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### Kritik an Foodassembly

Von einem Mitglied der Solawi Bonn

Bei uns gründen sich gerade 3 Foodassemblies. Das stört uns als SoLaWi erst einmal wenig, weniger schön ist, wenn sie so tun als ob sie SoLaWi wären und dass sie den Biokisten, die wenigstens etwas mehr Planungssicherheit für die Bauern bedeuten Konkurrenz machen. Für die Bauern gibt es keine Abnahmesicherheit und das Unternehmen saht kräftig Provision ab (8 % + Steuern für das Unternehmen und 8 % für die Organisator/innen, die eigentlich die Hauptarbeit leisten). Ein Grund zum Beispiel für den Initiator der Kölner Food Assembly sich aus dem Projekt wieder heraus zu ziehen. Vielleicht ist Foodassembly ja auch eine Vorstufe für etwas mehr Bewusstsein unter den Städtern, ich denke aber es wäre auch gut, den Unterschied zur SoLaWis deutlich zu machen.

### Kritik an Foodassembly "La Ruche Qui Dit Oui" von den französischen Solawis: AMAP says "NO" when the Hornet's Nest says "YES"

By AMAP Bio Devant – Courbevoie

For several years now, a group of consumers – actors-actresses have put their heads together to help small farmers to pursue their ground-work or to help them set up their own business model (AMAP, ACAPE, Job Centres etc.) but recently they seem to have started to lose their momentum. At the same time, new ways of distributing farm produce have appeared, via Internet, namely an entity known as "La ruche qui dit oui" (the Beehive says YES). Thanks to the enormous media coverage that this new formula has been getting, public interest in this new way of shopping has risen tremendously. The public is led to believe that they are supporting distribution of farm produce via the "shopping basket" scheme (distribution seemingly being done via direct sale – i.e. from farmer to the kitchen table) when, in fact, it is a logistical platform that runs along the lines of any other standard business, charging farmers 20% on any profits made when they use this "new" means of distribution. A Bee farmer, used to selling 90% of his produce to direct customers via 10 AMAP outlets refused to use the «ruche qui dit oui» network in operation near his farm. Why? First of all, he refuses to go along with the scheme because he believes that the customer is being misinformed when he thinks that he is buying directly from the producer when in fact there are (although it is not necessarily obvious) two intermediaries: the owner of the beehive who takes a 10% (VAT included) margin on the sales made and another 10% (VAT) go to a start-up in Paris that is making an ever increasing profit (it is run by 40 staff members (which include the guys who incepted the company – all of whom are graduates from leading Business Schools) .Secondly, for ethical

reasons, because paying the shareholders of the «ruche qui dit oui» (who just happen to be Xavier Niel (President of Free TELECOM), Marc Simoncini (co-founder of meetic.fr), Christophe Duhamel (co-founder of site marmittion.org) with bonds from this commercial enterprise is simply not acceptable. Key brands have quickly understood the benefits of the system and have set up «drive-ins» that enable customers to order their industrial food supplies via internet. The advantages for the customer are obvious: no need to go shopping, no need to push a caddy around a supermarket. Groceries are available upon request via keyboard. What are the prices being asked by the producers who decide to go along with the scheme? The answer is as follows: either the same price as when they are under contract with AMAP and then 20% added to the selling price being asked of the customer - supposedly justified because the customer can buy what he wants when he wants, - or aligning the price on the current market rate by selling the produce 10% to 20 % cheaper – which is unfortunately what some producers with AMAP are being forced to do – the same old story FYI: Supermarkets (the big or middle size ones) take a 27% margin on average (this includes stock management and staff fees – that are simply not justified in this case!). The origin of the products: the products are supposed produced locally when in fact some are freighted in from afar via companies that transform the raw materials or via craftsmen (acting as middle-men who are not the farmers). This does not only apply to food produce but also to other types of produce (sun cream being one of them).

A possible alternative would be to create new AMAPs as organic farmers are producing more but demand is dropping so middlemen are jumping at the opportunity to handle the produce and thus to increase their turn-over. More information must be made available to AMAP members who might be tempted to make use of the new "drive-in" scheme without fully understanding the full implications of this new XXIst century i-commerce strategy that is not any different from what was done previously and certainly not for their own benefit. "La ruche qui dit oui" advertises itself a direct sales entity via Internet, no contract is required, customers pick up their orders at a given point – from a private entity in charge of a "beehive", without ever being in direct contact with the producer – who might not even be a farmer or a certified organic producer but more likely to be a middle-man or somebody in charge of reconditioning raw produce – may be a craftsman.