the relation to the owner of the farmland. This area includes alternative models of succession as well as different types of tenures. In order to pass

on knowledge and property from the older generations of farmers, without forcing the younger generations to indebt themselves, such alternative solutions can be beneficial. Unconventional tenures such as local land trust or CSAs are also potential solutions for managing the economically difficulties associated with Danish farming, making this area interesting for DSL. The last of the three areas is the citizens and their connection to the farmer. Here, alternative food networks play a very important role, as mentioned above by Morgan et al (30).

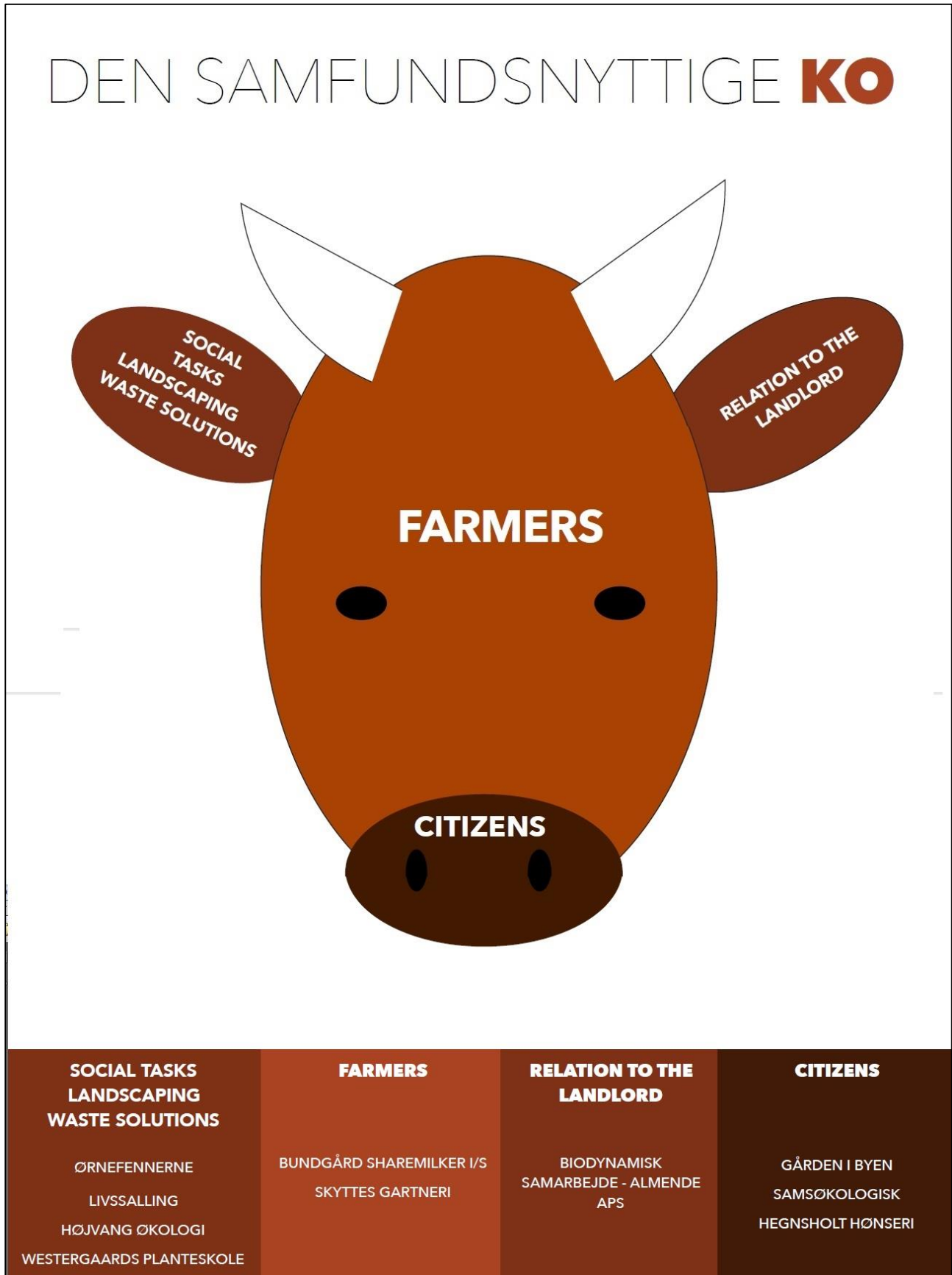


Figure 4 - Den Samfundsnyttige Ko with the cases of DSL

2.0 PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

Danish agriculture is highly under pressure, and according to DSL, this limits the farmers in taking animal welfare, environment and nature into account, restraining the sustainable development of our country's agriculture (31). Since World War 2, the development of Danish agriculture has led to larger production units which are unaffordable for the new generation of farmers to acquire. Thus, there is great reason to believe that Danish agriculture needs to be reconsidered.

2.1 Aim

The intention of this Master Thesis is to investigate the possibility of rethinking Danish agriculture, focusing on new entrants as well as established farmers' attitude towards succession and unconventional tenure, related to the second focus area of DSL; *Relation to the landlord*. By using Situational Analysis, the aim of this project is to strategically find relevant themes covering barriers and motivation for farmers regarding succession and unconventional tenures. The themes will be analyzed and discussed, with the intention of disclosing specific suggestions of unconventional tenures related to succession. Finally, the findings will be presented in a series of recommendations for DSL with information relevant to succession and unconventional tenures, enabling them to create communication material for new entrants. Below, a guide on how to read and interpret this Master Thesis, is presented, see [Figure 5](#).

2.2 Research Question

Which factors, influencing the motivations and barriers towards succession and unconventional tenures, are seen amongst new entrants as well as established farmers and which types of unconventional tenures are to be recommended for potential new entrants?

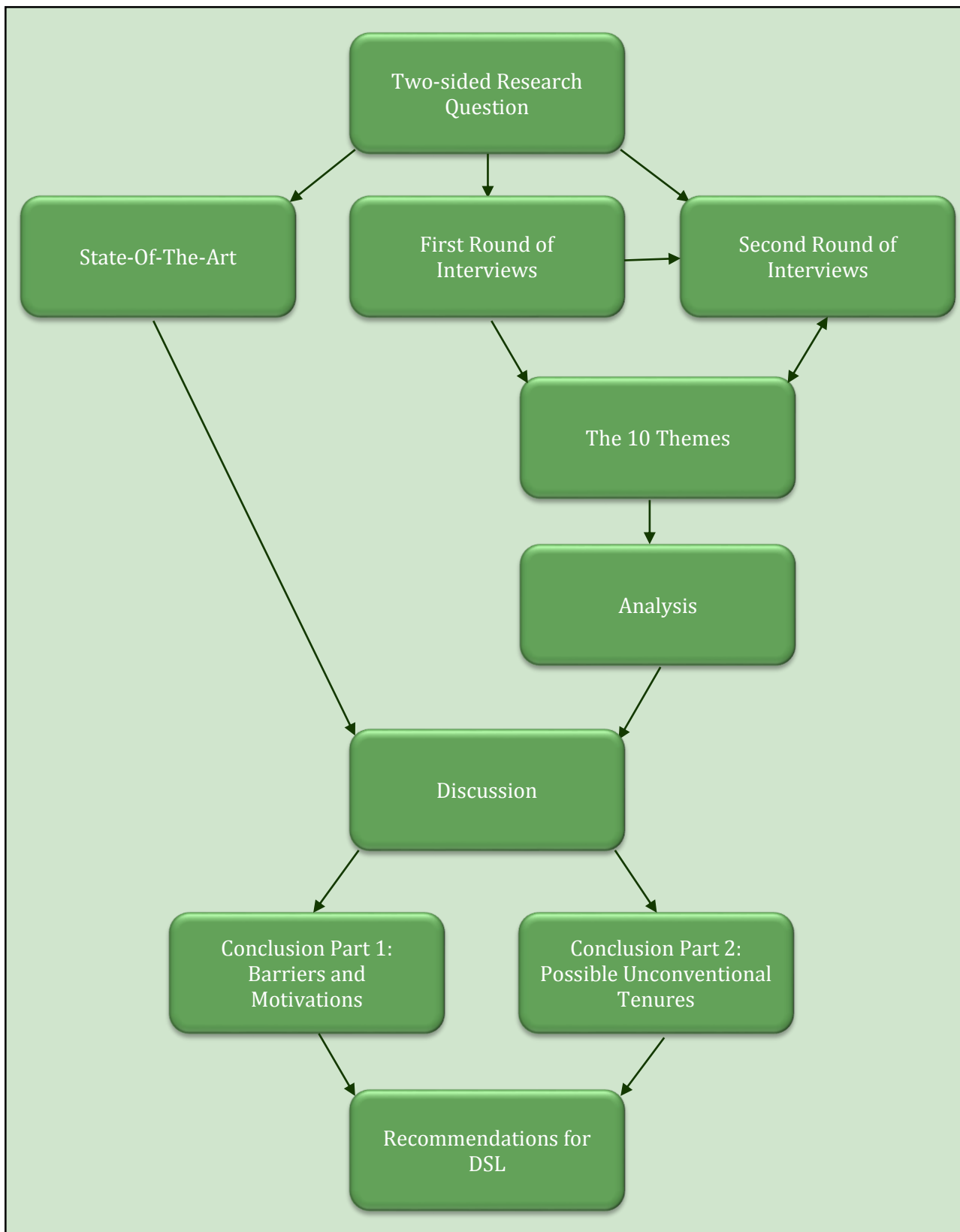


Figure 5 – Readers guide for this Master Thesis. The two-sided research question sets the frame for State-Of-The-Art as well as the interviews. The interviews are divided in two rounds, enabling the authors to adjust the interview guide in between. From the Situational Analysis, 10 themes relating to the motivations and barriers for farmers regarding succession and unconventional tenures are discovered. The 10 themes dictate the analysis, from which the discussion takes departure, along with the findings from The-State-Of-Art. The discussion leads to the two-sided conclusion, from which recommendations for DSL are derived.

I

2.3 Delimitations

DSL encompasses four focus areas: *social tasks, landscaping and waste solution; farmers, relation to the landlord; and citizens*. However, to ensure a comprehensive study of the research question for this Master Thesis, the authors have decided to focus on the third area of Den Samfundsnyttige Ko: *Relation to the landlord*. The remaining three areas of Den Samfundsnyttige Ko will be touched upon and naturally included when describing, discussing and debating possibilities and barriers among farmers towards succession and unconventional tenures, though they will not share the main focus. Furthermore, the scope of the project has been a constraining factor when electing empirical data, and the authors have chosen to focus solely on qualitative data.

2.4 Conceptual Clarification

In this Master Thesis, various terms will be used when elaborating key themes and aspects. Terms used in our research question will be explained in order to clarify the authors' definition of these. Furthermore, terms that were difficult to translate from Danish will be clarified, ensuring that the reader understands the meaning.

- **Succession**

In this project, the term *succession* is used when describing the process of intergenerational farm transfer. The traditional succession is between father and son, while alternative and untraditional forms of succession deviate from this in one or more ways.

- **Unconventional tenures**

The term *Unconventional Tenures* is used when describing tenures with a different constellation than traditional ones such as sole proprietorship. Traditionally, Danish

farmers were freeholders, but due to higher costs of farms, unconventional tenures are arising, opening up the opportunity of gaining capital from investors or pension companies, joining partnerships or even leasing or renting land, property or entire farms. When applying the term unconventional tenures, the authors have an implied understanding of which alternative agricultural constellations is embedded.

- **New Entrant**

In this Master Thesis, the term *New Entrant* is fully intertwined with young farmers. The terms are used synonymously to describe a group of young agricultural students who have not yet been established as independent farmers. The term furthermore covers young farmers who seek to enter the agricultural arena and strive to become an independent farmer.

- **Sharemilking**

Sharemilking is a relatively new term which describes the business idea of an established farmer renting out his stables to other farmers, giving them the option of only having to invest in dairy cattle and optionally the necessary machinery.

- **Cooperative**

This term is translated from the Danish word: 'fællesskab'. It is used when describing a joint community having an interest in common, working towards a goal in which all agrees. This could be a food cooperative, such as *Københavns Fødevarerfællesskab*, which is a cooperative with the joint aim of facilitating organic and local commodities for citizens in Copenhagen. It could also be cow cooperatives, enabling individual citizens to buy a share of a specific farmer's cow.

- **Cooperative association**

This term is translated from the Danish word: *andelselskaber* and is used when wanting to describe associations or companies owned by the members of this association. Such an association could be dairy cooperatives, i.e. *Arla* and *Thise*.

3.0 STATE-OF-THE-ART

This section will describe and discuss the themes *succession* and *unconventional tenures*, all related to agriculture. Even though these themes are given increased attention within non-academic literature, the body of scientific, peer-reviewed literature is still rather small (32), which is reflected in the number of articles discussed in the corresponding subsection. In the first section of State-Of-The-Art, the obtained academic literature will be presented. Next, the authors elaborate on the non-academic literature concerning the challenges seen within succession and unconventional tenures, including alternative agricultural constellations in Denmark.

3.1 Academic Literature Search

The academic literature taken into account for this section has been obtained through the scientific database SCOPUS, using the keywords: *Agriculture*, *Alternative Farming Constellations*, *Owner Relations* and *Generational Change* as well as abbreviations thereof². Non-western literature was excluded. Furthermore, the literature was limited to scientific articles. Since focus has been on recent agricultural tendencies, the chosen literature for this section is published after 2006. See [Table 2](#) for full search matrix. Of the 38 articles revealed from the initial search, ten were chosen based on their abstracts. From the ten articles, three were excluded after a thorough reading, resulting up with seven articles, which are presented in [Table 3](#).

² After having conducted the academic literature search, the keywords *generational change* and *tenures* have after been changed to *succession* and *unconventional tenure*.

No.	Key words	No. hits	Changes
1	agricultur* OR farming OR cultivati* OR agronom* OR "Crop growing" OR "Food production" OR husbandry OR "Agri-business"	641,175	Add a search for keywords for Alternative Farming Constellations
2	"Alternative farming constellation*" OR alternative OR alternat* OR other OR different OR innovation AND agricultur* OR agronom* AND format* OR construct* OR arrangement* OR setup* OR organization* OR cooperation OR network*	30,855	Add a search for keywords on Generational Change
3	"Generational change" OR succession* OR generation* OR "Generational planning" OR smallholder OR business OR "Family farm"	3,610	Add a search for keywords on Owner Relations
4	"Owner relation*" OR ownership* OR "Ownership structur*" OR tenur* OR possession* OR proprietorship* OR "Farm succession" OR "New entrants" OR "Young farmer" OR "Farm sale" OR "Farm joint ventur*" OR "Farmer retirement" OR "partnership approach"	157	Limit to: Social Sciences, Agricultural and Biological Sciences, Environmental Science, Economics, Econometrics and Finance, Earth and Planetary Sciences, Business, Management and Accounting
5	-	127	Limit to scientific articles
6	-	96	Limit to older than 2006
7	-	67	Limit to Western Countries
8	-	38	Read through abstracts
9	-	10	Read through articles
10	-	7	Articles for State-of-the-art

Table 2 – Systematic search matrix

Authors	Year of Publication	Title	Journal/Publisher
Masayasu Asai, Vibeke Langer, Pia Frederiksen & Brian H. Jacobsen	2014	Livestock farmer perceptions of successful collaborative arrangements for manure exchange: A study in Denmark	Agricultural Systems
Heike Fischer & Rob J. F. Burton	2014	Understanding Farm Succession as Socially Constructed Endogenous Cycles	Sociologia Ruralis
John Davis , Paul Caskie & Michael Wallace	2013	How Effective are New Entrant Schemes for Farmers?	EuroChoices
Sally Weller , Erin F. Smith & Bill Pritchard	2013	Family or Enterprise? What shapes the business structures of Australian farming?	Australian Geographer
Julie Ingram & James Kirwan	2011	Matching new entrants and retiring farmers through farm joint ventures: Insights from the Fresh Start Initiative in Cornwall, UK	Land Use Policy
Olga M. Moreno-Pérez, Eladio Arnalte-Alegre & Dionisio Ortiz-Miranda	2011	Breaking down the growth of family farms: A case study of an intensive Mediterranean agriculture	Agricultural Systems
Andrea Zimmermann, Thomas Heckelei & Ignacio Pérez Domínguez	2009	Modelling farm structural change for integrated ex-ante assessment: review of methods and determinants	Environmental Science & Policy

Table 3 – Presentation of articles

3.1.1 Succession

The succession rate within western agriculture has declined, resulting in fewer family farms and an older average age of the farmers (33). According to Fischer and Burton (33), succession is most often seen in the literature as a result of one or several factors called discrete factors, divided into two groups: farm factors and farmer factors. The first category includes farm size and profitability, total farm assets, farm type, farm location, diversification strategies, enterprise mix, land tenure, transaction costs, inheritance rights and death duties. The second group includes following factors: Personal preferences, values and/or intrinsic rewards, formal education levels, practical skills and knowledge, and intergenerational relationships (33).

Fischer and Burton find this factorization to be inadequate and point towards unknown or unobservable factors as a reason for the decline in succession, thus trying to grasp a more complex situation: “[...]historically (often intergenerationally) constructed identities tied to the farm as a place and a family tradition generates a sense of belonging to the farmland commitment to farming as a way of life” (33)^{p. 418}. By this, Fischer and Burton seek to draw on both the farm constellation as well as the farmer identity in a full analysis on why children of farmers, who earlier would not hesitate succeeding their father, are now more frequently choosing another way of living (33).

Fischer and Burton challenge the term succession by adding *socially constructed endogenous circles*, in that way underlining the complexity and reinforcement of the process. They suggest three intertwined processes in the understanding of family succession: “*the construction of successor identities, the progression on the ‘farm ladder’ and the development of farm business trajectories*” (33)^{p. 424}. From a thorough analysis of 22 in-depth interviews with members of family farms including both genders and several generations, Fischer and Burton end up with four key findings in relation to inter-family succession on family farms:

- 1) The importance of drawing in the successor when constructing a successful farm, thereby creating a foundation of intrinsic motivation for the successor and tying him to the land and farm. Furthermore, this process strengthens the ties and gives other, external factors smaller influence on his decision to succeed.
- 2) Due to the succession process evolving over a long period of time, it is difficult to get a full understanding of the different factors impacting the succession, when looking at an

instant moment. Although a numerous quantity of factors might be involved, their full effect will not be understood in a small timeframe.

- 3) The earlier the process of succession starts, the more successful it will be. Through the process of drawing in the successor early in childhood, a form of natural created successor identity may be created and the succession is therefore more likely to be a success.
- 4) The findings are built upon specific cases and the article authors therefore stress the fact that while some factors (such as the economic profitability of the farm) may be of great influence in one case, this may not be the case for another as they all have case-specific realities, and the outcomes therefore might differ (33)^{p. 433}.

While Fischer and Burton focus on the successor, Zimmermann et al draw attention to the farmer and the probability of succession. By drawing up mathematical models, they seek within a narrow body of literature to estimate which choices (also referred to as discrete choices) may be of impact for the farmer to enter in a succession (34).

For Zimmermann et al, succession is seen as a mean in order for the farm to continue and focus is rather on farm survival than succession itself. The article authors suggest following variables amongst others for the model to predict the success rate of a succession; the farmer's age and education, employment of the farm, the difference in age between the farmer and the eldest child as well as the number of children. Furthermore, they suggest looking at regional settings as well as type of production and farm size (34). From the model, the article authors found that the total number of children were of lesser importance than the age of the oldest child. Furthermore, the level of the farmer's schooling as well as his age (below 68) had significant influence on the probability of succession. Lastly, the type of farm was of great importance, as horticultures were more likely to have successors than poultry farms or farms having more hectares of land (34).

Zimmermann et al also investigated the timing and withdrawal from farming as a result of the early retirement schemes in Finland. From this it was found that there is a linkage between type of exit and the farmer and his farm as a mirroring of the political and economic atmosphere:

“More specifically it is predicted that an increase of the minimum age of eligibility for early retirement will first slow down structural development, since farmers cannot exit as early as before. However, as the exit decision is delayed and the farmers’ age increases, the probability of transferring the farm to a new entrant will decrease” (34)^{p. 612}

Davis et al too address the political schemes made in order to ease succession in agriculture. Two initiatives by the European Union, *Farmer Early Retirement Schemes* and *New Entrant Schemes for Farmers*, are given in an attempt to change the fact that in 2013 only 6 per cent of all farm holders were under the age of 35 whilst 34 percent were over 65 years of age (35).

The article authors question the effectiveness of these schemes and the economic incentive the farmers are given in the situation of succession. They point towards earlier research having showed that rather than increasing the number of retirees, the Farmer Early Retirement Schemes often only facilitated the succession and were therefore of no effect what so ever (35,36). Davis et al therefore draw attention to the New Entrant Schemes for Farmers and try to analyze how these can function as an effective tool in attracting successors by two means: *“a working capital installation grant and an interest subsidy on a farm development loan.”* (35)^{p. 33}. From the two means, the interest subsidy loan seemed to be the most effective as it resulted in higher performance by the receivers than the working grant. As the interest is saved on the interest subsidy loan, the ability to build up capital for the new farmer increases, and the loan therefore provides more value for money than the grant (35).

In contrast to the Farmer Early Retirement Schemes, the article authors see New Entrant Schemes for Farmers as effective tools in capturing new entrants to the agricultural landscape, assuming they are designed right. They further suggest a scenario involving an interest rate subsidy on a farm development loan as it *“can result in significant improvements in farm performance”* (35)^{p. 35}. Furthermore, Davis et al point towards the gain in a political perspective as the interest subsidy loan will attract new entrants, who often will be more willing to invest in farming than the already established farmers. The commitment of the recipients towards farming is also ensured by offering a loan and not a grant, since a grant only provides a short-term involvement (35). Furthermore, the article authors point out that *“The risk borne by the recipient is also likely to improve investment decision-making, improving economic efficiency and value for money for the taxpayer”* (35)^{p. 35}.

Even though the benefits are many and high, the article authors stress the importance of setting conditions for the interest rate subsidy on a farm development loan. Therefore, they suggest that the loan do not exceed 70,000€ during a period of 3-5 years, and that an approved business plan is made (35).

Ingram and Kirwan (36) are also investigating how political models can affect the succession climate in England. By looking into the Fresh Start Initiative in Cornwall, they are examining how politically driven matchmaking between farmers and new entrants can be facilitated through consultants (36).

While Zimmermann et al primarily focus on intergenerational family transfers of farm businesses, Ingram and Kirwan are suggesting to involve unaffiliated successors or new entrants connected to the farm but not related to the farmer. Due to their belief, a partial reason for the decline of English succession is the lack of eligible blood-related successors, thus they call for alternative solutions, such as joint venture (JV) farms, i.e. partnerships between an established farmer and an external successor (36). Results from an evaluation of the Fresh Start Initiative suggest that of the 212 interviewees, 55 were interested in taking active part in the initiative and from that group, seven eligible matches were made with only one being a success in establishing a match between a farmer and a new entrant, leading to a successful succession process. The article authors found that a reconciliation of expectations often is the missing link between the farmer and the new entrant, likewise a difference in motivation, as well as expected outcome from the intergenerational succession often becomes hard to overcome (36).

JVs are suggested by Ingram and Kirwan as an umbrella term including different types of partnerships, share farming and contract farming, thereby including both alternative agricultural constellations and tenures. The time scale seems to be an issue for the farmer, and they also repeatedly see the new entrants as being *“naïve and overly optimistic in terms of what they might get from a JV agreement, pointing out that they should not expect to get everything they want in the first instance”* (36)^{p. 923}. In contrast, the younger generation often feel that there is a lack of trust from the farmer - *“the older farmers’ reluctance to give up control”* (36)^{p. 924}, is a great obstacle for using JVs as a mean for succession, as it makes them feel less valuable than they are. In general:

“The research has found that where potential matches were identified amongst applicants (and structural barriers were absent), there is clearly a deep rooted reluctance amongst both parties to commit in practice to the proposed working relationship. The results revealed that older farmers had a variety of motivations for offering JVs, including wanting to prolong their farming career, supporting a transition toward retirement and altruism in terms of wanting to support a new generation of farmers. However, they also suggested that often expectations from both parties about what a JV might provide, were unrealistic” (36)^{p. 925}.

3.1.2 Tenures and Alternative Agricultural Constellations

The obstacles for the new entrants are, amongst others, a shortage of land combined with high startup costs, enormous interests and low outcome. All of these factors contribute to a tendency for the new generation of farmers to find other ways of occupation outside the agricultural world, and a need for exploring alternative constellations within farming (36).

In Britain, traditional tenures such as sole proprietorship have become of lesser importance as the available land has been reduced, leading to a rise in unconventional tenure arrangements. The tendency is not only identified among the young new entrants. Older farmers also experience this shift resulting in an intergenerational competition for the rented land. In order to pierce the agricultural business, the young new entrants therefore need to be able to be included in an already existing farm business (36). This is supported by the English government, which has removed direct subsidy support and quotas, increasing the fluidity and opportunities of alternative farm structures. Moreover, English industry has also opened its eyes towards the advantages of the JVs, encouraging farmers to engage in these forms of partnerships, thus increasing the security as well as the accessibility for the farmers (36). Ingram and Kirwan outline the importance of deregulating in order to obtain the flexibility needed for promoting alternative tenures. They summarize that JVs can be described as:

“driven by a free market orthodoxy, with arrangements brought about through negotiation rather than being pre-determined under law (Gibbard et al., 1999). This has introduced flexibility in tenure arrangements which extend beyond leasing, that is described as open, unregulated and short term, allowing ‘both parties the maximum freedom to exploit short-term market opportunities’ (Gibbard et al., 1999, p. 271).” (36)^{p. 919}

Although they list several benefits of JV models, the article authors also question the balance of power, as they do not see an equal distribution if only one part of the partnership owns the land, while the other rents the right to cultivate (36). It is therefore stressed that a business arrangement involving an increasing investment by the new entrant on the farm would be preferable. Furthermore, this has the advantage of showing both a financial and personal commitment by the new entrant, which will help building up trust between him and the farmer (36).

While the advantages of JVs for the new entrants are obvious, the motivations of the farmers are of more complex character. Whereas they on one hand are able to find a successor as well as continue working on their farm for a reasonable number of years, the submission of power to the new entrant is seen as an obstacle as well as leaving the farm (36). Altruistic motivations also occur, such as the desire of creating opportunities for the younger generations as well as *“being part of a career progression path for aspiring farmers”* (36)^{p. 923}. Even though some farmers wish to help new entrants, the article authors point towards former research showing that the opportunities for being invited into a JV differs depending on the relations to the farmer:

“It is argued that these intangible assets engender a sense of intergenerational accountability and provide an advantage to the kin over the non-kin intergenerational successor” (36)^{p. 920}

As business structures are influenced by social relations, new entrants with associations, either by relation or by previous employment to the farmer, have a great advantage, as the farmer is more willing to enter a form of partnership with an associate rather than an outsider (36).

In Australia, even though a promotion of agri-businesses for family farms has led to a greater number of intensive, specialized corporate agri-businesses for decades, the family farms have survived. According to Weller et al (37) this can be explained by three dominant features:

- 1) The family farms' capability to adapt to the market faster than larger factory farms, both due to size and because of the flexibility of human workforce.
- 2) By allowing capitalistic interests to either acquire family farms or invest in them without taking control of the production, family farms have been able to add value to their farms by means of subsumption³.
- 3) Lastly, a wide number of family farms have adopted organizational structures coming from agri-businesses, and have thereby challenged the traditional sole proprietorship in adding alternative tenures such as partners, trusts or even companies to the list of owners (37)^{p. 131}.

Due to the latter, Weller et al further suppose a conflict of interest by the farmers, who at one hand seek autonomy and on the other hand must give up some independence in order to ensure the survival of the farm (37). Of the factors determining the willingness of the farmer to enter alternative tenures, the article authors list social factors of family lifestyle and goals, including family composition, number as well as age. It is stressed that:

“farm legal arrangements were influenced by the age of the farmer, with younger farmers more likely to adopt more complex (and inherently more collective) forms of ownership such as trusts or private limited liability companies. The way in which age is associated with business structure choice, though, is likely to be more complex in light of the high level of uncertainty surrounding intergenerational succession experienced by many farmers” (37)^{p. 134}

Further, a characteristic link between the existence of similar size neighboring farms and different types of partnerships is not to be ignored. Additionally the article authors conclude

³ Subsumption covers the concept of the different ways in which the agricultural production and its associated social relations on the farm, are transformed under capitalism (38).

that the size of the farm rather than the type of production or profitability of the farm can be seen as an indicator for the willingness to enter in an alternative form of tenure, as this factor is more stable than the others (37).

Weller et al and Moreno-Pérez et al (39) further suggest a focus on tenures and namely partnerships within family farms as a way to ensure the continuation of the family farm (37). As the *modernization paradigm* presupposes, the total number of farms will decline as well as become more and more specialized, implying even harder conditions for the already financially stressed family farms in Europe (39). In order to strengthen the family farms for this development, Moreno-Pérez et al propose partnerships within multifamily farms, a term describing a single farm cooperation between related households.

“One of the elements which have enabled family farms to reach increasing levels of capital investment has been the transformation in their organizational forms and the development of more complex governance structures. Thus, partnership agreements involving the “extended family” (i.e. family members living in different homes) are being pointed at as a way to ‘pool’ the capital resources of several households, as well as to enlarge their managerial capacity and financial risk-taking” (39)p. 501

Multifamily farms cover several family types described in the article as:

- 1) Vertical multi family farms consisting of cooperation between at least two intergenerational families, living apart. Often these farms are passed on from father to son in a traditional succession.
- 2) Horizontal multi family farms involving at least two families that are linked collaterally within the same generation, although a combination of vertical multifamily farming also may occur (39)p. 503.

Multifamily farms are becoming a greater part of the agricultural landscape by increasing their position in a great deal of the OECD countries such as Australia, USA, Canada, Belgium and Holland. In the study, the article authors are investigating Spanish horticultures in order to seek an understanding of the effect multifamily farms may have on the structural dynamics of the farm. From a survey of 135 farmers, they discovered that about 20 per cent were multifamily

farms. Furthermore, these farms were often more eager to expand their business, and were the only farm group showing aggressive growth (39). Moreno-Pérez et al suggest this being partly due to the fact that there are multiple operators on the farm, who all have solid initiatives for the business to increase. Additionally, they point towards a supposed greater investment capacity linked to the business structure of multifamily farms and emphasize that:

“these complex organizational forms (particularly intra-generational arrangements), represent conscious, stable schemes enabling the survival and even expansion of family farming. In other words, multifamily farms could make up a new version of family farming that is better prepared to cope with an increasingly competitive framework, and particularly suitable for intensive, capitalized and market-oriented agricultural systems such as horticulture” (39)^{p. 510}

In Asai et al's study (40), partnerships are also instigated, although being livestock manure in Denmark. According to the article authors, these partnerships depend on several variables such as the age and education of the farmer as well as the size and type of the farm, the availability of hired labor and other social relations. While age and education can be associated with local and general knowledge, often the older farmers have had time to build up farmer networks, potentially benefitting future partners. The size and type of the farm are also of importance as smaller farms often have a broader understanding of the local environments and resources, which again can benefit the partnership (40). Asai et al furthermore point towards the positive effects that partnerships amongst local farmers can have within the rural community that they are a part of:

“Within the rural community, embedded social networks, related to social capital built upon on trust and communication, play an important role in collective actions (Breetz et al., 2005; Morrison et al., 2011; Pretty and Smith, 2004). The embedded ties offer participants more chances to exclude sources of risks and uncertainty. Collaborative arrangements, such as exporting manure to a well-known neighbor farmer or a partner introduced by local farm advisor, may represent such a mechanism” (40)^{p. 57}

Trust and communication between partners are also pointed out to be essential. Trust insures that the partners will not act only in their own favor, thereby providing a feeling of integrity and reliability to the farmers in the partnership. Trust can be built by providing the partner with problem-solving information, creating a mutual expectation that members of the partnership are pro-actively communicating on a frequent basis.

“This mutual alignment of trust and communication between partners generates reciprocity and flexibility in exchange relationships. Flexibility can be interpreted here as expectations of willingness to make adaptations (Heide and John, 1992). Flexibility prolongs the stable partnership, and thus saves the costs of searching for a new partner and changing the contract.” (40)^{p. 57}

In the study, which included a survey of 644 farmers, the article authors addressed the issues that may occur in such partnerships in order to identify the most common threats in this type of cooperation. Of 18 possible issues suggested by Asai et al, the farmers pointed towards three specific qualities which they appreciated in partnerships. The first is communication, as it is stressed that the partnership is in risk of failing if the line of communication is not respected. Both in terms of fulfilling oral and written agreements but also changes in the daily operation of the farm, communication is seen amongst the responders as the key in well-functioning partnerships. *“Timely communication is one of the essential factors in efficient coordinated work (Gittell, 2011), and frequent updates from the partner make it possible for exporters to prepare for a change of contract or to seek other potential partners if necessary.” (40)^{p. 59}*. Second, for a partnership to become successful, Asai et al also point towards the timeframe, as it seems to be of higher importance than other factors such as the professionalism, level of knowledge within rules and regulations or even skills. The possibility of extending the partnership over a long time frame weighs higher than other, specific characteristics (40). The *“physical and social accessibilities to the partner/s” (40)^{p. 63}* are the last quality introduced by the article authors. Here, terms of respect as well as previous knowledge of the possible partner came into action, although the older farmers were more concerned with this than their younger colleagues. Furthermore, a difference in the farm size also showed to have effect as the larger farms seemed to be less concerned with social aspects than the smaller ones (40).

3.2 Non-academic Literature Search

The non-academic literature taken into account for this section has primarily been obtained through the media archive *Infomedia*. Furthermore, chosen relevant articles and publications discovered randomly in the daily media will be presented as well. All information in this section has been published within the past five years, see [Table 4](#). The challenges within Danish agriculture, especially regarding succession, unconventional tenures and agricultural constellations are themes which are touched upon daily in the Danish media. It is therefore seen as highly relevant that chosen articles concerning these topics are elaborated in this section.

In June 2016, a Ph.D. dissertation will be published by ethnologist Rasmus Blædel Larsen, mapping the current situation in the Danish agricultural landscape, including political issues, legislation and the financial situation, as well as succession and its difficulties (41). From July 2015 till current date, eight articles regarding the project have been published, which conclude that in order for the Danish agriculture to survive, changes have to be made, both regarding financing of farming as well as how to secure the smaller family farms and their young successors (42). Blædel suggests alternative-financing models, such as public financed land, possible for farmers to rent, as well as succession models including inspiration from sharemilking and gradual takeover with 'buy-in'. Furthermore, Blædel stresses that a diverse production i.e. including both dairy production and crops, will strengthen the farms and make them less financially vulnerable (42). Ultimately, Blædel points towards the responsibility that lies within government and emphasizes that political courage to reform Danish agriculture is essential. This transformation is to change the public image as well as to make a shift towards smaller, affordable family farms, accessible for the new entrants (43).

Date published	Title	Article author	Media
2016.04.19	Alternative økosamfund popper op rundt i landet	Maya Munksgaard, Katrine Rønnow Holler	DR.dk
2016.03.27	Alternativet: Lad os løse landbrugets gordiske knude	Rasmus Nordqvist	Altinget.dk
2016.04.01	Veldrevne gårde med overskud kan altid sælges	Aage J. Iversen	LandbrugsAvisen
2016.04.01	Store landbrug kræver nye ejerformer	Peter Winther Mogensen, Bent Holm	LandbrugsAvisen
2015.11.27	Regler spænder ben for alternative ejerformer	Irene Brandt	Økologi & Erhverv
2015.10.19	Fars gård afgør drømme om selvstændighed	Kristoffer Sutton, Anne Sofie Hoffmann Schrøder	DR.dk
2015.10.13	Grønt lys for økologisk landsby med 90 boliger	Martin Rasmussen	ErhvervsAvisen Sjælland
2015.09.15	Kursus-succes gentages	Anders Kurt Simonsen	Landbrug Fyn
2015.08.17	Unge landmænd dropper drømmen om egen gård	Kim Palm	DR.dk
2015.07.28	Dansk landbrug kan overleve krisen	Anne Sofie Hoffmann Schrøder	DR.dk
2015.07.24	Der findes også landbrug, der tjener penge	Sebastian Abrahamsen	Dagbladet Information
2015.06.26	Pakke til unge skal lokke flere til landbruget	Frederik Thalbitzer	LandbrugsAvisen
2014.08.12	Next generation 2012	Peder Bligaard	Okologi.dk
2014.10.08	Brug for generationsskifte: Gamle landmænd sidder tungt på flæsket	Marie Kjempff, Peter Frandsen Siggard	DR.dk
2014.07.29	Pensionskassen køber gården - landmanden driver den	Peter Mikkel Pihl Rasmussen, Louise Kubel Baltzer, Lis Vibeke Læsøe Olsen	DR.dk
2014.02.16	Hvem skal eje jorden?	Henrik Platz	Politiken
2014	Resultater & viden fra landbrugsfaglige projekter i økologisk landsforening 2013	Økologisk Landsforening	Økologisk Landsforening
2013.04.17	Dansk landbrug skal trækkes op af møget	Knud Foldschack	Politiken
2013	Next Generation – modeller for generationsskifte	Anders Rousing, Martin Beck, Solvejg Høj, Lone Klit Malm, Karen Munk Nielsen	Økologisk Landsforening
2012.10.23	Mange fordele ved samarbejde i markdriften	KLS., Effektivt Landbrug	Effektivt Landbrug

Table 4 – List of materials for non-academic literature search.

3.2.1 Succession 3.2.1.1 Traditional Succession

The decreasing rate of succession is a highly discussed issue in Danish media. In the summer of 2015, attention was given to the subject by *Landbrugsavisen*, publishing an article stressing a need for a number of initiatives supporting the young, new entrants, the so-called *Unge-pakken* (The Youth Package), is relevant (44). The Youth Package is a suggestion by the Danish agricultural organization *Landbrug & Fødevarer* with the intention of offering new entrants improved conditions of financing. *Landbrug & Fødevarer* suggests that a partnership between the potential new entrant, the established farmer, consultants and finance parties is established, enabling them to discuss challenges and barriers of a succession (44). Furthermore, regulations of legislation, which complicate the process of succession, are suggested including elimination of taxes in seller mortgages, allowing the established farmer to leave capital in the farm during the process of succession, finally enabling the new entrant to obtain a smaller loan (44).

In an article, published by *Landbrugsavisen* in April 2016, Director of DLR Kredit, Jens Kr. A. Møller suggests seller mortgages as an alternative to traditionally mortgage financed loan (45). Jens Kr. A. Møller further points towards the fact that Danish farms generally have grown and therefore are too expensive for new entrants to acquire. Thus, he believes that there is a need for alternative methods of financing, although highlighting that an adjustment of attitude amongst the established farmers is required, increasing their willingness to think in alternative ways (45). Furthermore, the director sees a need for a general change of approach when it comes to freehold. In the article, he mentions that freehold is to be kept, however he believes that the traditional structure of sole proprietorship has to be changed. He stresses that large agricultural holdings preferably are to be owned by more than just one farmer, and that established farmers should leave some of their fortune in the farm, ensuring that new entrants have enough capital to success the former generation. Finally, Director Jens Kr. A. Møller points towards that young new entrants also need to accept that succession is a process, and that these new unconventional tenures result in the farmers having to cooperate either with other farmers or involved investors (45)^{p. 18}.

Often succession is a long-term process, which means that the two involved parties have to trust one another. In Jens Kr. A. Møller's objective, future farmers have to enter

partnerships in which each farmer owns a part of the farm as an alternative to having sole proprietorship. This means that young farmers have to accept succession as a process, and a gradually increase of self-determination as they add further capital to the farm (45). According to Jens Kr. A. Møller, tradition is seen as one of the largest obstacles when it comes to succession, thus Danish agriculture needs to observe and be inspired by other successful successions and alternative constellations, in other industrial holdings. Other types of organizational structure may have great opportunities within Danish agriculture and thereby break the traditional institution of freehold (45).

Concerning traditional succession in an article published in the fall of 2015 by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation *DR.dk*, described the dream of becoming an independent farmer⁴ by investigating the topic among a group of agricultural students. From the study, the benefits of being sons of farmers are seen as being paramount, partly due to tax-related benefits when entrusting a holding from one generation to the next, but also due to issues related to intergenerational trust (46). The article furthermore stresses that gradual succession is an opportunity as well, enabling successors to build up capital while benefitting on the established farmer's expertise and network (46).

3.2.1.2 New Models of Succession

From the summer 2014 until 2015, DR.dk published a series of articles, highlighting that the traditional type of succession needs to step aside for unconventional constellations, in order to accommodate the growing need for new entrants in Danish agriculture (47-49). The articles address how pension funds such as *AP Pension* currently invest in farms with the intention of leasing⁵ them to new entrants. Sven-Aage Steenholdt, chairman of *Vejle Familielandbrug*, mentions that this model still enables the farmers to feel empowered and work towards a state of freehold (48). The young new entrant, Jesper Toftager, who is a tenant at one of AP Pension's farm, supports this. He further highlights that he sees the arrangement as an opportunity for

⁴ Danish: *Selvstændig landmand*

⁵ Danish: *Forpagte*

him to gain experience and establish himself as a farmer without having the full financial responsibility (49). Additionally, the series of articles highlights the young generation of farmers who do not strive to become independent, as it is seen to be too demanding financially as well as personally (47).

Succession has also been a well-investigated area amongst ØL, who also launched the project *NEXT generation* in 2012. This project had the intention of gathering information on the barriers and possibilities of successful and organic successions (50). The project culminated in a succession conference with the themes 'economy and financing', 'unconventional tenures' and 'intergenerational matching the expectations' (51). Furthermore, the results of the project have been published in the pamphlet *Next generation – eksempler på og modeller for generationsskifte i det økologisk jordbrug* (Next generation – examples and models for succession in organic agriculture), which suggests following methods as alternatives for the traditional father/son succession: Farming operating communities⁶, Sharemilking, leasing and trust ownership⁷ (52). Additionally, the pamphlet gives a range of guidelines for new entrants: i.e. define the wants and needs, make a business plan and adapt it continuously, and make sure that there is a reconciliation of expectation between partners. Additionally, the importance of networking is highlighted, as this improves the opportunities of entering a partnership. This is also emphasized by the presented successful cases of the project, which show the benefits of an already established relationship between the farmer and the new entrant (52).

3.2.2 Unconventional Tenures and Agricultural Constellations

3.2.2.1 Public Trust Ownership

Within the last five years, a greater focus on traditional and especially unconventional tenures has arisen. Larger, industrial agricultural businesses are dominating the Danish landscape, which are unattainable to acquire for most new entrants. In order to deal with this issue, financial institutes are offering capital to potential new entrants which is described in the section regarding succession. Even though this type of financing has been positively received

⁶ Danish: *Driftfællesskaber*

⁷ Danish: *Fondseje*

in the Danish media, several opponents have criticized the financing method for being governed by financial interest (53-55). Among these, Rasmus Nordqvist, rapporteur of entrepreneurship in the Danish party *Alternativet*, states to *Altinget*, an online political portal, in the spring of 2012, the problem of farmers being financially challenged and highly dependent on the investments of banks (53). As an alternative, he suggests that subsidies from EU and the State of Denmark are provided to an organization with the responsibility of buying challenged agricultures, hereafter dividing them into smaller, sustainable agricultures, potentially being leased to several farmers. This would result in the original farmer being released from his mortgages, as well as more work places, greater biodiversity and a richer rural life, due to the increased number of farms resulting in an immigration to rural areas (53).

The argument is supported by lawyer and farmer Knud Foldshack, who in a featured article in *Politiken* in the spring of 2013 stated that he sees public trust ownership as the solution for the financial struggles which family farms are facing in the current financial situation (54). For Knud Foldschack, the society holds a responsibility towards the agriculture, in order to secure access to fresh Danish commodities, but also life in the rural parts of the country, which deeply depend on agricultural businesses. Hence, his vision for a trust ownership is for the fund to buy farms with a bad economy and let the farmer continue his work as a tenant, without having to worry about financial matters. In Knud Foldschack's objective, this solution would enable a lot of young people to become a farmer without having the financial capital to buy a farm on their own (54)^{p. 7}.

While Knud Foldschack does not distinguish between organic or conventional farms being incorporated by the public trust ownership, economist Henrik Platz, in a featured article in *Politiken* late winter of 2014, sees this as being essential, with respect to sustainability, animal welfare and diversity (55). The economist criticizes the liberalization of the agricultural legislation, allowing investment companies to acquire farms and land, and cries for solutions such as public shares or vending of the land (55). Furthermore, he points towards CSA as a more local way of securing the land, making sure that the society has a saying in the farming as well as securing the farmer a steady income as an employee (55).

3.2.2.2 Other Types of Unconventional Tenures

In an interview in *Landbrugsavisen*, spring 2016, Bent Holm, *Director of Landbogrupperne A/S* emphasizes that there is a need for innovative constellations in large industrial Danish agricultures if they are to survive (56). The structure of Danish modern industrial farms differs widely from the structure of traditional family farms with sole proprietorship, having just a few employees. The necessary capital for acquiring such a holding either require an investor or a joint capital from more than one farmer. Besides, such farms entail an owner who has great forces of leadership and marketing skills (56). Thus, in the opinion of Bent Holm, new unconventional tenures are needed in order for these farms to continue. He suggests either selling the holding in smaller parts or as one joint farm to a group of owners. The director also mentions that there is a need for farmers to change mentality in order for these unconventional tenures to happen, even though he already sees a shift in attitude from the younger generation of farmers, towards a more positive view upon this (56).

However, according to ØL a number of legislative challenges, which are currently acting as barriers when it comes to unconventional tenures, have to be regulated (57). In an article in *Økologi & Erhverv* in fall 2015, Lone Andreassen, project leader of DSL, states that technology subsidy only benefits larger farms and farmers who own land. Thus, landless constellations cannot benefit from these subsidies. Lone Andreassen emphasizes that this discrimination is an enormous problem in the process of creating alternative possibilities for young farmers to enter Danish agriculture, as these regulations potentially serve as an obstacle for tenures between an established farmer and a new entrant, if the constellation does not fulfil the demands of the subsidy in which the farmer is deeply dependent (57).

3.2.2.3 Society Orientated Unconventional Tenures and Agricultural Constellations

The increased attention towards alternative agricultural constellations and the interest of organic and more sustainable agriculture is seen among a number of members of the organization *Landsforeningen for Økosamfund* (58). In the spring of 2016, DR.dk presented a

range of articles focusing on the growing interest and society involving in alternative constellations such as organic communities (58). Despite a general depopulation of the rural areas, these communities are populated by an increased number of city dwellers moving to the countryside. The organic community *Soleng* contains five families, and in Oksbøl a family is in the process of establishing an organic community as well (58). Furthermore, in Sydsjælland the eco village *Permatopia* is currently being built with the first residents moving in late 2016 (59). By 2018, the self-sufficient and child-friendly agricultural community will be fully open for its citizens. The community will consist of 90 terraced houses in different sizes, making room for several social layers, a joint farm, land and a supply system with sustainable energy and complete resource circuit (59), see Figure 6. This community brings back the collective ideas of the 1960s and 70s, in which resources and tasks were shared and enjoyed. This project has great focus on environment and joint community, and it is expected that all citizens of the eco village take share in the community and farm work, just as well as they benefit from it.

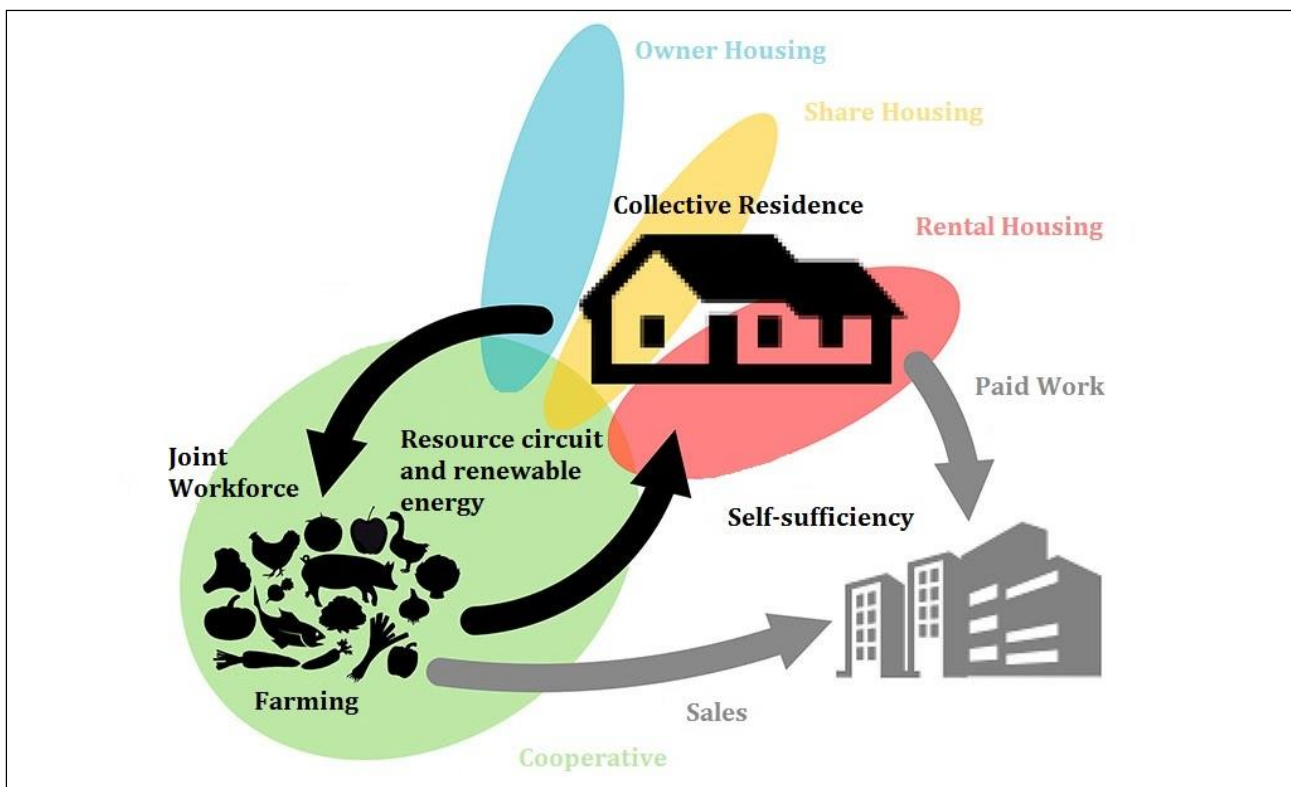


Figure 6- The vision of the collective residence and joint work craft and resources in Permatopia, Karise (Translated from Permatopia's website (60)).

3.2.2.4 Traditional Agricultural Constellations

Partnerships and collaboration between farmers have always been important factors in Danish agriculture and have been the cornerstone in the development for the cooperative associations (61). In the fall of 2012, the Danish agricultural newspaper *Effektivt Landbrug* described the advantages and uncertainties related to traditional agricultural constellations (62). The article included an interview with agricultural consultant Erik Maegaard from *Videncentret for Landbrug*, stating that in order to enter a partnership, both partners have to gain obvious advantages. Furthermore, in order to avoid conflicts, a reconciliation of expectations and an imperative and detailed contract between the involved partners is crucial before entering a collaboration. Besides, the consultant points out that hidden agendas often are main reasons for failing partnerships (62). The article lists two scenarios for traditional partnerships as well as their respective advantages and uncertainties:

1. Simple cooperations between i.e. neighbors on lending machinery or workforce. Here, the farmers will be able to save expenses on purchasing machinery themselves, or optimize the utilization of their own machinery. Furthermore, shared workforces strengthen the social relations between the farmers. The uncertainties are related financial issues and factors involving quality of the work.
2. More complicated cooperations i.e. a joint machinery park, a joint crop rotation or leasing of land or buildings. In these types of constellations, the farmers share the same advantages and uncertainties as in the simple cooperations, along with higher selling price for their crops, and the ability to obtain multi-unit deals on seed procurement. Furthermore, leasing secures a steady income (62).

4.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the following section, the theoretical framework and the methodology of this Master Thesis will be elaborated. Explaining the theoretical framework, Grounded Theory will shortly be described as the cornerstone of the theory Situational Analysis, which has been the applied methodological approach of this study. Next, the methods will be described, explaining how the empirical data has been collected, mapped and coded.

4.1 Grounded Theory

The theoretical point of departure has been the constructivistic inspired Grounded Theory, originally described by Strauss and Glaser in 1965 (63). Grounded Theory seeks to make qualitative research more academically sound (63). Thus, Grounded Theory strives to create theory from the situation in context, rather than fit the situation into an already known theory. The ontological approach of Strauss and Glaser is that:

“Constructivism is a research paradigm that denies the existence of an objective reality, asserting instead that realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals (although clearly many constructions will be shared)” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 43).” (64)^{p. 2}

Consequently, an already existing theory is not applied, but instead the researchers are to develop their own theory describing the specific situation which is examined. This process requires that the researchers have not done any previous research on the subject, as it would result in them having knowledge within the field, affecting their ability to examine the situation objectively. Methods such as generalization and universalization does not exist either, as the premise of Grounded Theory is the situation, which is the only truth in that specific situation. Instead, Grounded Theory strives to create theory from the situation via empirical data such as

interviews and observations, as “[...] *generating Grounded Theory is a way of arriving [at] a theory suited to its supposed uses.*” (65)^{p. 3}.

4.2 Situational Analysis

Adele Clark was a student of Strauss but detached herself from the traditional Grounded Theory as she felt it had several flaws, i.e. being too extreme in its approach by neglecting and not allowing the background and knowledge of the researcher to infiltrate the situation (66). Furthermore, Adele Clarke argues that Grounded Theory as a method lacks tools to reflect deeper on the material. To move Grounded Theory in a more postmodern direction, Clarke suggests mapping combined with the proposed coding as a method for systematically researching deep in the field (66).

4.3 Methodology

The following section presents the methodological approach for investigation of this study. This theoretical framework of this study is Situational Analysis inspired by Grounded Theory. This framework establishes the foundation for the type of research being conducted as well as the choice of empirical data and its processing and analysis.

4.3.1 Qualitative Research

The approach of qualitative research differs from quantitative research in many ways. In quantitative research, reliability and validity of key concept measurements are in focus (67). In quantitative research, the researchers have specific research questions that need to be

investigated, and the questions in the structured interviews are specifically designed in a way that answers these questions. Opposite, in qualitative interviewing, there is a great interest in the interviewee's point of view, and the interviewee is encouraged to speak freely as this might give insight into what he or she sees as relevant and important (67). The interviewer can also depart from an interview guide and ask new questions which follow up on the interviewee's responses. Therefore, the order of the planned interview guide might vary and give an outcome that the interviewer did not expect. This means that qualitative interviewing often ends up being very flexible, allowing the interviewee to decide the direction of the interview as well (67).

4.3.1.1 Interview Guide Design

Qualitative interviewing varies in the approach, depending on which design is being used (67). Overall, there are two major types of interview approaches: The unstructured interview and the semi-structured interview. In this project, semi-structured interview guides were designed for all of the interviews (67).

In semi-structured interviews, the researcher has a list of questions or topics which are intended to be answered by the interviewee. This is referred to as an interview guide, which the interviewer is following in the extent that makes sense in regard to the response that is given by the interviewee (67). Hence, questions may not be followed exactly as planned in the guide, as the interviewer can pick up on the response of the interviewee. This gives the interview a flexible structure, depending on how the interviewee frames the questions and understands them to be aligned and which subjects he or she emphasizes (67).

4.3.2 Situational Mapping

The empirical data collection follows the methods and ideas given by Clark in Situational Analysis, where truth is a product of a given situation. Situational analysis is used for two

different purposes in the project. At first, Situational Analysis will be used in order to get a better understanding of the overall research problem; second it will be used for coding and analyzing the interviews, implementing the ideas by Adele Clark (66).

Situational mapping can be used when entering a new research field. Clark's methods for mapping and analyzing the maps are broadening the data and making it more available to researchers (68). As the given situation cannot be detached from the time in which it occurs, the Situational Analysis and the maps, can therefore change as the project evolves.

Situational analysis suggests three types of maps depending on the situation of inquiry, these being Situational maps, Social Worlds/Arenas and Positional maps (66). The situational maps allow the researchers to analyze the major actors both human and non-human, as to analyze discourses. Furthermore it strives to draw upon relations within them, and thereby give a clear image of the given situation (66). The positional maps try to take the situation into a meso-level, by interpreting the collective actors and key non-human actors in the social worlds in which they negotiate (66). Lastly, the positional maps seek to explore which positions are taken and not taken in the data within a given theme (66). For this study, the authors have chosen to focus solely on situational maps as the field of inquiry lies within human and non-human actors, and discourses around succession and unconventional tenures, as well as between these elements.

Situational maps consist of three types of maps, of which the first one is an abstract map with similarities to brainstorming, called a messy map. This map shows human and non-human actors, as well as discourses, which are within the given situation (69). The messy map often changes several times during the analysis, as the researchers gain knowledge of the situation and therefore might have to update the maps by either adding new information, removing non-important information or even by creating situations within the situation, for the purpose of focusing on selected themes and the actors and discourses related to them.

From the messy map, ordered maps can be created. The ordered map divides the content of the messy map into specific categories. Clark suggests the 13 following categories, but argues that they can be changed according to the given situation:

1. Individual human elements/actors
2. Collective human element/actors
3. Discursive constructions of individual and/or collective human actors
4. Political/economic elements
5. Temporal elements
6. Major issues/debates (usually contested)
7. Other kinds of elements
8. Non human elements/actions
9. Implicated/silent actors/actants
10. Discursive construction of non-human actants
11. Sociocultural/symbolic elements
12. Spatial elements
13. Related discourses (historical, narrative and/or visual) (69)^{p. 102}

Ordering the messy map allows the researchers to gain an overview of the situation and the elements within. The final situational map is the relational map. In this map, the researchers draw relations among the elements of the situation. This shows strength of the relations as well as missing relations, which might be an indicator of weakness in the research and question the design. Furthermore, missing relations can be used to discover new discourses, from which new messy maps will arise and the process will then repeat itself (69).

4.3.3 Methodical Reflections

Even though this Master Thesis is considered to be valid, it is important to reflect on the methods used in this process in order to consider how it could be improved. The empirical data is collected through semi-structured interviews in order to provide flexibility in the conversation and a friendly and comfortable atmosphere. However, it is considered that relevant subjects have not been mentioned and discussed due to the direction of the semi-structured interview. Instead, quantitative questionnaires could have been used, enabling the researchers to interview more farmers (70). This method would have ensured all interviewees

answering the same questions, allowing the authors to generalize upon tendencies. However, quantitative questionnaires have the disadvantages of the respondent being unable to elaborate on the questions, which is found to be essential for the chosen ontological point of view of this study (70).

While Grounded Theory commands an inductive approach, Situational Analysis stresses that the researchers are not able to detach themselves from the situation, and the methodical approach to this thesis has therefore been adductive. This has enabled the authors to build up their research by adding knowledge from literature on a continuous basis, as the analysis developed (71).

4.3.4 Data Collection and Processing

This section outlines how the empirical data has been gathered as well as processed, including a presentation of the interviewees. All interviews besides one were conducted face-to-face. The last interview with ØL consultant Bjarne Hansen was carried out by phone on head speaker, enabling both authors to hear and comment on his statements. The same interviewer conducted all of the eight interviews, while the other author served as an observer, making sure that all planned and relevant questions were asked. Furthermore, the observant author was allowed to ask follow-up questions when needed. All interviewees were informed about the intention of the interview before beginning the interview. Besides, they were all asked for permission to be recorded and quoted in the thesis report. The interviewees were all given the opportunity of approving their statements before being used in the project. Furthermore, all interviewees were given the opportunity to be anonymous.

4.3.4.1 Presentation of the Interviewees

Following the premises of grounded theorizing, the starting point of this Master Thesis was for the authors to participate in the recurring organic congress with the theme Success and

Challenges in the end of November 2015, arranged by *SEGES Økologi, ØL* and *Landbrug og Fødevarer*. The congress allowed the authors to participate in debates and attend presentations within the field of interest, as well as having sessions with DSL, including an initial interview with the project manager of DSL, all contributing to the gathering of knowledge on the focus area of the project, as suggested by Clark (66). After attending in a presentation by DSL and how two farmers are trying to incorporate the ideas of DSL in their holding, contacts were made with the first round of interviewees, who will be presented in the section below.

The second round of interviews was planned after having conducted the interviews with the first selection of interviewees. These four interviewees were chosen based on the empirical data that was collected, suggesting the authors to look further into socially useful agricultural projects and successful succession, as in line with the objectives from Situational Analysis (66). Besides, the name of one of the farmers as well as the consultant was mentioned by at least one of the previous interviewees, and they were personalities with whom both authors were acquainted after having conducted research on DSL, alternative farming and succession. All were based on prepared interview guides, taking a starting point in the information gathered at the organic congress and relevant State-Of-The-Art literature.



Picture 1 – From the top: 1.Svend Brodersen (14), 2. Niels Quist-Jensen (15), 3. Bjarne Hansen (16), 4. Per Bundgaard (17), 5. Lars Skytte (18).

4.3.4.3.1 Niels Quist-Jensen

Niels Quist-Jensen is headmaster of *Nordjyllands Landbrugsskole Lundbæk*, an agricultural school in Nordjylland. Niels Quist-Jensen was born and raised in an agricultural environment, however breaking away from the norms of the family, Niels attended the *Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University* and became an academician. Nevertheless, Niels runs a part-time agricultural holding besides carrying out his job as headmaster.

Niels Quist-Jensen was selected as a relevant interviewee for this Master Thesis due to his position as headmaster of an agricultural school. The interview with Niels Quist-Jensen took place at the agricultural school in Nordjylland in January 2016.

4.3.4.3.2 Per Bundgaard

Per Bundgaard is an arable farmer, situated in Nordjylland on a family farm which has been in the family since 1517. In 1985, Per Bundgaard took over the farm, which at the time was a conventional dairy farm, and in 1997 he shifted to organic production, as he wanted better living conditions for his cattle.

Per Bundgaard grew up in a rural society with neighbors helping one and another, which he highly appreciated. However, in his time several of the neighboring farms have been forced to shut down, resulting in him purchasing a number of these holdings. This situation concerns Per Bundgaard, as he misses the neighborhoods and the rural community. Thus, he decided to take upon sharemilking, creating a rural environment on his own farm, offering young farmers the opportunity of renting his stables and his machineries, only having to invest in dairy cattle. Introducing this, Per Bundgaard entered DSL as one of their cases, showing a possible constellation of alternative succession and tenures.

Per Bundgaard was chosen for this project after having heard his and one of the young sharemilkers' presentation at the organic congress in November 2015. The interview took place in January 2016.

4.3.4.3.3 Svend Brodersen

Svend Brodersen is a farmer and businessman, and a joint owner of *Gram Slot* (Gram Castle) in Sønderjylland. When he was 20 years old, he bought his first farm in Kolding. The following years, he increased his production and started to study economy in his spare time. He has also been in the City council in Kolding for 10 years. In 2006, he noticed that Gram Slot was for sale. He and his wife then mapped a concept and presented it for the bank, asking for them to finance the loan of approximately 120 million dkr. The bank declined, propping the dream of buying Gram Slot until Svend Brodersen got in contact with an old acquaintance, a businessman who recently sold his business with a high profit. The two men partnered up and with further financial support from the bank, they acquired Gram Slot. In 2010, they sold half of the holding to the multinational supermarket *Rema 1000* with the intention of offering high quality organic products to the customers.

Svend Brodersen was chosen for this project for two reasons: The authors already knew him by name and considered him to be relevant due to the alternative tenure in his holding. The second reason for including him as an interviewee was that his name was mentioned several times by one of the young agricultural students and Niels Quist-Jensen, when talking about successful holdings and tenures. The interview with Svend Brodersen was conducted in the beginning of February 2016 at Gram Slot in Sønderjylland.

4.3.4.3.4 Lars Skytte

Lars Skytte owns the organic horticulture *Skyttes Gartneri* on Fyn, just outside Denmark's third biggest city, Odense. Lars Skytte is a passionate organic producer and has an educational background within agriculture as well as biology. His vision of farming is to be 100% organic and maintain a profitable and nutrient rich crop rotation, benefitting the land and the commodities. Lars Skytte is about to retire, and has strategically been planning the succession so that his horticulture can continue having the same visions as before. The plan is for three of his young employees to take over the farm in a period of five years. Lars Skytte has known all

three young men for most of their lives and has worked with them for many years, therefore having a close relation to all of them.

After having heard Lars Skytte give a presentation about soil and crop rotation at the organic congress in November 2015, the authors of this project decided to contact him and ask for an interview. Besides, Skyttes Gartneri was already mapped as a case by Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug, and he was therefore considered to be relevant for this study with regards to succession and unconventional tenures. The interview was conducted at Skyttes Gartneri after having interviewed Svend Brodersen, the beginning of February 2016.

4.3.4.3.5 Bjarne Hansen

Bjarne Hansen is a former organic farmer, now working as an organic consultant at ØL, counselling the cases of DSL and helping other potential farmers to integrate the principles of DSL in their holdings.

Bjarne Hansen was selected by the authors with the intention of hearing his experiences with the cases of DSL, especially regarding the challenges of setting up alternative constellations, introducing alternative succession methods, and tenures which might be seen as a barrier for young and established farmers. Subsequently, Bjarne Hansen was contacted by email and a telephone interview was planned and conducted in February 2016.

4.3.4.3.6 The agricultural students, Frederik and Christian

The two agricultural students in this project named Frederik and Christian both attend Nordjyllands Landbrugsskole where they study company leadership. In order to protect their privacy, they have been anonymized in this project.

Frederik is 22 years old and raised in an agricultural environment, having a father who works as a part timer farmer, combined with a job as an agricultural consultant. Frederik's father has a small amount of breeding stocks, which gives a reasonable income. His holding is

not organic, and generally Frederik's attitude towards organic agriculture is very sceptical and negative. Frederik has no intention of having a farm on his own due to the bad economy of this profession. Instead he would like to become a financial consultant in a bank for example.

Christian is 24 years old and raised in an agricultural environment as well. His father has a rather big conventional dairy farm, which he intends to be the successor of. Christian is positively minded towards organic agriculture, and would like to shift the production to organic, since he believes that the economy of the farm would improve due to the attitude and support of the surrounding society.

The authors of the project wanted to interview two agricultural students, representing each side of the attitudes towards organic agriculture and alternative constellations in agriculture and tenures. The intention of the interviews was to question which opportunities and barriers within such constellations the students saw. Thus, the headmaster of Nordjyllands Landbrugsskole Niels Quist-Jensen, was asked if he could find and choose two such students who would like to participate in the project. Frederik and Christian were interviewed in January 2016 on Nordjyllands Landbrugsskole, the day after having conducted the interviews with Niels Quist-Jensen and Per Bundgaard.



Picture 2 – Nordjyllands Landbrugsskole (19).

4.3.4.3.7 Bjarke Andersen

Bjarke Andersen is one of the successors of Skyttes Gartneri. He was raised on an organic farm as well, and has known Lars Skytte his entire life. Originally, the plan was for him to take over the family farm, but due to him not being able to cooperate with his father, he found a job at Skyttes Gartneri. Now he is to succeed the horticulture with two other young farmers in a period of five years. In the period of having worked at the horticulture, and in the five years of taking over the holding step by step, the young farmers have been and will be introduced to the operation of the business and the network of outlets and cooperative neighbors.

Bjarke Andersen was asked to participate with the intention of hearing his opinion and experience of alternative succession and tenures. He was seen as a relevant interviewee as he is in the middle of such a process. Bjarke Andersen was chosen over the two other successors, as he was the only one having a Danish agricultural education. Bjarke Andersen was interviewed immediately after interviewing Lars Skytte in February 2016.



Picture 3 – Bjarke Andersen working in the Black Italian Cabbage field at Skyttes Gartneri (10).

4.3.4.2 Processing of the Data from the Interviews

The analysis was based on the situational mapping by Clark (66). Immediately after conducting the four interviews, they were transcribed and thoroughly read through by both authors. Afterwards, a messy map was conducted, using the three categories: human actor, non-human actor and discourse, as given by Clark (69), see [Picture 4](#) (see [appendix 1](#)). Words and important sentences from the interview were highlighted according to the three categories, a code from the interviewee was noted as well as the page number, and the words were then transferred to a post-it in a corresponding color, and randomly added to the map.

From the messy map, relational maps were then carried out, dividing the mapped actors and discourses into 13 categories given by Clark, (see earlier chapter on methods). Each ordered map was then ordered into fewer common relations, such as succession and farming methods. The interviewee code as well as the page number were kept (see [appendix 2 and 3](#)).

Lastly, the categories from all of the 13 maps were gathered in one map, giving an overview of the overall topics, being 62 headlines. All headlines were followed with a number, telling which map it belonged to. Finally, these 62 topics were clustered in the 10 categories below, setting the agenda for the themes of the last two interviews, as well as the analysis, see [Picture 4](#):

The derived 10 categories from the analysis

1. Self-employed	6. Economy and financing
2. Rural Life	7. Farming operating conditions
3. Owner relations	8. Politics, legislations and organizations
4. Succession	9. Outlets
5. Influence	10. Organic and conventional agriculture

The mapping and coding of the last four interviews followed the same pattern as the interviews in the first round ([appendices 4 and 5](#)). The relational map was conducted using the 10 themes derived from the first round of interviews ([appendix 6](#)).

Opposed to what Clark suggests, the authors did not use memorizing in the way she intended, by writing specific memos during the mapping process. Instead, the authors did vocal memos, making sure each part of the mapping was articulated and thereby ensuring that the conscious process was still obtained. Furthermore, the relational maps had another take than that of Clarke as these draw on common relations as opposed to direct relations as Clarke suggests (68). Although the methods differed from that of the theory, the relational maps still showed both the relations of the elements in the research as well as where relations were missing, and these were then used as the baseline themes for the following analysis.



Picture 4 - Stages and types of maps used in the Situational Analysis of the data. From the top: 1. Messy map with actors and discourses, 2. Relational maps, 3. Categories from relational maps, 4. initial messy map.

5.0 ANALYSIS

This section takes departure as a continuation of the relational map of the eight interviewees, resulting in the above-mentioned 10 themes, under which the mapped actors and discourses of the interviews have been divided. The themes have formed the overall frame of the analysis, although the agenda has been that of the research question being which barriers and opportunities established farmers and new entrants see towards succession and unconventional tenures.

In the analysis, quotes of the interviewees will appear. In order to make the empirical data as manageable as possible, all quotes being presented in this Master Thesis have been transferred into separate appendices (7-14) and appears in Danish as well as in an English translation.

5.1. Independent Farmer

One of the biggest concerns of the interviewees is the issue of being independent and freeholder. Being your own boss seems to be an enormous motivation for the farmers to enter a process involving either an alternative form of succession, agricultural constellation or an unconventional tenure. Several of the interviewees agreed upon the fact that life as independent farmer differs from that of an employee by both the time and effort invested:

[...] Nobody has any idea of how much I have been working when I was young. Nobody would believe it. Well... I was not on holidays with my kids, I was nothing, and when I finally was able to go on holidays with them, the holiday started with me getting ill from stress, right?

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 1)

[...] and yeah, some drop out of desire, and some drop out because it is a giant work. Working hours. No independent farmer can work only 37 hours.

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 1)

First of all, it is the professionalism, right? Second, it is their attitude towards life [...] if they are of the view that they are going to have a 37 hour work week as an independent farmer [...] but there has to be an attitude towards being able to manage the finances and activating themselves and so on.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 1)

Furthermore, Christian mentions that being independent and having invested capital in one's own agriculture is essential for farmers, as this empowers and motivates them to work hard in order to ensure a profitable farm. For comparison, he mentions the communist era in Eastern Europe where enormous agricultures (Kolkhozes) were set up by the communist regime and run by hired workers, who did not feel this empowerment and joint responsibility:

Independence [...] It is the entire background of agriculture and the day that it disappears, I do not believe that.... You can see how it went back in time with the communists in the Eastern Europe [...] They were not able to succeed. They made these giant agricultures and had thousands of people hired, but they never succeeded. They were not able to make a profitable business out of it. Everybody worked against each other. It was not possible. Nobody said "this is how we are going to do it.

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 2)

Lars Skytte and Christian both enhance the importance of the support from family and especially the surrounding community. Christian mentions that the support of the surrounding community is of great importance with regards to feeling empowered and motivated to work as an independent farmer. The time and effort needed as an independent farmer will often not leave much spare time for hobbies and social gatherings. Lars Skytte points at this fact as an unfortunate development of farming as the characteristics have changed from family driven farms to a more industrial way of farming, being very economically dependent:

But in my generation, ordinary farming was a one-man farm. It has been like that from the 60's and on to year 2000 or the 90's. Actually, it was not until then that some of the young people, who were getting started, they said "no, I do not want a one-man farm, then rather invest in a big farm so that there is room for hiring employees." And I understand that. But of course, then you will run into something, when it is suddenly getting really, really big. And maybe then, a financial strain would come that would be too big for many to handle.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 2)

Bjarne Hansen elaborates on the importance of taking part in social interactions, which often is undervalued amongst the independent farmers:

[...] you can make some farms, which are going to take a greater part in the surrounding community. Like it did in the past, giving people a more normal workday. People would get a greater surplus etc. etc. etc. Making them able to take part in the social life, which a lot of farmers did in the past. And which they really want to, but when they are pushed to their limits, then they have neither time nor surplus [...] I mean, they would obtain more energy to do something different in the local community rather than them being part of the local community.

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 1)

The social aspect seems to be of high importance to the interviewees, and it is also mentioned that this has been the reason for Bjarne Hansen to abandon life as a freeholder, as he simply felt bored without colleagues. Additionally, the connection between workspace and living situation is highlighted by several of the interviewees as being especially characteristic for the trade as an independent farmer, hence the line between work and leisure is somewhat blurred. This is expressed in relation to time spent on work as well as the financial dependency, which both are seen as extensive barriers:

If it was a factory, then you could go home. On a farm you are not able to go home, you live there. It is your entire life. The smallest movement and you are going to lose your home as well. It is difficult and there is no room for it to go wrong [...]

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 3)

[...] The workplace is our home and if it is a privately owned farm, which we had in the beginning, well if things go wrong, then it is not just the workplace that is lost, it is also your home

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 3)

According to a group of the interviewees, being a successful independent farmer is related to intrinsic motivation. However, being able to adapt to any given situation as well as managing various tasks of the holding, is essential:

Being an independent farmer gives a huge amount of energy, which you cannot neglect, and you have to try to exploit it. Because [...] it comes from nothing. Which [...] gives joy and this joy is what you have as a farmer [...]

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 1)

You really have to want it. Really. And then you have to be good at running the production, taking care of it, you have to be extremely good at negotiating and buying. Yeah, and you have to be extremely good at managing, and you need to be good at involving your local community.

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 4)

As a farmer today you have to do all of it, partly what you are good at but also what you are not good at [...]

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 2)

Although the disadvantages may outweigh the benefits, the student Christian still has a dream of being independent. He states that the ability to live a life in which he is his own boss motivates him. Furthermore, he mentions that the daily challenges related to the life of being

independent is something that he is very passionate about (appendix 8, quote 5). The same applies for Svend Brodersen, for whom this is the most important aspect of being a successful independent farmer:

[...] You do not dream in the morning like I do, and wake up early and sneak out of bed, because I just love to get started with my work on Gram Slot. That is why it provides results [...] And if you do not do this, then you have to move. So the first thing, a lot of farmers [...] they need to do something new. Really. They are not cut out to be farmers.

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 2)

Per Bundgaard, Lars Skytte, Bjarne Hansen and Niels Quist-Jensen all state that the former obvious connection between being independent and freehold is in need of a shift since owning the land may be outdated. In addition, according to Bjarne Hansen, the general way for farmers to establish themselves by financing the land through banks and other mortgage institutions leads to an illusion of freehold, which is supported by Niels Quist-Jensen:

Well you actually believe in Santa Claus, even in an enlightened society, right? And then the farmers believe in this freehold, even though none of them owns anything themselves. It is the credit associations and the banks that own all of it [...] But the agriculture has been good at keeping this telling about the farmer owning the land and cultivating the land, but I don't know one single farmer, who actually decides for himself, because all of them have to ask the Bank for approval of their accountings and then decide what has to be done, right?

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 3)

There is a certain amount of conservatism in it. Although they have not really understood that as a freeholder you are actually really bound from the moment you owe more than you own and you do that in the moment of establishment [...]

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 2)

Several of the interviewees suggest land renting as a possible solution to this problem, since the general opinion is that as long as the farmer has the right to cultivate, he will perceive himself as being independent. It is mentioned that in other professions, it is common to rent without losing the feeling of being independent. This solution furthermore has the benefit of reducing the financial risk of freehold, as the economical barrier is reduced. This is to be further analyzed in a later chapter.

The interviewees mention that education and preparation for life as independent are provided by employers, family as well as agricultural schools. The family is particularly of high importance for the choice of becoming independent and it is outlined that *like father like son* is a great part of the farmer identity of the rural children:

Besides, it is also what they know. The freehold has been [...] the existing belief of the profession through 100 years, so it is cemented in the consciousness, for father as well as [...] grandfather and great grandfather, they had their own farm, and that is why it is so difficult for them to abstract from it, so they take it for granted to become freeholders, right?

– Niels Quist-Jensen, (appendix 9, quote 3)

Svend Brodersen points out that this might be a problem as this tendency may lead to farmers choosing life as independent without having the intrinsic motivation, as a result of family history:

[...] all in which you have been raised, from your father and your grand father and the newspaper and the government and the agricultural school, saying that the freehold is more firm than the Constitution itself. You can hold on to that easily, but then you have to adjust your dreams [...] But if you are not ready for that, then you have to start removing some of all the blinders, which is part of being raised, and then figure out what can be done differently [...]

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 3)

Bjarke Andersen expresses that the schools also leave room for improvement as he feels that there is a lack of focus on preparing the young agricultural students to an independent life. He

points out that this has been missing in his education. Per Bundgaard shares this attitude and stresses that the schools also lack more focus on the different ways of being independent as well as presenting the possibility of separating freehold and self-employment (appendix 12, quote 1).

5.2. Rural Life

Especially Per Bundgaard has first-hand experiences with the increasing depopulation of the countryside and expresses sadness towards the loss of neighbors and village life as a result of this. He further states that him acquiring neighboring farms and land rather is a result of foreclosures than an inherent desire to expand (appendix 12, quote 2). Sharemilking has been an attempt for Per Bundgaard to revive life in the village, as he feels that he has the opportunity as well as the obligation to help the younger generation to get established. By providing facilities for his sharemilkers, he gives them an opportunity to gain experience without being too financially dependent. Besides, he gains the opportunity of a stronger crop rotation, but most importantly, this project results in more life on his farm.

Several of the interviewees claim that the rural population, and the attitude towards the agricultural landscape, has changed over time, somewhat because of the agricultural specialization and growth of the individual farms. Niels Quist-Jensen clarifies:

[...] There is a form of, well you get alienated [...] A large, well some kind of scepticism will come towards what is going on inside of these large buildings behind the "no access" signs, it seems tremendous when the farmer drives in this 30 ton huge slurry spreader, which takes up the entire road [...]

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 4)

Several of the interviewees point at the newcomers as another problem in the agricultural landscape, as they do not understand the rural way of life. For Lars Skytte, this is seen amongst the lack of support to the local community hall and other social activities as well as in their behavior:

So it is people from the cities, that move out here, they simply close the gravel road. It is weird. You would never dream of doing that before [...] It is often people working in Odense, who just want to live in the countryside, right? And they move out here and actually, they are seeking less contact than the old generation of peasants.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 4)

He underlines that the daily contact, which previously was a part of the everyday life amongst the farmers, has been eliminated as urban dwellers have taken up residence in the neighboring farms. Christian agrees and elaborates:

[...] first of all it is about getting people to live in the countryside. But the people living in the countryside, they are not necessarily friendly towards agriculture

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 6)

He emphasizes that their unrealistic perception of farming, might be due to them coming from larger cities. Niels Quist-Jensen sees the negative attitude towards agriculture, as a consequence of the separation of socially useful tasks from the farms in the later part of the 20th century, such as cleaning up ditches, clearing snow and participating in the up keeping of the community hall. He elaborates that he expects a shift in the way society is seeing agriculture and that new requirements will be asked to be fulfilled:

[...] the society is asking us to solve some tasks again [...] they are actually starting to demand [...] where are you able to do something, where can you do something, right? Something that is socially useful farming? [...]

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 5)

This is supported by Bjarne Hansen, who awaits a shift in paradigms of agriculture and the expectations towards it, and points out that dairies such as Arla, the older generation and agricultural regulations need to rethink agriculture.

In order to accommodate this shift, the gaps between the rural and urban population need to be withdrawn. Thus, this is seen as a huge obstacle for a number of the

interviewees in relations to farming, which only strengthens the estrangement of these two groups. The students are of the opinion that the urban population is unaware of the true nature of agriculture, especially organic farming, and points towards the romantic shine given by the media in programs such as *Bonderøven*⁸ and *Søren Ryge*⁹. They propose that Danish agriculture may have been too closed and a need for inviting the public inside through initiatives as *Åbent Landbrug*¹⁰ can be very useful, as they have shown to be in i.e. branding organic farming. Svend Brodersen supports this but also points out that agricultural landscape needs to be rebranded, thereby strengthening the relationship towards the non-rural community (appendix 11, quote 4).

5.3. Tenures

Traditional tenures may have the form of an I/S, A/S, ApS¹¹ or holding companies (after 2004) and are often financed by either banks or mortgage companies. These traditional elements are what Frederik points out when he is asked about tenures:

[...] You have always had these constellations in agriculture, either being one owner or I/S or ApS and that is just the way it has always been. That is how you do this
- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 1)

Especially within succession, the I/S is often used within family trades, father/son etc. Both Frederik and Bjarke Andersen enhance the importance of trust within the parties involved. Frederik is of the opinion that the family relation instills an inherent trust, while Bjarke Andersen is more sceptical towards the financial part of the constellation, as the parties are

⁸ Danish TV-show about a self-sufficient family living at Kastanjegaarden in Djursland

⁹ One of the most known TV hosts about agriculture in Denmark, had his first show in 1977.

¹⁰ An initiative by Landbrug & Fødevarer, welcoming the public to farms all over the country (72).

¹¹ I/S is a company in which all participants are equally liable. No demands of capital exist. As a standard, the partners owns an equal share of the holding both partners owns, unless other agreements have been made (73). A/S and ApS covers Public Limited Companies, which can be founded by one or more owners. In an A/S, one or several of the owners have to add a capital of at least 500.000 DKK, and in an ApS the added capital has to be at least 50,000 DKK (74).

equally liable for any debt in case of bankruptcy. Instead he claims that ApS has a smaller financial risk. All of the interviewees agree upon the fact that farms have currently become too expensive for the young generation of new agricultural graduates to acquire. Bjarke Andersen states that:

Because, not a lot of properties have a size which allows you to [...] buy it and make a living from it, for an amount less than a certain amount of millions. Then you have to [...] bring an amount yourself and that actually means that you have to get a job for a couple of years and then you are going to be maybe almost 40 before you have saved enough money, and in this period of time you might have had some children and then you need to have a house. And that also costs a lot, and then it is bloody difficult to put aside enough money to go out and buy a property. So in school you are getting prepared to, to convince the Bank. But you cannot do that if you do not have any money to begin with.

- Bjarke Andersen (appendix 14, quote 1)

This leads a group of the interviewees to the conclusion that the need for alternative constellations is unavoidable, if the younger generation of farmers should have the prospect of becoming independent within a decent time after graduation. One solution suggested by a number of the interviewees is for the farmer to be renting rather than owning as well as deviations of this concept:

I think that we are going to see a new kind of tenure, in which the farmer, like me, is not going to be the one owning all of it.

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 7)

Another solution is for pension trusts or other private investors to acquire the land and hire the farmer as a manager, by means of leasing. Frederik is positive towards this type of arrangement as a way for younger farmers to gain experience, and argues that the sense of self-employment is maintained:

AP Pension, they have done it [...] they buy the property and then they actually just let it out. And that allows you to, if I was the tenant, then I still would be independent but just leasing.

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 2)

Niels Quist-Jensen and Bjarke Andersen are also positive, although both express scepticism towards the intention of the investor, and they are worried that the autonomy is lost when the farmer has to report to the owner (appendix 14, quote 2). Furthermore, Niels Quist-Jensen questions the financial side of the arrangement as he thinks the return is too high, although he highlights the option for the farmer to purchase the farm after an agreed number of years. Thus, in order for it to be a recommendable idea for young farmers, it needs to be more economically beneficial.

The pension companies want to enter, but they demand a return of 3-4-5 %. In my opinion, they demand too much in return, but I think that it is a good model, especially the fact that the farmers have the option of buying the farm at a predetermined price after 10 years.

Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 6)

Bjarne Hansen does not address the financial side of the matter but points at the right to cultivate as the major principle:

[...] And then it actually does not matter who owns the land. It just has to be an investor who has the funds. It might be the public as well; we might as well all be the owners of the land, right? It could also be private investors, it could be pension funds. I actually do not think it matters that much, and I do not think it matters to those who are cultivating the land [...] Well, I believe that owning land actually is not that essential. Eh, I believe that we can find a type of ownership, where someone else owns the land and then the ones cultivating it, they are renting the right to cultivate. I believe that is the right way of doing this [...]

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 4)

A third way of creating possibilities for the farmers who may not have the ability to acquire farms on their own is sharemilking and variations thereof. Although the term may be rather new in the Danish agricultural arena, Frederik claims that the concept has been used throughout time:

it has been done within pig farming [...] here, renting out the stables has always been done. It is somewhat the same. You are renting the stables from another and then he might take the manure and then you are provided with grains from him.

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 3)

Although the business constellation is well known, the agricultural students are rather sceptical towards sharemilking:

[...] I would never judge it, even though the first time I heard about Sharemilking I thought to myself "A year will pass and then they will go bankrupt or they will close it down"[...]

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 4)

Christian sees the issue of trust as being essential for the survival of the concept, both in times of collaboration in the daily operation of the farm as well as interdependency related to sharemilking.

What will happen the day they fall out? And he no longer delivers what he has to deliver and you are in his buildings? [...] It is a precarious production, I would say. If you are standing there with your entire herd but you do not have anywhere to, if you fall out, to have them or... everything else is his. Then what?

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 8)

[...] how are you going to get two entirely different people to cooperate on something which they eventually are going to own both of them? Such as sharemilking. That is why I do not believe in that concept.

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 9)

Bjarne Hansen explains that the scepticism towards the unconventional tenures may be related to the fact that it is a new way of doing things in a profession which is dominated by traditions. He elaborates that he is of the opinion that success stories concerning these projects, such as *Bundgaard Sharemilker I/S*¹² and Skyttes Gartneri, will lead to media publicity resulting in students, schools and older generations slowly becoming more positive towards such projects (appendix 10, quote 5). This is supported by the student Frederik, who expresses:

[...] But I think that you become very sceptical. I am. I have become sceptical myself, I am very sceptical towards everything, but that is just until you have shown me the results. You cannot conclude on it until then[...]

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 5)

Bjarne Hansen is currently working for DSL on broadening the awareness of sharemilking, and for him sharemilking is a rather quick and easy way for young generations of farmers to establish themselves as independent. Niels agrees and adds that the most important aspect is the alliance between the already established farmer and the young farmers, as mutual advantages then will occur. He highlights that the young farmers' partner should be a significant and well-established farmer who has a network that they are able to benefit from, both in relations to operational and financial regards (appendix 9, quote 7). Per Bundgaard elaborates:

And the way that we have built this up financially, means that if the price of milk drops, then I will charge less for the feed [...] yeah, and if it goes up, then I go along with it. That is how I stabilize my sharemilkers, financially.

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 3)

For Per Bundgaard, it is important that the younger farmers are aware of his intention with the project. Showing an alternative approach to dairy production, than what is common in the Danish agriculture, is key:

¹² The company of the two young farmers at Per Bundgaards farm

I have a general idea of this sharemilking. I have clarified that we will have... We can have 180 cows, and that is the maximum limit. They are not to dream about expanding because I do not want that. I think that this. 180 cows, it is suitable for two people. They can make a living from it. It is suitable for two sharemilkers to make a saving and make a living. It is suitable for one sharemilker, enabling him to hire an assistant and save money. It is suitable so if one does not want to have an assistant, then he can settle for 120 cows, right? So there is this flexibility. I do not want more cows. And if they cannot make a living from 180 cows then they are not able to make a living from 380 cows or 400 cows. That is my philosophy.

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 4)

5.4. Succession

In the interviews, several barriers related to succession were mentioned amongst the interviewees. Tradition seems to be a vast barrier for especially alternative successions as *the way it has always been done* dominates the culture. First of all, Christian points toward the fact that farm size is expanding, a tendency that has been ongoing for decades.

No, but there is probably somewhat of an attitude amongst the farmers, who are sitting out there. The more the merrier. But that is the direction in which they have always been pushed

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 10)

This is supported by other interviewees, who further explain that the tendency will continue for years to come, reinforced by the financial crisis. As the talk goes towards the different types of succession, tradition again plays an important role. Lars Skytte expresses that:

Also because it comes from this culture of family heritage, right? It went from one generation to the next, and if there was something that you should not do, then it was risking all of it. Then the ties would be cut. So there is an entire culture in this.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 5)

He explains that the traditional father/son succession slowly has decreased in Danish agriculture, as the land has become more and more expensive. This calls for a transformation in order to let the new generation of farmers into the profession. For Lars, this can be as co-owners, who slowly buy out the established farmer. But his vision is broader than this and deals with creating a society of farmers working together on land, possibly owned by society, and with key words being *renting* and *crop rotation*, see Figure 7. Bjarke Andersen supports this point of view, and stresses the importance of an ownership feeling among the farmers involved in the project.

[...] But maybe, if something goes wrong. Then he does not lose anything, other than he will lose his job but then he can find a new one. Maybe I do not think that it is enough.

- Bjarke Andersen (appendix 14, quote 3)

Per Bundgaard has a similar vision on a smaller scale, creating a farming community on his acquired land, starting with sharemilkers but possibly extending to free range pigs, rabbits or chickens, and preferably involving a farm shop or even cow cooperatives. By this, he would let young farmers, having the vision and will to be independent, rent a piece of his land and take a part in the greater operation, see Figure 8.

Svend Brodersen also sees alternative succession as part of the future for Gram Slot. His vision is to create a holding company that would buy farms in the local area and integrate them in the production of Gram Slot goods. He intends to give young farmers the opportunity of renting the property and gain experience of being independent, see Figure 9. The three examples can be seen as a manifestation of the fact that new ways are needed within the agricultural landscape in order to ensure the survival of the profession.

Another barrier is the importance of trust amongst the parties involved. Trust is often related to risk, and some of the interviewees see this as a major barrier for alternative succession, as they are of the opinion that the older generation has the biggest risk, since they are investing the most. Frederik also points to the risk connected to the succession, both alternative and traditional:

[...] even if it is an I/S or how you are doing it, it is totally different. You have to be able to agree upon it. Because there is money between people, so you have to be able to agree upon it. Otherwise it just goes wrong in the end [...]

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 6)

He elaborates that he sees the father/son succession to be easier as the trust is already built and says that the father and son need to be able to collaborate and agree upon the direction of the farm in order for the succession to be a success. This is also an issue for Christian, who is to enter an upcoming succession with his father within a foreseeable future, and he is aware of issues arising, such as different attitudes towards organic farming. The gap between the generations is a general issue within succession. Christian explains that the reconciliation of expectation or lack thereof may be a reason for the low number of successions throughout the last decade:

There has to be some transparent rules and... yes... how it is going to be implemented. That is also what has gone wrong in many farms today. It is the ones who have been making I/S companies. Two years go by and then they fall out, if they had to go on for 10 years... It is when young and old meet, it is not always... the best combination.

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 11)

He also points towards conflicts occurring when the older generation is letting the younger generation into his farm, bringing in other points of views and visions for the farm. Thus the danger of offending one or the other generation is absolutely present:

And it is also, if I was an old farmer and I had been here for the past 40 years and I had an idea of how it should look like and be like, and then this new guy comes and changes everything and says that all which I have been doing previously is wrong. Not everyone in the older generation is ready and willing to do that.

- Christian (appendix 8, quote 12)

Niels Quist-Jensen experiences that the source of the greatest gap between the two generations is the attitude. He feels that the older generation should take on more responsibility towards helping the new generation into the profession of agriculture.

It is about helping the next generation getting started. Not just in the upbringing, not just in education but it is goddamn also in a financial matter and that is where we fail big time in these years.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 8)

It is goddamn this generation or our generation's most important task, to create some conditions for the next generation, and we are so selfish today.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 9)

Niels Quist-Jensen is supported by the other interviewed established farmers, who all agree upon the task of improving the conditions for the younger generation in being established. Lars Skytte also highlights this issue:

Because one of the main ideas was to try and make some kind of generational change in a way where you did not have to take money out of the farm in every single succession.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 6)

Furthermore, Niels Quist-Jensen points towards the younger generation having lost economical skills. Per Bundgaard explains that he believes this is a reflection of the teaching in the agricultural schools, where focus is put on large farms and calls for a more nuanced teaching, showing the agricultural diversity.

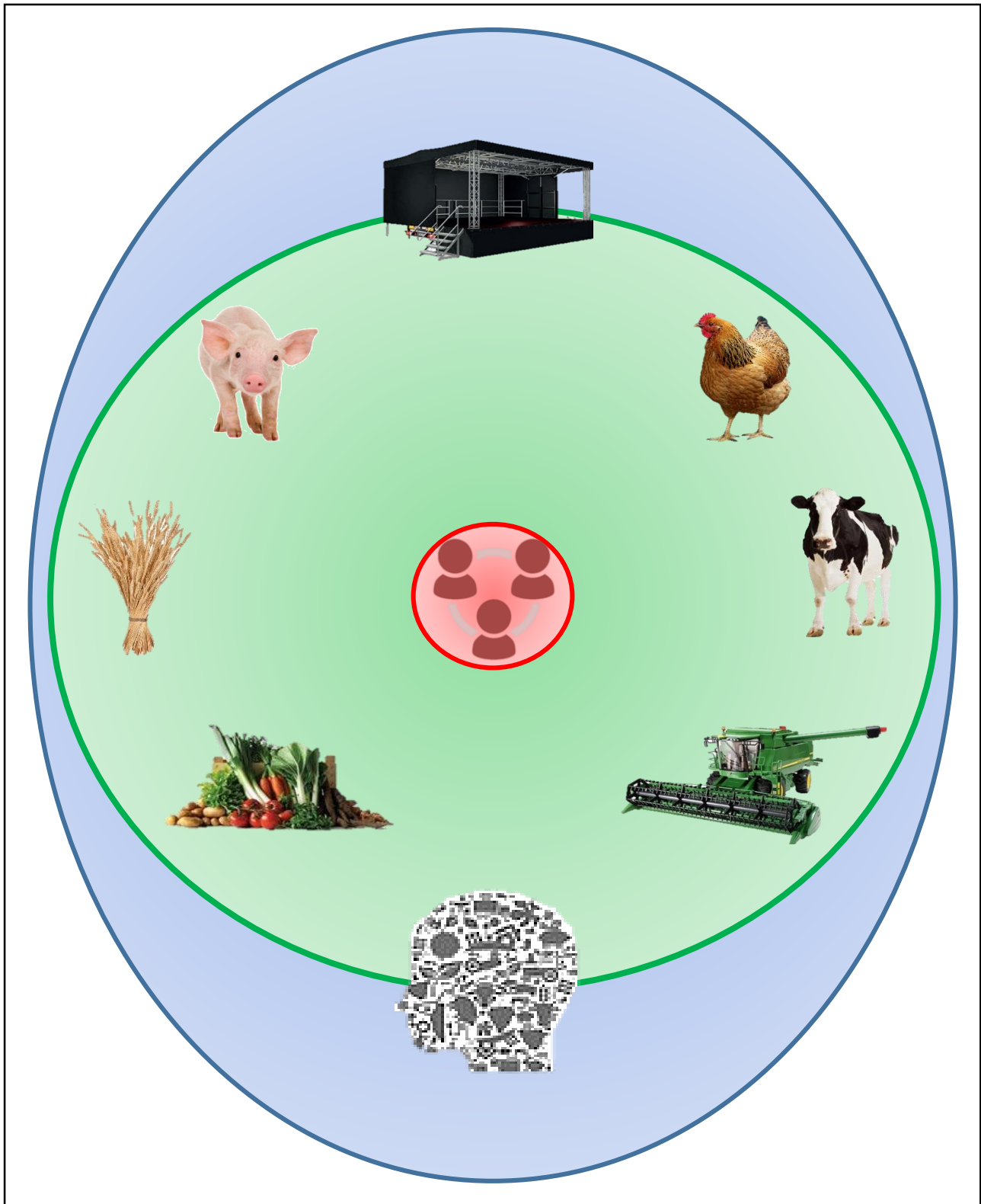


Figure 7 – Lars Skytte's model. This model has many similarities to that of Per Bundgaard although it differentiates itself in three specific areas. One being that the partnership (the green circle) is not bound to a specific location and farmers, meaning that young as well as established, easily can enter and leave the partnership. The second is that the land is not owned by one person, but a non-location based organization (represented by the red circle). Third is that this model has a direct link to the surrounding community (represented by the blue circle). Lars Skytte also demands that farmers entering this partnership have to be organic and enter a crop rotation. Lars Skytte does not limit the partnership to only farmers, but sees a center of knowledge as a natural collaborator, linking the surrounding society to the partnership as well as parts of the land could be used for i.e. concerts, empowering the community to take ownership of the farmland.

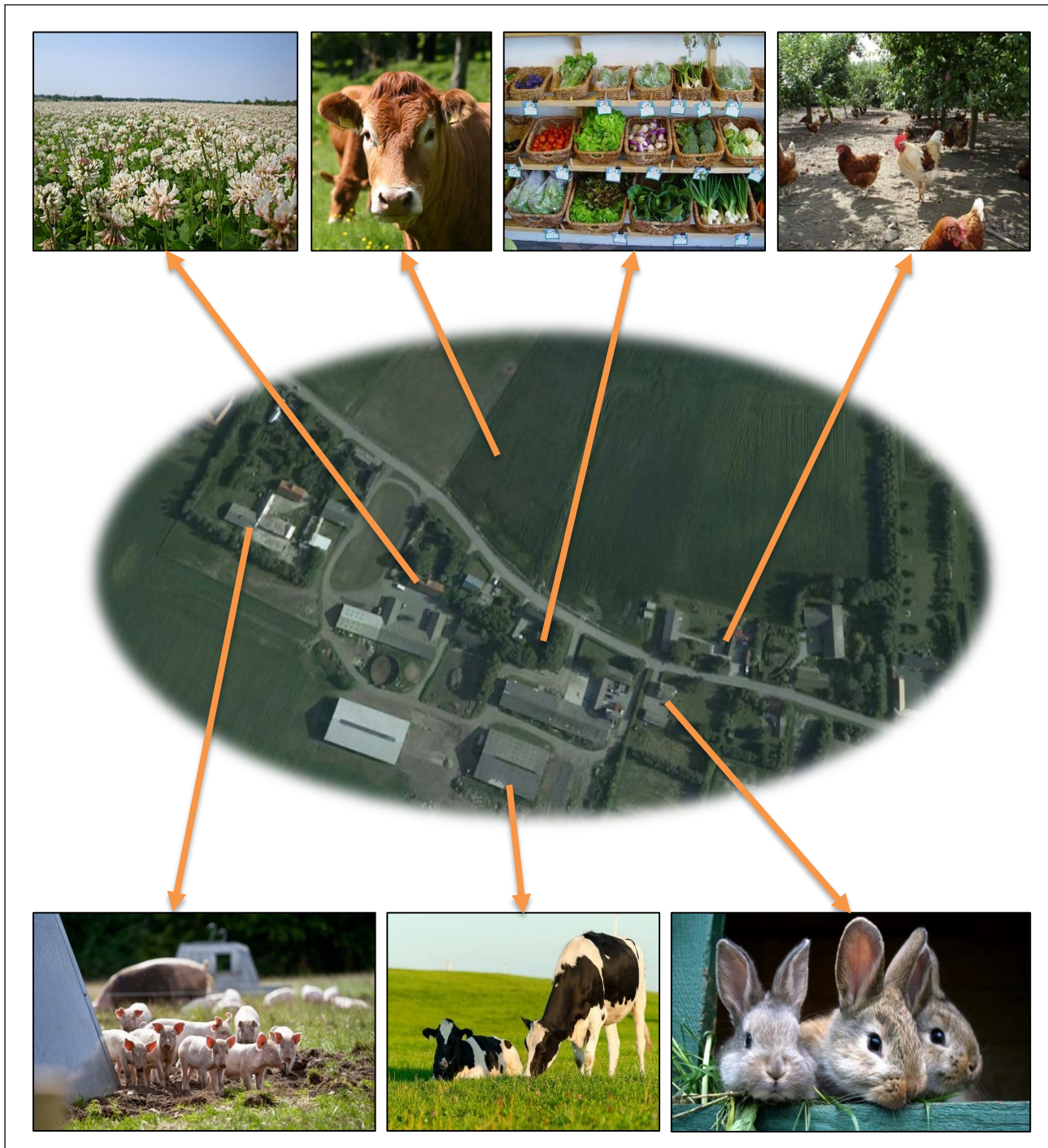


Figure 8 – The model of Per Bundgaard. The model is based on a further development of the sharemilking concept, creating opportunities for young new entrants to start their farm business without investing in land. The multiple properties of Per Bundgaard allow him to rent out single properties for young farmers, corresponding to their different needs. This being i.e. a small chicken production, free-range pigs, cow shares, a farm shop, sharemilking or even a production of rabbits for consumption. The terms for entering a partnership in Per Bundgaard's model is that the production is organic and that the farmers enter a cooperation with the other parties on i.e. crop rotation or manure.

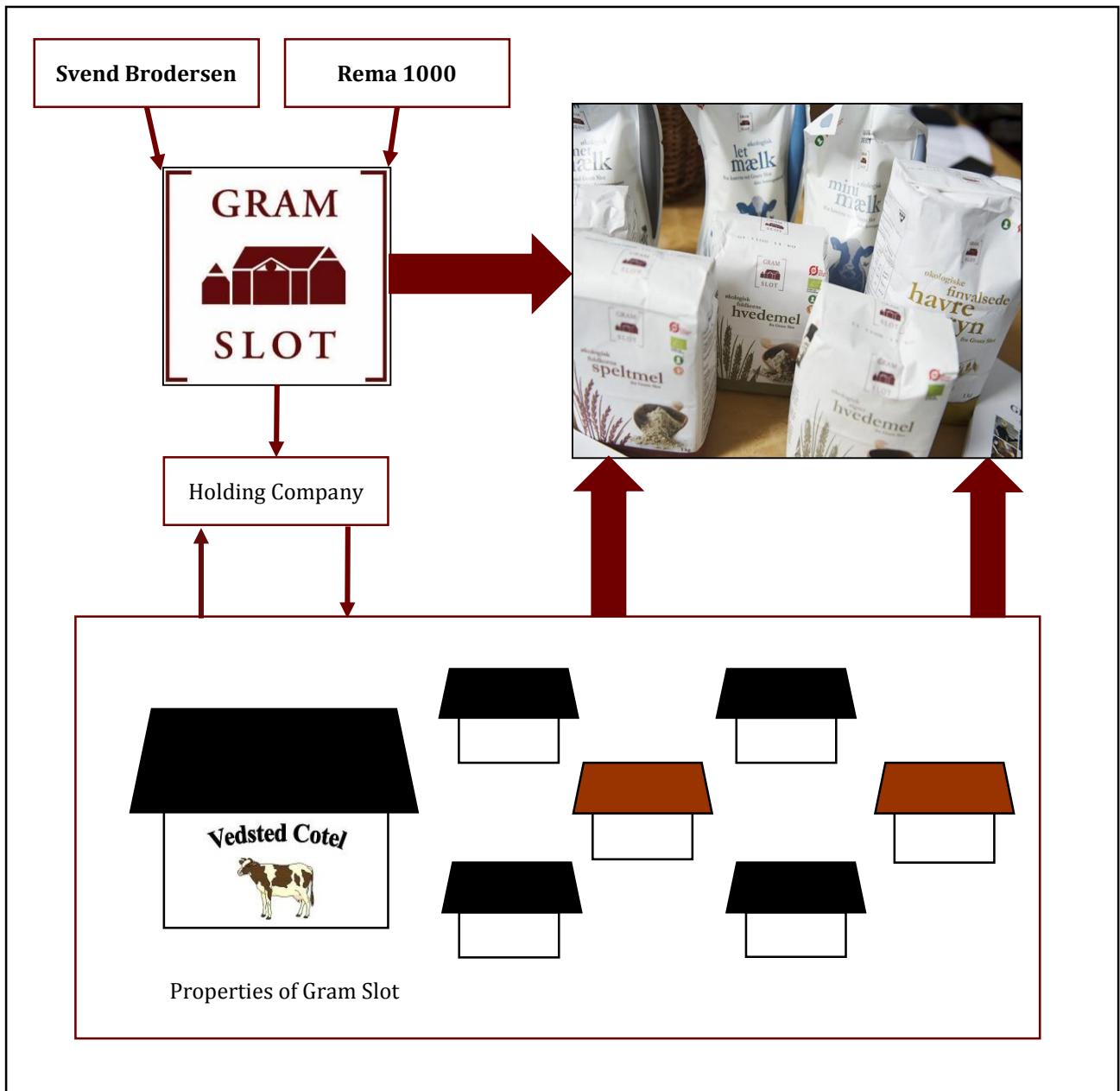


Figure 9 – Model of Svend Brodersen. This model has several similarities with the model of Per Bundgaard as the main idea is a holding company under Gram Slot will acquire property and land, which will be able to rent for new entrants, who are not able to invest in property themselves (black roof). The property will after a number of years be offered to the farmer, who slowly will be able to purchase the farm. The model also allows established farmers to enter the partnership by adding a ‘buy-in’ in the company but keeping their farm (brown roof). All of the farms in the partnership will produce Gram Slot commodities, which are sold in Rema 1000, implying that the production must be organic. Svend Brodersen has at this point taken the first step towards establishing such a partnership by his project *Vedsted Cotel*, which can be seen as a form of sharemilking.

They need to come out and see the production and see what it looks like on the bottom line? It is fine to come and see a production, how it can be run, having 600 cows. It is fine. But what does the bottom line say? And what kinds of risks are related to this type of farm? And it is very important that they are opening their eyes, both the teachers and the students. Well, here is a farm, it has 80 cows, and they do this and this. They are earning money. The ones over here are not. What will happen if this herd gets sick? What will happen if this herd gets sick? What will happen if the interest rates goes up here and what will happen if the interest rates go up over here?

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 1)

According to Per Bundgaard, this leads to the students having the attitude that *the bigger the better* and expresses a need for change in morality amongst the younger generation by proving their worth. Niels Quist-Jensen has the same experience – the students want too much, too soon:

Their focus is on having their own production, this ideal production, and that it has to be there a fairly short time after being established.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 10)

He gives the explanation that the collective memory of the farmer slowly building his farm business has been lost among the younger generation, who instead wants to take over already successfully established farms.

5.5. Influence

The attitude towards farming and especially unconventional tenures is influenced by several factors. According to Bjarne Hansen, when it comes to the attitude towards constellations such as sharemilking, the younger generation can be divided into two categories: Those coming from an agricultural background and those who do not:

[...] The family has an enormous influence on how young people see this. It is also typical that the ones entering here, i.e in sharemilking [...] are young people [...] who are actually entering agriculture from the outside, meaning that they did not have any relations to agriculture before they entered [...] none of the ones we have met here, in any of these contexts, neither sharemilking, Ydun's Garden nor anything, has agricultural backgrounds. So it is people coming from the outside.

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 6)

One explanation may be the influence coming from family and the traditions linked to the culture of farming, where the norm has been succession directly from father to son. Bjarne Hansen notes that:

I am not in doubt that the parents have a great deal of influence [...] and as I mentioned before, in the case of Xs 6th generation, well there are deep roots, so there is no doubt about the parents. They all say this, "well my father says, well my father says, he says", so I mean... The family has an enormous influence on how the young people see this [...]

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 7)

Per supports this as he has had the same experience when he started the sharemilking project. Even though he has worked alongside Niels Quist-Jensen in order to raise awareness about the project amongst the agricultural students, he encountered resentment from the students:

[...] I have been dealing with Niels Quist-Jensen a lot, and Niels Quist-Jensen sees it. He is not in doubt about this, so he deals with the young people in the area. But it is difficult for him because the young people come from homes with parents who are also affected by this "well, you cannot make a living from this" and "you have to own your own property" and "is this going to work?"

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 5)

Niels Quist-Jensen is of the opinion that the background does not influence the possibility of becoming independent, although he experiences that the rural children often are difficult to teach due to their pre-knowledge of agriculture:

I often think the benefits of being son of a farmer are overestimated when it comes to being a freeholder. Because I often experience that [...] the worst kind of students are these 16 year-old sons of farmers with 30 years of experience from their father [...]

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 11)

He expresses that the learning curve and the academic growth is highest amongst the non-agricultural students and argues that their personal level of initiative also is superior.

Another setting where the position of the family comes into account is on the case of whether to produce organic or not. Bjarke Andersen elaborates that his choice to grow organic is due to his parents having an organic farm. He mentions that he *received it through his mother's milk* and he would not even consider conventional farming. Per Bundgaard is of the same opinion and states that the young generation coming from conventional farms hesitates when it comes to organic conversion, due to the fear of disappointing their fathers (appendix 12, quote 6). Niels Quist-Jensen and Bjarne Hansen furthermore point to possible conflicts between the parents and the agricultural schools, when alternative topics are touched upon in the teaching.

[...] it has to come from the headmaster, who has to approve it. The headmaster and the school board have to approve these things being taught at the agricultural school. Because when some crazy father calls them, saying that "my son bloody does not need to learn this nonsense, he just has to go home and be a traditional farmer", then they have to be able to defend it, right?

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 8)

This is supported by Niels Quist-Jensen, who sees this as a direct barrier in relation to teaching alternative succession in the agricultural schools.

Because when they go home and discuss these things with the previous generation, right? And when I say previous generation, then I mean their employer and their parents, right? [...] and then they go home and discuss and then they tell a different version of it, right? That is why I think that we face a barrier in this, right? They simply close their eyes for these new things going on, right?

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 12)

The alternative tenures are ongoing on Lars Skytte's as well as on Per Bundgaard's farms. Both of them have the opinion that this is the future for Danish farming, and that the attitude of the farmers has to change in order for changes to be made. Induced matters, such as governance or subsidies, cannot provoke it:

And I am of the distinct opinion that I want to affect my surroundings. I will not force farmers to this, but I want to affect them. By showing that it is possible.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 7)

[...] the people who entered this were very positive. I did not have to convince them and I am also of the belief that I do not want to convince and influence anyone. I do not want to oversell anything. They have to see it themselves [...] I will tell them the advantages and if they do not get it then. I do not feel like persuading them, I am not selling anything. They have to see it themselves. They have to approach me themselves.

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 7)

Most of the interviewees agree that the schools are having the most important influence in sculpting the younger generation. According to Bjarne Hansen, this is a problem as he has the experience that students earlier granted the teachers somewhat of a guru-status and referred to their teachers many decades later (appendix 10, quote 9). Thus, the importance of teaching quality is a key issue, and addressed by several interviewees. The students feel that the school only shortly brushed upon financing in relation to becoming independent as well as alternative tenures such as sharemilking, while Bjarke Andersen sees the teaching as inadequate and calls

for a more thorough review of the different possibilities. Per Bundgaard and Bjarne Hansen support this accusation and claims:

[...] I think it is because the agricultural schools are not good enough at showing other ways of doing this [...]

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 8)

[...] There is definitely room for improvement! But the agricultural teachers are afraid to introduce new topics [...] There is a lot of agricultural teachers who are afraid of thinking like this, as they are heretic thoughts, right? And then you are afraid that you will get your notice, if you start talking about it.

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 10)

Niels Quist-Jensen is of the belief that his school has made a lot of initiatives towards accommodating the wishes from students, as well as parents, future employers and the demands from politicians, while adding an academic level to the education. However, he expresses that reality is more complex than what can be taught in a school, so the need for practice is essential (appendix 9, quote 13). While Per Bundgaard suggests that the teaching focuses on the wrong issues, such as surplus production and the large farms, Svend Brodersen is of the opinion that the students in general spend too much time in school.

[...] you do not learn anything in a school, nothing. It is purely for storage. But when you exit, if you exit and then add some practical experience afterwards, then you have the possibility to translate your school knowledge into something good, along with the practical experience. But if you end up having only the theoretical knowledge, then it is outdated within two years, and then it is worth nothing.

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 5)

[...] They need to enter and then exit again. They have been founded in order to create independent people but they have forgotten this and they think that they have to make consultants of all of them. It is completely wrong.

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 6)

He elaborates by telling which type of students he would hire at his farm and expresses that he experiences a lack of initiative amongst this group, for him the more education the lesser the willingness to take initiative (appendix 11, quote 7). According to the students this is a paradox as they see management training being essential in becoming independent. This exact part of the education focuses on financial issues as opposed to the basic training concerning practical issues such as livestock farming and vegetation, and it is therefore seen as being very relevant. Lastly, Niels Quist-Jensen draws attention to the schools' role as truth teller and elaborates on how it is possible for him to manipulate how the students would grasp concepts as i.e. organic farming by how they are presented through teaching.

If we take the students to Y here, he has an organic farm somewhere between Viborg and Aalborg, right? [...] and Y's farm, it is just working. His organic farm, it is just working, you cannot put a finger on anything out there. And then when the students have been there, then they all want to become organic farmers. And then they visit my friend, X out here, right? He has free-range pigs running around, right? And then X starts by, he is so provoking, he is an old, old hippie, and then he provokes them, then he says that he bloody hell has not become an organic farmer, just to sit there and eat pesticide meat, like provoke them. And when they have been at his place, they do not want to become organic farmer anymore. And then we go to a conventional farm, and "yeah it is much better if it is conventional than organic", so you are actually able to manipulate them, showing them what you want them to see.
- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 14)

5.6 Economy and Financing

Economy and financing were two major themes in all interviews, explaining the crisis in Danish agriculture, as well as being very important factors in succession. According to the two agricultural students, Danish agriculture needs to *rebrand* itself and demand more money from the world market for its products, guaranteeing the farmer a surplus. It is mentioned that the

Danish dairy Arla already has helped rebranding Danish dairy farmers by adding an *owner brand* to all milk cartons, telling a story about a Danish farmer and explaining the consumers that this big company actually is owned by Danish dairy farmers (appendix 8, quote 13).

Svend Brodersen, part owner of Gram Slot believes that it is time for Danish farmers to focus on the demands of the consumers and adjust their production of commodities according to this demand. Thus, instead of up-scaling the production of conventional milk, he considers it to be far more reasonable and profitable if they shift to organic farming since the demands of organic products are increasing and the accounted price is higher for the farmer.

[...] It is because they do not have focus on the client and [...] because they do not place themselves where the market is. But they follow the wrong highway [...] and they are stubborn, they say that they do not want to listen to the market [...] But think about it, we produce 3 millions liters of milk. We get an added cost of 1.8 dkr. It is 3,6 million dkr more that I get for my milk. It is something after all. It is 10,000 dkr per day. That is exactly what I have to pay in interest

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 8)

Besides, Svend Brodersen has made a great effort, creating a brand that tells a story and is of a higher value than similar products. In this process, he analyzed the market of possible outlets with the aim of finding the right partner to sell Gram Slot's products (appendix 11, quote 9).

Another way of earning money as a farmer is by investing less in buildings, materials and land. Per Bundgaard rents out his buildings and milking machines to two young farmers who have a dream of starting up their own farm. This is a way for a new generation of farmers to start-up a production without taking large loans and paying off huge interests every month. These two young men invested only in dairy cattle and immediately started producing organic milk. Besides, they cooperate with the owner, who provides them with animal feed, whilst they provide him with manure for his fields, see Figure 8:

Small rural community where you help each other, right? And the way that we have built this up economically [...] if the milk drops, then I charge less for the animal feed [...] Yes, and if it increases then I follow. That is how I stabilize my sharemilkers economically.

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 9)

Svend Brodersen has a vision of a new model in which he intends to buy more farms under the wings of Gram Slot. This is a way for new farmers to get started without having to bring in huge amounts of capital. Within a period of years, he will have the opportunity to be co-owner of the farm, and in time maybe buy the farm himself, if he delivers positive results, see [Figure 9](#):

Yes, then we hire him and then we follow him and his farm's accounting closely. How is it going? And if he is good, then we have no problems letting him come in as a co-owner out there. And this might develop into 100% ownership in a period of 10 or 20 or 50 years for such an ownership [...] He does not bring in so much capital but a lot of skills.

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 10)

Svend Brodersen is very positive towards partnership when starting up a business. He points out that the first step in finding the right partner is *finding yourself*. It has been extremely important for him to be able to identify with his partner Rema 1000 and that they have same values and visions for Gram Slot. In his opinion, it is positive to have a partner who does not only provide capital but also knowledge, network and in his case, a sales channel.

For us, this is a co-owner of our dreams because they not only contribute with money, they contribute with knowledge, network and sales channels, and this you have besides the money. And that is why you have to know that when you bring in partners, it might be okay to bring in partners who contribute with money. That is fine, but then you still have to carry out and implement all of it yourself and they are ready, looking and counting their money because [...] it is an outcome, it is the only thing that they measure; how high is the outcome [...]

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 11)

5.7 Farming Operating Conditions

Lars Skytte also saves money on renting land and buildings instead of owning it, and he actually thinks that this idea has future prospects for young men who would like to start-up their own farm. Not only is it more economic to rent or share land and buildings with neighbor farmers, it is also more sustainable for the land and the outcome to integrate crop rotation and utilize the manure of nearby cattle and pigs. Thus, Lars Skytte suggests an agricultural ecosystem in which farmers specialized within production of cattle, pigs, different crops etc. can be a part of and benefit from. This will improve the crop rotation, limit cases of crop diseases and provide cattle and pigs with valuable feed, see [Figure 7](#):

So actually, we would like a long term stable agricultural eco system [...] I do not mean a single farm. I'm thinking about a giant cooperation [...] We imagine a frame which is built upon a core of values, here among the legislation for organic production, but there are also other things attached [...] But a big frame here [...] which contains... Well 2000 hectares [...] And then of course you have an administration centre in the middle, but this is a core of values, but it is also an area [...] Below this hat you have different farms. You have a horticulture which is Skytte's Gartneri for example, and then you have agriculture, I mean bigger crops [...] then we have some cows, a farm with cattle, we could also have chickens [...] The essential here is that these properties are individual. It might be an APS, it might be private owned, but all of them are companies that submit to this core of values and to a certain degree the crop rotation. You choose to enter a cooperation with regards to crop rotation, not economy.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 8)

Per Bundgaard has also found a way to exploit the resources of his partners on the farm. Due to him having sharemilkers, he gets manure from the cattle on the farm and he introduces grass to his crop rotation, which results in better crops. Besides, he earns money on renting out his stables, he gets company in his everyday life, and he also believes that all of this increases the value of his farm.

I get one more crop to my arable farm. I introduce grass. When I introduce grass I improve my crop rotation and then I get better crops. Besides, I also get manure and I get to rent out my stables [...] Then I get life on the farm and [...] my farm becomes more valuable.

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 10)

Frederik the agricultural student actually agrees in this tactic. He believes that other organic farmers might find this kind of cooperation attractive, but according to him, conventional farmers would not be tempted by it, as they do not depend on optimal crop rotation and manure due to them being able to use pesticides and fertilizers.

Organic farmers, such as X he does it because it also benefits him and his crop rotation in the end. It is easier to control with manure. I think [...] if you closed down a conventional farm with cattle, I do not think that they would be so tempted to do it. Well, of course you would be tempted to rent out your stables [...] but I think that it is the organic farmers that gain most from it.

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 7)

They all agree in the importance of technology, and that it already has and will have a high impact on Danish agriculture. It is also said that larger farms have the advantage of being able to invest in technology due to their size.

There are some operational advantages, also giant advantages in exploiting new technology. A lot of people are afraid of this new technology, but it is the big farms that are able to invest in these new computer-driven and GPS systems [...] enabling them to dose pesticides correctly, right? And likewise, invest in drones, invest in the necessary equipment towards locating weeds [...] I mean, the big farms have some possibilities that the small farms do not have.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 15)

However, Lars Skytte emphasizes that these great companies need to work together in a common versatility in order for them to benefit properly from each other and the land.

These companies need to be specialised companies but in a common versatility. And they need to have a size that [...] We do not believe that we should work with a hoe in the future. None of us wants to do that. It needs to be of a size which enables us to afford to invest in robots.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 9)

For Per Bundgaard his intention is for his sharemilkers to have a moderate amount of cattle. In his opinion, there is too much focus on big productions and he believes that the agricultural schools should pay more attention to the small farms, and make sure to show the students farms with a reasonable economy instead of showing them farms with big production and beautiful stables. In Per Bundgaard's point of view, it is important to prioritize the essentials in one's holding, and only loan money for the necessities.

One might begin to focus on the smaller farms [...] They need to come out and look at the farm and see the outcome on the bottom line. It is fine to see a farm with 600 cows, it is great, but what does the outcome on the bottom line say? And what is the risk of this farm?

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 11)

Besides, he believes that the young men should be more open to the fact that they do not need a great number of cattle in order to earn enough money. Hence, he has made it clear for his sharemilkers that they are allowed to have no more than a herd of 180 cows.

And I have this general belief about sharemilking. I have made it clear that [...] we can reach 180 cows and that is the maximum limit. They are not to dream about expanding because I do not want that. I think that this, 180 cows is suitable for two people. They can make a living off it. It is suitable for two sharemilkers to save money and make a living. It is suitable for a sharemilker to hire an assistant and they can save money. It is suitable for a farmer who does not want an assistant; he can have 120 cows, right? So it provides this flexibility. I do not want more cattle, and if they cannot make a living off 180 cows, they cannot make a living off 380 cows or 400 cows [...]

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 12)

In his mind, it is much more reasonable to downscale the production and decrease the risk of investment instead of increasing the production and hope for a higher income. However, he mentions that there is a tendency for agricultural consultants to give the opposite advice to farmers who would like to optimize their production and earnings.

I have heard about several places where they have visited a pig farm and counselled the pig farmer, and they found out that if they took out all machines, the farmer would be able to fit in 80 more sows. Then you can produce more pigs... For a market that does not need more pigs. Then we lower the price making them earn less. Pork is cheaper than vegetables today!

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 13)

All three young farmers point out the difficulties in investing in a farm on their own, which are in line with the statements of Per Bundgaard. Bjarke, who is one of the successors of Skytte's Gartneri mentions that not many farms have a size which is big enough for a farmer to be able to earn enough money for a living. Hence, you need to work hard for a lot of years, maybe turning 40 before you can afford to buy a farm.

Because not a lot of properties have a size which allows you to [...] buy it and make a living from it, for an amount less than a certain amount of millions. Then you have to [...] bring an amount yourself and that actually means that you have get a job for a couple of years and then you are going to be maybe almost 40 before you have earned enough money, and in this period of time you might have had some children and then you need to have a house. And that also costs a lot, and then it is bloody difficult to put aside enough money to go out and buy a property. So in school you are getting prepared to, to convince the Bank. But you cannot do that if you do not have any money to begin with.

- Bjarke Andersen (appendix 14, quote 1)

5.8 Politics, Legislations and Organizations

Common for all of the interviewees is a frustration with the system and legislation complicating either operational conditions or new, unconventional tenures. Bjarne Hansen mentions that legislation regarding subsidies are a great barrier for many farmers when considering unconventional tenures. Hence, he suggests a revolution of the system, ensuring that all agricultural constellations and tenures are given the same conditions and options of achieving subsidies. However, he fears that lobbying and too much politics will stop this from happening:

I mean, you should very quickly set up a working party, who could adjust all of these systems for other tenures. It is essential for the future work of this! That people do not have to fight the system too [...]

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 11)

First of all, there is this lobbying which makes them fear to let go. That is one thing, and the other thing is that this is so complicated so if you want to make reforms too, then you mix apples and oranges. I mean, then you would say that you do not want to touch these subsidies or succession or something else, and then you add reforms simultaneously. So it might take 3, 4 and 5 years before there is a solution. I might fear this. And then it might go very political.

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 12)

In his perspective, too much regard is given to the history of Danish agriculture and traditional farming. So much regard that the system does not pay attention to the development of the society and Danish agriculture. Svend Brodersen also explains that agriculture needs to adjust to the demand of the population. Likewise, the system needs to adjust legalization, enabling Danish farmers to rethink unconventional tenures and alternative agricultural constellations of their farm businesses:

[...] It is not the system's task to maintain a culture or a self-ownership for that matter. The system simply has to say: "Okay, how do we do if it is owned by a trust, how do we do if it is a sharemilker and how do we do if they do not own any land? [...] And then you just have to equate people [...] and here you might say that this lobbyism coming from the established agriculture is big and say if we let go of this, then we lose the independence. But it is the politicians' job to say "well, this is the future" [...] I mean, development happens all the time. And right now you just have to adjust the systems to the development. Right not, we do the opposite.

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 13)

Bjarne Hansen elaborates that the system needs to be seriously updated in order for alternative tenures and farming operating conditions to work properly. The system is still accommodating the needs and conditions of traditional agriculture, making it very difficult for farmers with an alternative approach to navigate and gain help, support and subsidies:

[...] we also have regular authorization for organic farming. It is very difficult if you do not own any land. Then you need to apply as a landless agriculture. They are not able to figure that out as well in the authorization for organic farming [...] it is only for traditional agriculture, I mean with one owner, who buys a property. They are not able to deal with these other tenures. Not at all.

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 14)

This is a large barrier for a lot of farmers who consider unconventional tenures. Among these is a specific farmer (whose name is known by the authors) who owns a big organic farm and considers renting out his stables for sharemilkers. Bjarne Hansen mentions that this farmer will be forced to stop his sharemilker project if SKAT is not able to adjust subsidies and taxes to this tenure.

[...] if this succession at [XXs'] is not possible to change, making it applicable for a sharemilker, then they have to repeal this sharemilker system, because then they are not able to make this trade.

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 15)

Svend Brodersen believes that there is too much bureaucracy stopping the individual farmer from taking a personal responsibility. He mentions that there are too many rules, but as long as they are upheld everything is fine. In his point of view, Danish farmers should be more idealistic, and not just follow the orders of higher agencies.

[...] Today, rules are just kept. But we need to move away from this, you need to take on a personal responsibility in every single second [...] because you change and it is the new rules you start all the time. And this is what matters in this culture of independence, which I lack a lot... Also in relation to agriculture [...].

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 12)

5.9 Outlets

For a long period of time, Danish farmers have sold their commodities to cooperative associations, thereby detaching the farmers from marketing and reselling the products (75). Thus, the farmers have not been forced to find alternative outlets and alternative distribution channels. However, it seems as if the future generation of farmers need to choose alternative options besides the traditional, simply in order for them to adjust to the market and the demand of the consumers. This is emphasized by Svend Brodersen, Lars Skytte as well as the consultant Bjarne Hansen.

They need to know more about regulations of marketing; I mean, right now farmers produce commodities and the consumers better goddamn eat it, right? Instead of turning the plate and say that agriculture is a profession of service - what do you want as a consumer?

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 16)

Svend Brodersen has already acknowledged that he has to adjust his business to the needs of the consumer:

Here, the general opinion within agriculture was that others have to eat what we feel like producing, because we know what is best. It is a totally different mind-set, whereas I walk around all the time focusing on the market and I do not see myself as a judge. I like organic production and I want to fulfil this need but I would never decide what the consumers want. I mean if the consumers want rolled oatmeal then I do not want to keep on producing instant oatmeal. Why the hell should I do that? [...] I do not have to decide their preferences [...]

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 4)

The concept of thinking out of the box is in line with Lars Skytte's way of running his farm business. Hence, instead of being a member of a cooperative association to which he can sell all of his commodities, he has shortened the food supply chain by selling his products directly to his clients being i.e. COOP, *Sticks'n'Sushi* and Københavns Fødevarefællesskab.

That is also why you are a member of a cooperative association. It is so easy. Somebody sells your commodities, you just have to concentrate on producing, but you do not necessarily get the price for your products, which it costs to produce them. That is why we sell them directly to our clients.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 10)

Thus, there is reason to believe that the field of agriculture needs to change in order for the new generation of farmers to be able to invest in a property and make a living off their production. Lars Skytte believes that the new generation of farmers needs to focus more on alternative outlets in order for them to earn more on their products than if they distributed their commodities to traditional outlets such as Arla or *Danish Crown*.

[...] Well, it is a question of economy but they need to be more active with regards to marketing than previous generations have been. You simply need to, in order to run a business. I mean, no matter which tenure they have, they need to be more active marketing-wise.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 11)

Bjarne Hansen agrees and says that farmers need to be more aware of the market, the value of their products and which outlets they consider as being most suitable as their sales ambassador.

[...] And here, they just delivered products for Arla or other buyers to pick up, and then they have some directors and other people hired to sell it, exempting you from having to interfere with it. And we have seen some sad examples of this, and that is why farmers have to interfere more as company owners and say "my product needs to be sold in this and this way and so on". They need to be more active and they also need to know how the market works and in general know more about marketing [...]

- Bjarne Hansen (appendix 10, quote 17)

When Svend Brodersen was asked about this attitude towards the challenges in Danish agriculture, he replied that modern farmers have to adapt to the market and the needs of the consumer all the time, and if you are not able to adjust to the market, you simply should not be independent.

If you choose to be an independent farmer, then you should not be knocked over by shifting to organic production or something. I mean - hello! It is not that hard. If you do not have the necessary power then you should not be independent. If you only want to do what you have seen your father and grandfather do, you know what? There is not room for that!

- Svend Brodersen (appendix 11, quote 13)

Thus, there is reason to believe in a basis for choosing alternative outlets, especially if the farmers wish to produce commodities of a higher quality. Niels Quist-Jensen believes that there are other alternatives than the big cooperative associations, however they are few.

[...] yes, there is a great deal of local slaughterhouses [...] or local, not many. But it is true, Danish Crown owns 60-70 % of the slaughterhouses, right? But there are 30% left after all, right?

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 16)

5.10 Organic and Conventional Agriculture

How agriculture is seen through the eyes of the media is of huge concern for the two students and a great barrier when it comes to the urge to become independent. Christian states that he is unsure if the risk related to self-employment is worth it, as long as conventional farming has its current reputation. Frederik supports this attitude and elaborates that the media has great responsibility in glorifying organic farming as opposed to conventional (appendix 13, quote 8). Lars Skytte agrees.

Well, there is this fact regarding organic farming, when something is in the media and mentioned in a positive manner, right? The drawn picture might be too rose-colored. I mean, romantic, right? Regarding organic farming.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 12)

Per Bundgaard also joins the discussion and broadens that the media has had a large role in the story of organic farming and the romantic picture being drawn and upheld in the eyes of the consumers. He further elaborates on this as being one of the reasons for the polarization of the agricultural scene, which has been transmitted to the younger generation (appendix 12, quote 6). Furthermore, Niels Quist-Jensen explains that the sacred attitude of organic farmers and organizations provokes the young agricultural students as well.

They are provoked by this sacred attitude, this attitude of salvation; yes it provokes them a lot.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 17)

I feel it among the students as well. There is this resistance and that is why I am saying that a lot of organic farmers actually are partly responsible for this resistance, which conventional farmers feel.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 18)

He believes that the organic farmers themselves are the biggest barriers for young people not being more positive towards organic agriculture.

Unfortunately, in my point of view organic farmers are one of the biggest barriers for why our young people do not have a more positive attitude towards organic production.

- Niels Quist-Jensen (appendix 9, quote 19)

Frederik supports this assumption, as he mentions that there is a common belief that organic farmers are *perfect people* and that conventional farmers are being punished for not being organic.

I mean, in my point of view, conventional farmers are always targeted. Organic farmers they are... Perfect people and then the rest of us are not... Well, organic farmers are given relatively much and that is fine... It is a brand which they are trying to introduce, but you should not punish the rest of the farmers [...]

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 9)

He agrees that there might be a bad atmosphere between conventional and organic farmers as organic farmers are paid more for their products. In Frederik's point of view this fact is unfair since there is not that much difference between organic and conventional production.

You might say that there is a bad atmosphere since the one part earns one and a half kroners more for the milk than the other part does, but I do not know if the atmosphere is bad... I guess it is just fraud.

- Frederik (appendix 13, quote 10)

Per Bundgaard mentions the exact same barrier and explains that this might also be an explanation to why there are more conventional farmers than organic ones. He explains that children of conventional farms are highly influenced by their parents who have a negative attitude towards organic production due to this polarization between conventional and organic farmers.

[...] the young people from conventional farms are highly influenced by their parents because organic farmers have been doing stuff that [...] has built walls and barriers [...] But the social heritage has been so tough and "what dad had done is the right thing", right? I think it is very difficult to do the opposite

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 6)

Meanwhile, Bjarke Andersen was raised on an organic farm and even though he has been in an internship on a conventional farm, he simply cannot imagine producing conventionally. In his mind, conventional farmers are ruining nature by breaking down the soil instead of nourishing and rebuilding it. In order to ensure a nutrient-rich nature for our children, Bjarke believes that we have to make sure to use nature's own methods for building up humus in the soil.

At the place where I was an apprentice, the farmer spread pesticides, but I could not really see why. It is ruining the nature, which is our home and source of resources. We break down and break down and break down, but we do not rebuild anything as conventional farmers [...] you have taken over the land by your parents, but [...] you actually borrow it from your children, right? So there is no need for decomposing the nature because then there is nothing left for our children.

- Bjarke Andersen (appendix 14, quote 4)

Lars Skytte mentions that crop rotation of different kinds of crops has been used as a natural tool in agriculture for decades, simply decreasing the risk of crop illnesses. However, since pesticides are able to decrease the occurrence of crop illnesses, conventional farmers see no advantages in having to rotate between crops.

You can remove it with pesticides today. That is why you can grow wheat after wheat conventionally, but you would never do it as organic gardener. You would never have done it as a conventional farmer back in the 70's. But today, you are able to remove it with pesticides.

- Lars Skytte (appendix 7, quote 13)

Per Bundgaard also mentions that his farm has benefitted from the sharemilkers. He mentions that having a farm only producing crops simply is not harmonious, as he would lack the necessary manure as well as a crop for his crop rotation:

Organic production means harmony, and a farm only producing crops is not harmonious. This is harmonious.

- Per Bundgaard (appendix 12, quote 14)

6.0 DISCUSSION

This section will discuss the findings from the analysis above. The discussion will take departure in the research question with the themes barriers and opportunities seen by established farmers as well as new entrants towards succession and unconventional tenures. Furthermore, relevant literature from State-Of-The-Art and other relevant studies will be included in the discussion.

The development of Danish agriculture has changed significantly since World War 2 (2). In this period of time, the number of fulltime farms has gone from being 200,000 to approximately 11,000. The development of Danish agriculture, resulting in fewer large industrial farms has led to a number of challenges in the rate of succession. Here amongst, the increased costs of the farms, followed by the state of the market having a downturn. This means that young farmers are to invest huge amounts of money when buying a farm, without having the security of a favorable economic climate (2,36). Thus, new entrants have two options when investing in a farm: Either buying a small one-man farm or choosing alternative tenures and giving up of having traditional sole proprietorship as a freeholder.

6.1 Succession 6.1.1. Traditional Succession

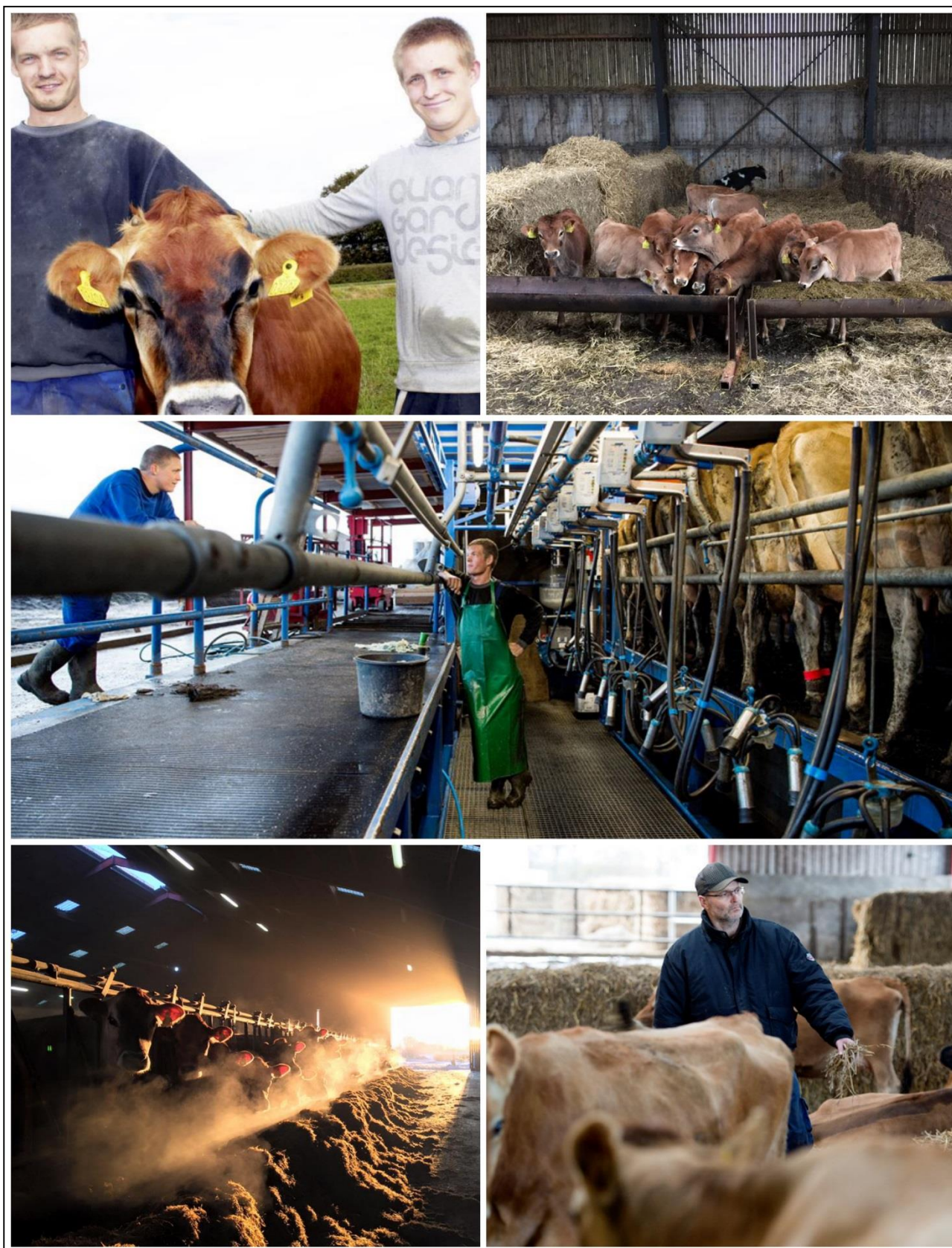
The Danish countryside has experienced depopulation throughout the second half of previous decade, partly because of an increased urbanization. The average age for Danish farmers has increased because of this and the tendency is continuing as the amount of eligible successors is declining. Ingram and Kirwan (36), describes the same trend both in Europe and in the UK. Here, it is reasoned with the argument that agriculture provides poor rewards and is difficult to enter for young farmers, due to high start-up costs as well as a limited availability of land (36). This finding is supported by several outcomes of the interviews, for example showing that young farmers see farming as being unprofitable. When explaining why he does not wish to become a farmer, Frederik mentions that he feels it is an unprofitable profession in which one works without getting paid. DR draws the same conclusion in their article regarding the

struggles of traditional succession (47). Considering that both agricultural students are rural children with farming fathers, it can be questioned if this attitude is to be generalized for the group of agricultural students. The term *farmer identity* is introduced by Fisher and Burton (33), who underline that within traditional succession, the farmer identity is an inherent feature of rural children, emphasizing that farming is a blood-based occupation which rural children grow into (33). Considering the opinions of Frederik and Christian, , one might inquire if this is due to first-hand experiencing of their fathers' financial struggles, which present a negative side of the farmer identity and can be difficult to look past. Because of the scepticism embedded in the profession, finding suitable successors will therefore be even more complicated. Fisher and Burton stress that within the traditional succession, socialization by the farmer, who often is the father of the successor, is essential, thus challenges may occur for the established farmer to find an alternative new entrant if his children withdraw from continuing the family farm (33,76). Fischer and Burton explain that the farmer successor identity of farmer sons or -daughters is a life-long process which depends on them growing up in the environment of farming, participating in the daily work and being in daily contact with the farmer and the farm. It is noted that this process has been affected by increased industrialization, diminishing the contact between the farmer, the young potential entrant and the farm (33). Hence, it seems that the industrialized development of agriculture results in less *natural born successors*, and due to this profession being so closely attached to family values and traditions, it is very difficult for new entrants, not having any relations to the specific farm, to become the successor.

The farming identity of rural children is according to the interviewees not only limited to family but also to employers, the agricultural school as well as the media. This is expressed by several of the older generation of interviewees. Furthermore, in contrast to the two students, some of the older interviewees believe that rural children might choose the path of farming simply due to family history, as continuing the family farm seems more important than being passionate about the agricultural business (77). Independence is a highly valued factor for new entrant farmers, as it is found that both generations of farmers are very conservative when it comes to alternative ways of succession, unconventional agricultural constellations and tenures (78). This tendency is especially elaborated by Niels Quist-Jensen and Bjarne Hansen, who point out how much influence the fathers of these young farmers have (77). Both Asai et al (40) and Zimmermann et al (34) highlight farmer education as a barrier

when looking towards determinants of the farmers' willingness towards taking part in alternative models of succession as well as agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures. In this light, agricultural schools have to struggle with earlier years of farming education which indirectly affect rural students, as well as the hurdle of teaching new and unexplored subjects. Niels Quist-Jensen expresses frustration with the fact that sons of these farmers are difficult to affect and introduce to new alternatives in agriculture and unconventional tenures, because their fathers feel a strong aversion towards changes of their profession (appendix 9, quote 12). Thus, it seems that the farmers not only affect their sons but also the content of the agricultural education. Due to this fact, it seems accurate when Bjarne Hansen points towards non-rural entrants as being more open-minded and positive towards alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures than sons of farmers, having been affected by their families and fathers their entire lives (56). It is very likely that this group of young potential farmers is the target group of initiating more alternative successions, agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures.

The farmer identity seems to have the additional aspect of dividing new entrants into two groups, one having relations to the farm and one that does not (76). Fischer and Burton explain that the attachment to the farm and land eases the commitment of the related successors (33). Furthermore, Ingram and Kirwan highlight that a relation to the farm is preferred amongst the farmers when choosing a successor, resulting in new entrants with relations to the farm land have an advantage compared to entrants who do not (36). Although the literature suggests that the farmers' sons are taking the lead when it comes to traditional succession, Niels Quist-Jensen disagrees, stating that other factors are more important (appendix 9, quote 11). The students on the other hand are of the opinion that the farming identity plays the most important role in succession, and point towards the trust that has been built between the farmer and successor, being blood-related or associates (46,77).



Picture 5 – The successors of Bundgaard Sharemilkers. From the top: 1. The two successors (20), 2. Calfs of jersey cattle in the intermistic enclosures (21), 3. Working in the moveable parlor, one of the investments by Per Bundgaard (6), 4. A group of the Jersey cattle (13), 5. Per Bundgaard working in the renovated stable (6).

6.1.2. The New Models of Succession

It is the belief of the older generation of interviewees that in order to change the increasing average age of farmers, Danish agriculture is in need of a revolution which accommodates alternative succession options (45). Thus, having found that young farmers find it difficult to enter agriculture, partly due to high start-up costs, poor rewards and either a limited availability of land or a high cost of land, there is reason to believe that alternative solutions for introducing young farmers to Danish agriculture are needed (79).

As the rural demographic has changed, rural life has been transformed from being a united society of common interests with farmers and neighbors helping one another, into a combination of large, industrial farms as well as smaller family farms and private households, alienating the heterogeneous rural population (77,80). Both Christian and Lars Skytte mention that newcomers often come from larger cities, searching for a quieter alternative to the urban life. Lars Skytte elaborates that people from urban environments often have an idealized impression of rural life, believing that farming is a romantic profession, similar to TV-shows such as *Bonderøven* and *Søren Ryge* (81). He explains that the newcomers often isolate themselves from their neighbors and stay away from joint activities in the community. It affects the rural life and the social cohesion, which before characterized the society of the countryside (80). Studies have shown that urban dwellers tend to be more interested in buying a smallholding than those already living in rural areas (81). Furthermore, this group of citizens searches for a better quality of life in the countryside (81). Bjarne Hansen explains that young people entering alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures often are from either smaller towns or larger cities, and not native rural citizen. In his point of view, this is due to them not having been influenced by family or a life-long perception of traditional farming life (76). The farming identity has large influence when discussing succession capability (33).

For the farmer, the benefits of engaging in succession are that his farm is ensured to continue while he has the opportunity of retiring (36,82). Furthermore, Lars Skytte points towards temporal continuity as a benefit as he gains colleagues and sparring partners, helping his business to progress. Per Bundgaard agrees, and sees these benefits as synergetic aspects of the succession, which also can be referred to as *the succession effect* (62,82). While the

advantages can serve as motivators, the older generation of interviewees also point toward a feeling of obligation to help the younger generation getting settled in the agricultural business. Ingram and Kirwan, who emphasize the altruistic motives of the farmers as a key ingredient in successful succession, support this (36).

In order for a succession to thrive, trust and commitment to the farm and to life as a farmer are key aspects (83). Frederik believes that farmers, the established as well as the new entrant, need to trust one another in order to ensure a successful succession. In his opinion, it might be difficult to find a suitable successor in whom the established farmer can trust, namely because this is a long-term process which historically has happened between father and son (77). This is elaborated on by Ingram and Kirwan, who suggest that the limited agricultural experience of the new entrant often is the main reason for the lack of trust (36). The interviewed students claim that this makes them feel inferior to the farmer and they imply that since the process of succession involves a shift of power from the farmer to the new entrant, the farmer is required to relinquish responsibility of his farm, which is somewhat impossible if the parties do not trust each other (83). Ingram and Kirwan support this argument although they further explain that the lack of trust may be caused by the naïveté of the younger generation, a claim that permeates the interviews with the older generation i.e. Niels Quist-Jensen, who states that the young farmers expect to *have it all* from the beginning (36). A reconciliation of expectations therefore seems the keynote for a successful succession, both in terms of expected outcome and motivation of the parties, and also in relation to trust and investment on a financial and personal level (45,52,62,83).

In Project Next Generation, ØL has sought to investigate the possibilities that lie within the new models of succession (52). Some of these models have been used as cases in DSL with the intention of broadening the knowledge of them, as well as a template for future successions. Through his work for DSL as a consultant in ØL, Bjarne Hansen has worked as a mediator in succession processes, in some cases trying to act as a matchmaker between interested parties, while attempting to facilitate legal aid in others. The two cases from DSL discussed in this Master Thesis are Bundgaard Sharemilker I/S and Skyttes Gartneri. Both holdings are currently in a process of succession and unconventional tenure. While both of the sharemilkers from Bundgaard Sharemilker I/S are alien to Per Bundgaard, Lars Skytte knew all three of his successors, as they were involved in his business as employees. Both Niels Quist-Jensen, Per Bundgaard and Bjarne Hansen outline the difficulties of finding suitable farmers for

Bundgaards Sharemilkers, and Niels Quist-Jensen says that the young generation questioned the intentions of Per Bundgaard when he presented his vision to them (52). Ingram and Kirwan investigated a policy-driven scheme involving matchmaking as a facilitator for the succession process and came to the same conclusion: Without knowledge of each other, trust is almost impossible to create and the succession will most likely fail (36). This indicates that even though the intentions might be good, using consultants as matchmakers may be a waste of effort, and energy should perhaps be directed towards other elements in the process, such as contract aid or practical matters such as acquiring organic license and so on (82,84).

Another issue of both Skyttes Gartneri and Bundgaard Sharemilker I/S was for the successors and the sharemilkers to be able to get a line of credit in order to make the initial investments needed for the start-up (45). In this case, Davis et al (35) suggest a *New Entrant Scheme*, involving an interest free loan, which will be given to the young farmers as initial capital (85,86). A scheme of that type would have eased the financial agony for the two involved farmers of Bundgaard Sharemilkers as well as those in the case of Skyttes Gartneri, enabling them to get a start investment in cattle earlier in the process as well as reducing the financial dependence of the established farmer (44,86).

6.1.3 Sub-conclusion on Succession

Both generations are sceptical towards the new models of succession, as the fear of giving up the autonomy traditionally connected to sole proprietorship and freehold is paramount. Tradition is key in this profession, and even though the attitude of the new entrants might be more positive towards this issue, they are still influenced by the older generation and the agricultural school. In traditional as well as unconventional succession, commitment and trust between the involved parties is essential. These features are more likely to emerge if the parties of a succession are part of each other's network beforehand. The issue of trust is more crucial for the older generation, whereas the young generation is seen to be naïve, which emphasizes the importance of an already established relationship with the successor. A reconciliation of expectations is essential, as this is the basis for building trust.

Even though there is scepticism towards the new models of succession, there is a general need for more successors to take over farms from the aging generation. The older generation of farmers sees several opportunities connected to the new models of succession, being that they are able to slowly retire, achieve colleagues and a livelier farm, and they obtain a synergetic effect with the joint workforces. Furthermore, they feel that they have an inherent obligation towards helping the younger generation getting started.

The younger generation of farmers is generally sceptical towards life as a farmer, as they fear that the profession is too demanding. This is a negative result of the farmer identity, as the tendency points towards the scepticism being more pronounced amongst students with a rural background. In spite of this, the new entrants from a rural background are more likely to enter traditional forms of succession, due to the embedded trust that lies within the intergenerational relationship between father and son/daughter. This might also result in a number of rural new entrants who choose the farmer life as a result of family expectations rather than because of an intrinsic urge to become independent within agriculture. Furthermore, the young generation experiences enormous difficulties in finding funding for the investments needed for any type of succession, thus a subsidy option might ease the process, facilitating more successions.

The countryside demographics have changed as a result of a massive depopulation to the larger cities, followed by a smaller migration of urban dwellers. The new rural citizens have a false image of Danish agriculture and often isolate themselves from activities in the local community. This aside, city dwellers are generally more open-minded towards entering new models of succession. Therefore, when wanting to inform and teach new models of succession, it might be more effective to target non-rural entrants, who do not struggle with expectations from family embedded in the farmer identity.



Picture 6 – Unconventional succession at Skyttes Gartneri. From the top: 1. Working at across generations (22), 2. A selection of commodities from Skyttes Gartneri (23), 3. The partners of Skyttes Gartneri (24), 4. Field of rhubarbs (5), 5. Inter-generations working in the field (20).

6.2 Unconventional Tenures and Alternative Agricultural Constellations

6.2.1 Criterias for Unconventional Tenures

Due to the high costs related to fulltime farms in Danish agriculture, Bjarne Hansen and Niels Quist-Jensen agree that freehold is an illusion today. Usually, farmers need financial help from investors, either banks or investment companies, in order to acquire a farm. Hence, often they work under certain conditions set by the investors in order for them to assure a surplus. This is highlighted by Bjarne Hansen as well as Niels Quist-Jensen, who say that *farmers believe in this freehold, even though none of them owns anything themselves* (appendix 10, quote 3) and *they have not really understood that as a freeholder you are actually really bound from the moment you owe more than you own* (appendix 9, quote 2). Although Weller et al suggest the younger generation of farmers are more likely to form unconventional tenures (37) it was found from the interviews that even though the established farmers already participated in such constellations, they as well as the students believe that farmers in general prefer to be independent and set the rules of their own business themselves, without being involved in partnerships and JVs (78). This may, according to Fischer and Burton, be a result of the younger generation of interviewees all being from a rural upbringing, thus imbued with the farmer identity, which as mentioned earlier, might affect their attitude towards alternative ways in agriculture (33,87). The fear of giving up sole proprietorship with the embedded feeling of being freeholder either by entering partnerships or JVs with other farmers or new entrants, or by receiving investments by non-invasive partners, is common amongst farmers (45). Weller et al support this finding even though they underline that the willingness to form an unconventional tenure is what has secured the survival of family farms in Australia (37).

As the premise for this study is that new entrants struggle to enter the farming business as independent, especially due to high start-up costs as well as older farmers not being able to find successors and thereby retire, the unconventional tenures are a much-needed measure (45,86). In order to ensure that farmers do not lose the feeling of empowerment, Ingram and Kirwan point towards that new entrants, as partners have to add a 'buy-in' and be part of the capital investment in order to ensure the empowerment of the younger farmer (36). By adding capital to the partnership or JV, both parties are invested in the farm, securing that the established farmer as well as the new entrant will exert themselves, increasing the trust between them, as underlined by Asai et al (40). Furthermore, Asai et al stress the importance

of finding a partner both compatible in size and ability to contribute with social relations as well as agricultural experience. This is also underlined by the older interviewees, who see the process of partnerships as a way to continue the learning curve for the new entrants, allowing them to draw on i.e. networks of the established farmer (46,87).

In regards to size, Weller et al highlight the flexibility of keeping the farms at a reasonable size, as this allows them to adapt to the quickly changing consumer controlled market (37). Per Bundgaard supports this assertion and elaborates that a smaller farm with no more than 180 dairy cattle is able to feed two fulltime farmers, as well as acquiring less start-up capital than a larger farm. Taking this into consideration, entering a sharemilker partnership should perhaps be limited to farms not demanding a livestock herd with more cattle than suggested by Per, in order to create the best opportunities for the new entrants getting financial aid (42). While Weller et al focus on the family farm being able to adapt quickly to the market by having a reasonable size, Moreno-Pérez et al (39) discuss the advantages of bringing in more generations into the farm constellation, i.e. by changing the tenure (79). The model has been applied in the case of Skyttes Gartneri, although the relations between the parties, in contrast to what Moreno-Pérez et al suggest, are of both horizontal and vertical non-blood related character. By adding more generations to the farm business structure, Moreno-Pérez et al emphasize the synergetic successor effect, which both Lars Skytte and Bjarke Andersen highlight in the interviews, as well as the possibility of growth (39,62,84).

6.2.2 Alternative Agricultural Constellations

The case of sharemilking is a model of unconventional tenure, succession and alternative constellation. The model enables the farmer to lend his stables to sharemilkers, which potentially can lead to succession if the sharemilkers are given the opportunity to invest in the farm over time. The established farmer and the sharemilkers engage in a partnership, involving manure and crop rotation, making the sharemilking project an alternative constellation as well as an unconventional tenure. According to Ingram and Kirwan, independency and ownership are potential conflict triggers when older farmers and new entrants enter a partnership or JV. It is stated that the older farmer often is cautious when entrusting his business and tasks to a

new entrant (36). Christian elaborates that transparent rules and guidelines are needed in order to make a partnership or JV work, especially as the difference of opinions between young and old farmers often result in communication problems, which also is highlighted in the article in *Effektivt Landbrug* (52,62). Furthermore, Ingram and Kirwan underline that young farmers value independency and responsibility (36,83). This is supported by the younger generation of interviewees, who stress the importance of being independent and autonomous. Ingram and Kirwan explain that it might cause conflict and poor relations if the older farmer is unwilling to cooperate and share responsibility in a succession or partnership, especially when these factors have such high priority and value for the new entrant (36). Christian is of the same opinion, saying that he believes it is difficult for two different people to cooperate on something which both of them eventually have to own. He simply does not believe that it is possible. Frederik is a bit more flexible, saying that he has become very sceptical towards alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures, and that he is ready to give his opinion on alternative constellations such as *Bundgaard Sharemilker I/S* when they have mapped their annual report in the summer of 2016. However, he admits that his first reaction after hearing about the sharemilking project was that they would go bankrupt after having run the project for a year. Both attitudes suggest that there is a general need for narratives within the field of unconventional tenures and alternative agricultural constellations and new models of succession, in order to expand the knowledge to the younger generation (52).

The older generation of interviewees all agree that older farmers as well as young farmers have scepticism towards alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures, and that this scepticism is due to decades of agricultural traditions which state that freehold is the only opportunity if a new entrant want to become farmers (78). Hence, it seems that there are two aspects when discussing unconventional tenures and alternative constellations: The issue of trust between the established farmer and the new entrant, and agricultural traditions which both generations of farmers find difficult to let go (88). Observing these findings and supporting studies, alternative constellations and tenures must accommodate these needs in order for farmers to enter such constellations (62).

6.2.3 Legislation and Support

While Danish farmers seem doubtful on the subject of unconventional tenures and alternative agricultural constellations, British farmers appear to have adopted the idea, according to Ingram and Kirwan. They suggest this is due to British government deregulation of the area, as well as having a massive support from the British industry, opposing alternative agricultural constellations as abbreviations on sharemilking and other forms of partnerships to the farmers (36,85). This raises the question if more support from Danish politicians and/or the industry or even the consumers, would have the same effect on the Danish agricultural sector. Bjarne Hansen emphasizes how legislation especially with regards to subsidies complicates alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures because they do not offer the same benefits as traditional constellations (89). Thus, it is very problematic for new entrants and established farmers to enter a partnership such as a sharemilker project as regulations and legislation complicate the process (57,85,86). In his point of view, the system needs to adjust legislation according to the development, instead of farmers having to adjust constellations and tenures to legislation. However, having observed the development of agricultural legislation, a repeating liberalization of the law has happened, among other things widening the opportunities of tenures.

In 2004, the agricultural legislation was regulated, allowing farms to be owned by holding companies (20). In 2015, another regulation was made, allowing capital companies such as pension companies and investment trust to invest in agricultural holdings and even lease the company to a farmer who does not have the necessary capital to establish himself as a freeholder (21). Furthermore, the demand of having a farmer with superior influence over the company board was withdrawn. This means that investors and owners are given full influence and say regarding management of the farm. Besides, the legislation of preferential treatment when selling land was repealed as well, meaning that trading featured after January 1st 2015 is not to be announced 4 weeks in advanced in order to prioritize neighbors higher than other potentially interested buyers (21). Even though very few have exploited the new possibilities within alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures, appearing within the liberalization of the legislation, there is reason to believe that if regulations accommodating farmers in other constellations are made, an increase in the

amount of such constellations will most likely occur (44). Hence, it seems that even if farmers have the motivation and willingness to enter alternative agricultural constellations and/or unconventional tenures, they still need support of the system, in order to realize these projects (44,57,89). While the support of the industry seems essential in the British model, it is questioned if the same effect will occur in Denmark due to the strong relations to traditionally bound cooperative associations such as Arla and Danish Crown. In light of the development in the agricultural sector, it is therefore more likely that such constellations should be demanded or even driven by consumers, as in the case of the escalating success of organic commodities which are setting the agenda in the agricultural landscape at the present time (90).

6.2.4 Sub-conclusion on Unconventional Tenures and Alternative Agricultural Constellations

Farmers in general fear that they will lose their autonomy if they enter an unconventional tenure. Furthermore, the young farmers prefer to be independent in the traditional term rather than entering an unconventional tenure in which they can become independent over time. In order to avoid the feeling of losing control of the farm, the new entrants need to add a 'buy-in' from the beginning. Thus, to ensure their commitment to the farm as well as to boost the level of trust amongst the parties, both parties need financial interest in the partnership or JV. Unconventional tenures involving more farmers should additionally only be established if all parties benefit. An intergenerational tenure model has a synergetic effect, and the possibility of growth is reinforced.

There is a tendency for the new entrant to want a large farm from day one. In order for this group of farmers to establish themselves in the current financial climate, this attitude has to change and the dreams of the new entrants have to be downscaled. This demands a smaller start investment as well as making them less vulnerable towards fluctuations of the market.

Both generations question unconventional tenures and alternative agricultural constellations in regard to trust as well as the opposition towards the belief of freehold embedded in the traditional agricultural constellations and tenures. As in succession, mutual trust is important for the parties involved in such constellations, i.e. partnerships and JVs.

Especially the young generation prioritizes this along with independence and responsibility. Constellations, in which this is not fulfilled, will be more exposed to conflicts between partners, and it is therefore essential that the involved parties follow a set of guidelines and imperative rules. A transfer of responsibility is also an important tool in order to ensure a successful partnership.

In order to facilitate more unconventional tenures and alternative agricultural constellations, it is essential that the rights of the involved farmers are secured. A reformation of the agricultural scene is crucial in order to accommodate the need of the farmers, both in regards to general legislation, and also when it comes to receiving subsidies, which at the current time are restricted to landowners and farmers who lease land, and thus neglect the landless farmers. Furthermore, delivery rights are also complicated in such constellations, which is why cooperative associations also need to support this. Based on the experience from British agriculture, more support from the industry and the public may also encourage Danish agriculture to be more willing to form such constellations.



Picture 7 – Gram Slot, an example of an unconventional tenure. From the top: 1. Svend Brodersen in one of his organic dairy barns (9), 2. Sanne and Svend Brodersen together with Anders Rene Jensen, procurement and marketing director, REMA 1000 Denmark A/S (12), 3. Crops from Gram Slot, available in the farm shop (25), 4. Gram Slot (8).

6.3 Examples of Unconventional Tenures

The older generation of interviewees all have suggestions for alternative tenures, improving succession and conditions for new entrants as well as farmers who want to retire. Niels Quist-Jensen is of the belief that the older generation, being the established farmers, must take on more responsibility with regards to helping the new generation of farmers getting started. His suggestion is for them to leave a small investment in the farm, limiting the investment of the new entrant (45). Considering the findings of this Master Thesis, showing the issue of trust between the two generations and the studies by Ingram and Kirwan and Asai et al, one might question this method of tenure, unless the two farmers have known each other for a long period of time and agree in the agricultural operation (36,40).

The three interviewed established farmers each have a suggestion for an unconventional type of tenure, allowing new entrants to gain momentum within the agricultural landscape. Per Bundgaard suggests a farming community based on his own farm. Parts of the farm, which already have acquired several neighboring premises, could then be leased to young farmers as already being done with the two sharemilkers. The overall demand to a potential partner in this cooperation is that the production is organic, see [Figure 8](#). Lars Skytte mentions the idea of landless farms as well, and suggests communities of farmers in a cooperation of land, buildings and machineries, improving the crop rotation and limiting the investment of each farmer (62). His suggestion is to create agricultural ecosystems which farmers' specialized production of cattle, pigs, different crops etc. can be a part of and benefit from. This will improve crop rotation, limit cases of crop diseases and provide cattle and pigs with valuable feed. See [Figure 7](#). Thus, this type of cooperation does not only have economic benefits, it also has operational and environmental benefits. Svend Brodersen has the suggestion of a holding company below Gram Slot which would purchase farms that are able to produce Gram Slot commodities, hiring farmers to run the operation in each individual farm and eventually giving them the opportunity of buying either parts of or the entire farm, see [Figure 9](#).

All three types of constellations enable young farmers to enter life as an independent farmer, either by making a small investment in a farmhouse and entering a community of leasing land, buildings and machinery or by starting as an employee, earning

capital throughout a number of years, resulting in him being able to buy the farm. It can be argued that these kinds of tenures are to be recommended, due to both of them requiring the new entrant to either make a small investment in the farm or giving him an incentive to work hard and create a profitable business, by allowing him to buy the farm when he can afford it. As previously mentioned this 'buy-in' is essential for ensuring the new entrant's motivation and eventually the profit of the farm (36). The 'buy-in' can be seen as one of the steps on the characteristic *succession ladder* describing the phases, which a new entrant meets in the succession process towards becoming an independent farmer (33,78).

Bjarne Hansen mentions the possibility of the society owning all land in Denmark and renting it to farmers (42,53-55), which Christian does not consider as being a sustainable opportunity, namely because it would remove the empowerment and feeling of responsibility of the farmers. This is also supported by Svend Brodersen and Niels Quist-Jensen, who both believe that new entrants should be given the opportunity of buying either parts of agriculture or the entire farm after a certain amount of time. Thus, the suggestion presented by Bjarne Hansen, proposing that society should own all Danish land and rent parts of land to farmers, is questioned. This solution does not accommodate the need of farmers to be independent, which is found to be one of the most important aspects of motivation for farmers, supported by Ingram and Kirwan (36). Making the farmer a common employee might remove his empowerment and motivation towards working hard on creating a profitable farm.

Weller et al point towards subsumption as another possible tenure, allowing capital interests to make investments in the farms, thereby accumulating capital to the farm (37). In Denmark, this solution has already been incorporated in cases with farmers sharing the investment of a farm with an investment company or a pension company. Svend Brodersen applied this model when investing in Gram Slot, initially by sharing the investment with a private investor, and later on in a partnership with the supermarket Rema 1000. In Svend Brodersen's point of view, an adventurous partner has an interest in the business and not only in the profit of the business. Thus, in such constellations, he recommends the new entrant to find a partner with whom he shares values and ideas, in order for them to avoid conflicts. Bjarne Hansen emphasizes that in these kinds of constellations, in which most of the company is owned by an investor, the freehold is an illusion, namely due to the farmer not owning the farm. Besides, in cases of having a pension company as an investor, the price for buying the farm after a period of time is too expensive in Niels Quist-Jensen's point of view. This is in conflict with

the current experience from the company AP Pension, which is investing in farms and leasing them to new entrants, who feel that they do not lose their work motivation as a result of being tenants (47-49).

Hence, it might seem that these constellations are less beneficial than the models presented by Svend Brodersen and Lars Skytte, since the models of Brodersen and Skytte give the new entrant beneficial opportunities of running his farm the way he intends, and by using Svend Brodersen's model, enables him to buy the farm after a period of time. In Figure 10, the authors of this Master Thesis have attempted to sum up the findings from the interviews as well as the literature. This model shows the steps from being an agricultural student to becoming a freeholder, gradually participating in an alternative agricultural constellation, including an unconventional tenure, finally resulting in succession.

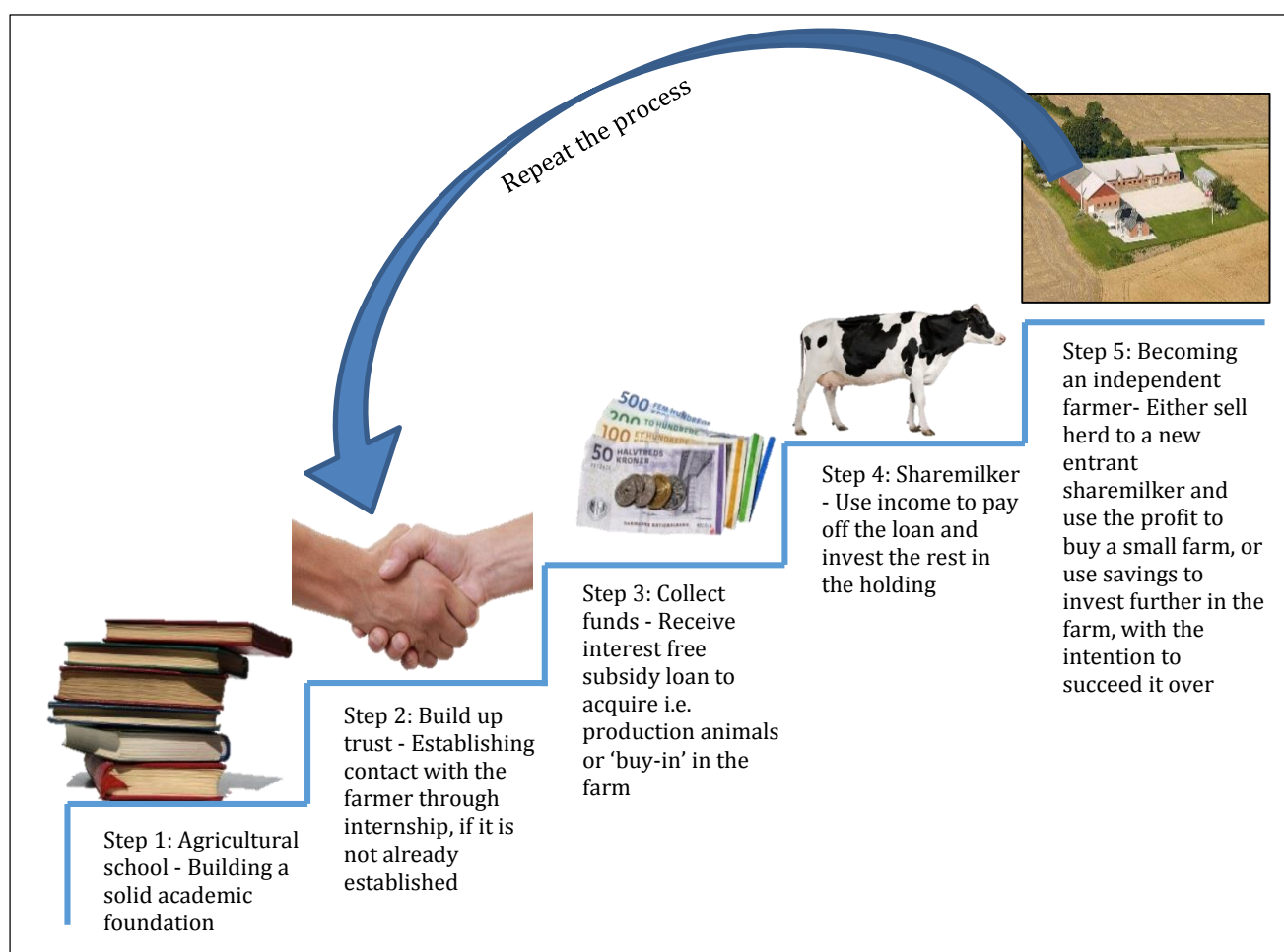


Figure 10 – Model the Modern Farmer Succession. The model describes the succession ladder, including steps which the new entrant is recommended to take in order for him to become an independent farmer. The first step suggests that the new entrant must have a solid academic foundation before he pursues the dream of becoming an independent farmer. The second step involves looking for eligible established farmers, in the network of the new entrant, who are interested in a partnership. The third step is adding a 'buy-in' in the holding, which can be financed by an interest-free subsidy loan. This is followed by the fourth step, which covers an installment credit of the loan and further investments in the holding, increasing the new entrant's share. The last step in this model includes either becoming full owner of the holding or selling the herd to a new entrant, using the earnings of this sale

Extended Master Thesis, *Integrated Food Studies* of Missouri (91).

6.3.3 Sub-conclusion on Examples of Unconventional Tenures

From the collected literature and empiric data, four ways of unconventional tenures are suggested:

1. The established farmer leaves capital in the form of a seller note¹³ in the farm, thereby lowering the full amount of capital needed by the new entrant, as well as working as a security, making it easier for the new entrant to lend the capital. The disadvantage of this model is that it presupposes an enormous amount of trust between the parties involved, making it likely only suitable for intergenerational succession with relatives.
2. Three types of constellations, all including large cooperative farming structures, which have an organization or one person as an owner. Point of departure is lending land, property or even farms to new entrants, who commit to the common rules of the cooperative. Furthermore, the new entrant is given the opportunity to invest in either the establishment or the individual farms, which is motivating as a career opportunity. The obvious disadvantage is the scepticism towards such constellations amongst farmers in general.
3. Public trust ownership giving the new entrants the possibility of gaining experience by the land. Apart from the difficulties in establishing such a trust, the disadvantage is that the new entrant is not able to make a personal investment, which is seen to be demotivating. Furthermore, there are no career opportunities embedded in the model, which might affect the feeling of empowerment.
4. External investments by either pension companies or other interested parties. This enables the new entrant to lend less capital in acquiring the farm. Disadvantages might be that the entrant does not see himself as owner of the farm¹⁴. Furthermore, a sole focus on profit from the investors may outshine the wellbeing of the farm. Lastly, the current examples of this type of unconventional

¹³ Danish: *Sælgerpantebrev*

¹⁴ Danish: *Har ikke fod under eget bord*

tenure involving pension companies are characterized by very high rates of interest which reduce the new entrant's profit.

From the four types of unconventional tenures, the second solution is preferred as it has the smallest demand of investment (aside from solution no. 3), it is foreseeable, and it has affordable disadvantages. A blend of the three models in this type of tenure combined with findings from the literature is therefore suggested as the optimal solution for an unconventional tenure, including elements of alternative agricultural constellations as well as succession. Key aspects are therefore a reconciliation of expectations as well as trust between the parties. Besides, added 'buy-in' by the new entrant, financed through an interest-free subsidy loan given by the government and the opportunity for the new entrant to acquire the farm on a long-term basis, giving him a career goal, is suggested.

6.4 Other Elements

From the analysis, several elements occurred, not directly linked to the themes succession and unconventional tenures. In the following section, these elements will be discussed in relation to how they may affect the farmer's willingness to engage in the above listed themes.

6.4.1 Organic Farming

One of the key findings in this study, which is also a barrier for choosing unconventional tenures, is the negative attitude towards organic farmers. According to the statements from the interviewees in this study, the atmosphere has been caused partly by the media, who promotes organic production, while publishing negative stories about conventional agriculture, and partly by organic organizations, which glorify themselves.

The polarization between conventional and organic farmers seems to be caused by actors within conventional as well as organic production. Danish agriculture is economically

challenged, both due to the economic climate having a downturn after decades of favorable times and because of an increased worldwide competition (2). Besides, national demands are highly growing towards local and organic products, increasingly challenging traditional conventional agriculture. Thus, it seems that Danish agriculture is experiencing a revolution, setting a new scene for new entrants, compared to that of the previous generation. Hence, the resistance and the negative atmosphere towards organic and alternative agricultural constellations might highly be due to the existing contrast between conservative established farmers of the previous generation and the new generation of farmers. It is therefore likely that the attitude towards alternative constellations in agriculture might change over time as the previous generation of farmers retires.

In the interviews, the agricultural students, Niels Quist-Jensen, and Lars Skytte mentioned that compromises have been made within organic production, resulting in the production not being 100% organic. This fact seems to cause a great deal of negative atmosphere as well, especially because organic production is promoted so positively in the media while conventional agriculture suffers from bad publicity. The resistance and negative attitude towards organic agriculture seems to be a big barrier for potential new farmers with regards to entering unconventional tenures (92). It can be argued that the resistance and negative atmosphere might decrease if the agricultural schools adjust their curriculum and teach the students about new and alternative constellations and their benefits. Besides organic organizations might consider their communication strategy, not presenting themselves as *sacred*, as this seems to provoke conventional farmers and new entrants, especially those coming from rural backgrounds.

6.4.2 The New Generation of Farmers

Today, Danish farmers generally specialize within concept cultivation, i.e. having only dairy cattle, beef cattle, a pig production, a specific production of crops etc. The industrial development of agriculture has made the farmer less dependent on natural resources and processes, making it possible for farmers to manipulate production outcome with, among other things, fertilizers and pesticides (2). In Lars Skytte's point of view, a more organic approach is

needed if sustainability of Danish agriculture is to be assured. He suggests entering a crop rotation partnership, in which the land is shared financially as well as operationally and the soil is exploited under circumstances that provides it with nutritious components. However, running an agricultural ecosystem presupposes basic knowledge within biology and chemistry, and only few agricultural schools teach the students about basic natural science. Thus, in order for new entrants to enter such partnerships and run sustainable agricultural ecosystem, it is suggested that agricultural schools introduce more basic education within natural science.

Cooperative associations have had an important role in Danish agricultural history. Thus, for decades, farmers being members of cooperative associations have been guaranteed outlets (61). However, taking into account the crisis of Danish agriculture, resulting in a lot of farmers being challenged, new solutions might need to be considered, fulfilling the demands of the consumers. Considering the development of consumer interference and the increased interest of fulfilling the needs of the consumers, the statements from the older farmers regarding the need for farmers to change attitude of marketing and production, seems very reasonable (17). It is mentioned by these interviewees that marketing skills are required if young farmers are to succeed with their business. According to Lars Skytte, farmers are not paid sufficiently for their commodities when sold through cooperative associations, and therefore it might be beneficial for them to choose a shorter food supply chain, improving their own income. This is also emphasized by Svend Brodersen and Bjarne Hansen, when stating that better marketing skills are needed among new entrants. Taking this into account, the farmer identity seems even more complicated than before, as the tasks of the farmer have evolved (87). Along with the economical and political climate, this might be a reason for the fear of the younger generation towards entering the agricultural arena. Although this is seen amongst the interviewed students, no direct link to this has been found in the literature on the topic supporting this.

6.4.3 Sub-conclusion on Other Elements

The current financial and political situation forces new entrants to educate themselves even more than their predecessors, as knowledge within both academic subjects such as chemistry

and mathematics as well as management skills and leadership, are imperative to run a farm nowadays. This may be a reason for the young generation of agricultural students to reject life as an independent farmer, both in traditional ways but especially in more complicated, unconventional ways, as those being described in this discussion.

7.0 CONCLUSION

From the coding and processing of the conducted interviews, the following 10 relations affecting farmers' attitude towards succession and unconventional tenures were found: Independent Farmer; Rural Life; Tenures; Succession; Influence; Economy and Financing; Farming Operating Conditions; Politics, Legislations and Organizations; Outlets; and Organic and Conventional Agriculture. After having analyzed and discussed these 10 relations, further findings were discovered, which will be elaborated in the section below.

As an agent for facilitating succession, unconventional tenures can be concluded to be an opportunity, which in most cases demands smaller initial investments by the new entrant, allowing him to obtain a feeling of empowerment from the beginning. For new entrants, independence is also an important aspect when it comes to considering succession and unconventional tenures. Hence, when adding a 'buy-in' and thereby being part of the capital investment of the farm, the new entrants' motivation is higher than when being tenants. Furthermore, in contrast to constellations, which exclusively involve leasing, a succession process of slowly adding further investments to the farm motivates the new entrant. Besides, established farmers see an opportunity to retire when having a relative who wants to succeed him, which also is seen as being an obvious advantage. Achieving colleagues and obtaining a livelier farm are also concluded to be great motivations for this group.

In order to ensure a successful tenure and succession, it is essential that both parties trust each other from the beginning of the process. Looking for partners within the existing network as opposed to entering a facilitated matchmaking process is therefore concluded to be preferred, since lack of this first-hand acquaintance complicates trustworthiness. In general, both groups of farmers are sceptical towards unconventional tenures as well as untraditional ways of succession, as they fear that unknown constellations, which differ from the traditional sole proprietorship and freehold, decrease their feeling of being an independent farmer. When it comes to farmer identity and farming profession, traditions are key. This is especially embedded in rural-born new entrants, for whom traditions of farming are concluded to be among the greater barriers. This is partly due to the influence from the family and employers who are shaping the new entrants from their childhood.

Furthermore, a general fear towards the profession is concluded to be present amongst this group, as they see farming life to be too demanding, both in terms of financing and personal sacrifices, and in regards to skills and knowledge, which have become even more demanding with the changing market. These factors contribute to the decreasing number of successions in Denmark.

It is concluded that new entrants fear that established farmers find it difficult to relinquish the responsibility of the business, potentially resulting in conflicts and poor relations if the established farmer is unwilling to cooperate and share responsibility in a succession process or partnership. New entrants entering alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures are likely not native rural citizens, but from either smaller towns or larger cities, as they are not affected by the farmer's identity.

The established farmers in general perceive new entrants as naïve and lacking commitment, which affects their willingness to enter partnerships or agricultural constellations with this group. Thus, a reconciliation of expectations is concluded to be paramount when attempting such a process. Furthermore, it is concluded that agricultural regulations and legislation stand as great barriers for entering alternative succession, agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures. Additionally, traditional subsidy and tax regulations do not accommodate and thereby support alternative agricultural constellations and unconventional tenures, although the literature suggests alternative subsidies in the form of an interest-free loan as a way to support new entrants in the succession process.

From the analysis, it is concluded that the farmers currently see four types of unconventional tenures. The first one includes a seller note, and is evaluated to be too demanding with regards to issues surrounding trust, thus not recommended in general. Public trust ownership has been a great part of the public debate, it does not offer new entrants a constellation which stimulates empowerment and independence, and this model is therefore not to be recommended. External investments from either pension companies or other interested parties are concluded to have several preferable elements. The opportunity to succeed the farm over time, as well as the new entrant having to invest capital himself, are strong motivators, even though the intentions of the external investors have to be taken into consideration, as well as the interest rate.

The most recommendable model is concluded to be that of the three interviewed, established farmers, combined with the findings from the interviews of this Master Thesis and the chosen literature. The model consists of an established farmer, offering a new entrant to enter, adding a 'buy-in' in the business, which is financed through an interest-free subsidy loan. Over time, the new entrant is to be given the opportunity to increase his investment in the business, either resulting in a full succession or a part-ownership of the agricultural business.

8.0 FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

In this Master Thesis, emphasis has been on finding possibilities and barriers among new entrants and established farmers towards succession and unconventional tenures. Therefore, findings related to this exact area have been prioritized throughout the project work. However, relevant findings related to other aspects of agriculture have been notified as well, and in this section these discoveries and related articles will be presented and put into perspective with regards to future farming.

In the conducted interviews, it was declared that the majority of Danish farmers are not crisis, and that large industrial farms experience more growth than smaller family farms, putting these smaller family farms in higher risk of having to foreclose. Furthermore, it was stated that Danish farms in general will grow larger within the next years. On the contrary, the ethnologist Rasmus Blædel Larsen draws a different conclusion regarding the structure of future farming (42). In his PhD dissertation, following and interviewing nine different farmers all having efficient holdings, it was found that all of these farmers slowly made investments and did not focus on a single production of commodities. Instead, they produced a diverse variety of commodities and had several outlets, thus decreasing their vulnerability to economic fluctuations and variant land prices (42). This production diversity and slow progression of investments resulted in all of the case farms being economically stable. Thus, Rasmus Blædel Larsen recommends that more family farmers shift to this constellation, oppose to strive for large industrialized farms. He emphasizes that there is a need for new strengths in Danish agriculture; farmers who are able to find a rentable production method and a business model (42).

This conclusion also appeared among the interviewees, stating that the modern farmer needs to adjust to the market and change the constellation of the tenure if this adjustment potentially benefits the economy of his business. Skytte's Gartneri is an excellent example of an unconventional tenure including an intergenerational partnership producing different commodities. According to Rasmus Blædel Larsen, the constellation of renting land, buildings and machineries as well as having a wide range of outlets, makes the horticulture very stable in the current Danish agricultural climate (42). Furthermore, he underlines that the Danish government has a great responsibility as well in reforming Danish agriculture, both

regarding the public image as well as shifting towards smaller, affordable family farms, accessible for new entrants (89). The authors of this Master Thesis wonder if this reformation also needs to take the content of agricultural schools' curriculum into account, ensuring that new entrants have the necessary knowledge and skills within unconventional tenures and alternative constellations of agriculture, as this is supported by the findings in the empirical data.

In the interviews the young agricultural students mention that farmers in general have become more sceptical towards innovation in agriculture as a result of changing legislative regulations. By Koesling et al it is highlighted that governmental support is an important aspect with regards to persisting organic management (92). Furthermore, community and family support are mentioned as key factors for farmers and organic organizations, and advisory services are therefore recommended to identify strategies which potentially support and encourage organic farmers to continue the organic production (92). This finding is confirmed by one of the young agricultural students as well, stating that public support is so important for him as a farmer that it actually encourages him to consider organic production instead of conventional. In general, the authors of this Master Thesis consider if the findings by Koesling et al can be transmitted to the field of farmers' resistance towards unconventional tenures and untraditional succession methods in Denmark, as findings from the gathered empiric data of this project indicate this.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, recommendations for future studies are suggested, as well as proposals for legislative regulations. In order to provide intervention strategies and communication strategies for DSL, ensuring a greater farmer support for untraditional succession models and unconventional tenures, recommendations for the organization will be presented.

8.1 General Recommendations

For future studies, it is recommended to collect data from more agricultural students and young as well as established farmers. It is suggested to interview and collect relevant data from traditional established farmers as well as farmers working with alternative agricultural constellations and in unconventional tenures. Additionally, in order to recommend beneficial modifications, making it easier for young and established farmers to cooperate in new and alternative ways, more studies on legislation affecting Danish agriculture and especially new alternatives to traditional farming are suggested. It is recommended that legislation and regulations complicating untraditional succession models, unconventional tenures as well as alternative agricultural constellations are changed, with the aim of accommodating these new initiatives to the same extent as traditional constellations. It is considered to be very relevant that these regulations are made, since they have shown to be large barriers for new entrants and established farmers when entering untraditional succession models and unconventional tenures.

Agricultural school teachers are shown to have great influence on young agricultural students' opinion and view on constellations in agriculture, and it is therefore recommended that teaching in alternative succession and unconventional tenures is highlighted, in addition to basic natural science, with the aim of improving the students' skills of farming, and crop rotation as well as their ability to adapt the market and to consumer demands, thereby increasing the number of successful new entrants.

8.2 Recommendations for Det Samfundsnyttige Landbrug

Considering the findings of this Master Thesis, it is recommended that DSL consider non-rural agricultural students as their main target group, and attempt to recruit potential new entrants for untraditional succession models as well as unconventional tenures. It is also recommended that following aspects are taken into consideration when developing communication material:

The importance of being independent and having a feeling of autonomy rates high for Danish farmers. Thus, it is recommended that the communication material emphasizes the opportunities of independence and freehold in unconventional tenures. Furthermore, it is recommended to find agricultural cases that give new entrants the option of buying parts of or eventually the entire holding over time, since constellations in which the farmer adds a 'buy-in' improve his motivation and empowerment.

Trust and commitment are two other factors on which DSL is recommended to put focus, both when facilitating untraditional succession models and tenures, and when communicating the constellations of these. If being able to communicate that both parties of a partnership are able to commit to the holding and trust each other, established farmers and potential new entrants will feel more secure when entering such constellations.

In addition to this, it is recommended to find established farmers that are willing to relinquish responsibility of the holding and cooperate with a potential new entrant, as this ability is seen to be necessary for an unconventional tenure or a succession to happen. Finally, DSL is recommended to provide communication material, which tells these potential young new entrants successful stories of untraditional succession cases and unconventional tenures. The material is to provide information about the project, the benefits of entering such constellations as well as a financial statement from the cases, underpinning the financial benefits of these types of constellations.

From the conducted interviews, three models were presented, all considered to have future potential for young, new entrants. These models were to be presented in the discussion and summed up with the general findings in [Figure 10](#), Model of Modern Farmer Succession, with the intention of inspiring DSL to find or set up similar models for farmers, see [Figure 7](#), [Figure 8](#) and [Figure 9](#). [Figure 10](#) represents the possible career steps a new entrant may take toward becoming an independent farmer, inspired by the untraditional succession

model sharemilking and including an unconventional tenure as landless farmer. These steps include:

- Finding partners within their existing network.
- Obtaining a small start-loan i.e. through a government financed interest-free subsidy loan.
- Slowly paying off the loan as well as increasing the investment in the farm.
- Over time, fully take over the farm, including the land, as a successful succession.

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