



*Young Friends of the
Countryside*

**YOUNG FRIENDS
OF THE COUNTRYSIDE**

www.yfcs.eu



ACTIVITY REPORT 2018

**Friends of the Countryside- Meta asbl
Young Friends of the Countryside aisbl**

Jehanne de Dorlodot : coordination@elo.org
Sophy Smits van Oyen - Maltzoff : events@elo.org
Gabrielle Cubillo : gabrielle.cubillo@elo.org
Alberto Hermosel : alberto.hermosel@elo.org

Rue de Trèves, 67
1040 Brussels
Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 234 30 00
Fax : +32 (0)2 234 30 09
Email : coordination@elo.org
www.friendsofthecountryside.org
www.yfcs.eu

No part of this activity report may be reproduced in any form whether by print, photo print, microfilm, photocopy or any other means without the prior written permission of the association. All personal data contained in the publication is for the exclusive and internal use of the association. Any other use is forbidden. The pictures used are from past events. (copyright) ELO-FCS





Foreword

ACTIVITY REPORT 2018

Dear Young Friends,

Much has happened over the last few years with YFCS developing nicely. Change is on the horizon and YFCS' old board will start to hand over to a new and younger generation. Applications are most welcome! We will ensure a smooth process where parts of the old board stay on for some time and in any case remain at the disposal of any new board members to ensure a successful transition.

This year our Forum for Countryside Entrepreneurship was held in Belgium. The conference concentrated on Innovation in Land Management and presented some inspirational speakers discussing the topic with our members. In the afternoon our members were then invited to visit two farms in the Belgian countryside to see and experience how to turn theory into practice. How to apply intellectual theories in the real world and actually change things for the better, innovating and preparing for the future are amongst the core objectives of our organisation and something we always try to demonstrate. We believe that our

Forum has just the right format to do exactly that as it brings both together.

We have continued to co-host our General Assembly alongside the Friends of the Countryside, which proves to be mutually enriching. Our members enjoyed the blend of generations and found it most inspiring and just very enjoyable, too. Furthermore, it of course allows us to join their most excellent organisation and programme! All of that said, we did have our own moments where we stayed "amongst ourselves" to discuss a range of topics and listen to insightful speakers, after joining the larger conference of the Friends. Our visit to the most wonderful Island Mainau on Lake Constance, which still belongs in its entirety (!) to the Bernadotte's Family Foundation, was certainly the highlight.

This year the board has not changed, but as I already mentioned above we do expect to hear of new members joining and others leaving. In fact, I can already tell you that the board will undergo substantial transformation with the largest part of the board replacing itself, myself included. Please do not hesitate to speak to any of us if you would be interested to hear more or have any interest in

joining the board! We very much appreciate any discussion and are always keen to hear from you. So, please do get into contact if you are interested, or would like to propose someone else.

Last but not least, I want to express our deep gratitude to LGT, our very generous sponsors! As a private bank owned by the Liechtenstein family they fully understand our family values and thinking and prove to be a great partner for us. We very much appreciate their loyal support and professional guidance!

As always I very much invite you to get actively engaged with YFCS and its board. As a members organisation it is only about you, so please do help us shape it and its future, especially at this transformational point in time. I hope to see you at the upcoming events and would like to remind you of our Bring-a-Friend policy for all of our events.

We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Yours,

Carl-Philipp von Croj
President of YFCS

About

The Young Friends of the Countryside (YFCS) is a European membership organization for rural business people, rural entrepreneurs, future and young private landowners aged between 18 and 35 years old. It was created in 2006 as a Not for Profit Association with the support of its parent organization Friends of the Countryside (FCS), the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and the European Historic Houses Associations (EHHA).

The main idea is to focus on younger business people, rural entrepreneurs and landowners as they represent the next generation who will be in charge of the prosperity of our future rural economy. Their objective is to raise awareness amongst YFCS members about European environmental policies, European rural business opportunities and Estates and historic inheritance and management processes. They also aim to promote educational philanthropy in the countryside as well as leverage on members' innovative countryside management related experiences. YFCS is represented and channeled at EU level through the European Landowners' Organization (ELO).

In the context of its environmental activities, YFCS actively promotes European citizenship, bridging the gap between young rural people and the European Union and stimulates its members to develop a sense of belonging and European identity.

YFCS Board

PRESIDENT

Carl-Philipp von CROÏ (Germany)

SECRETARY GENERAL

Francesco KINSKY dal BORGIO (Czech republic)

BOARD MEMBERS

Geoffroy de CANNIERE (Belgium)

Louis-Victor de FRANSSU-DOUVILLE (France)

Alix SAVOYE de PUINEUF (France)

Marie-Christine SCHÖNBORN (Germany)

SECRETARIAT

José Alberto HERMOSEL, Coordination

www.yfcs.eu







Join the YFCS

Another year has passed and the question of why one should join the Young Friends always presents itself in a new light. With the new impending Brexit discussions, European friendship has become more important than ever. The Young Friends have the immense privilege to welcome members from many European countries. During our events and seminars, we have the chance to meet new friends who are all passionate about various aspects of rural activities, in particular rural entrepreneurship. This way we can learn from each other and it helps us to develop new innovate projects. .

This is reflected in our activities in 2018. In March 2018 our Forum for the Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE) took place in Scotland. The Young Friends were very generously welcomed by Lord JOICEY and Edward BAXTER. We then joined the Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) in Brussels and



had the chance to learn from world-renowned experts who work at the forefront of the most pressing issues around agriculture. In June we joined the Friends of the Countryside in Constance and held our General Assembly together with the Friends. This weekend is always particularly treasured by the Young Friends with the Friends giving us incredible support and advice. For a more detailed account of these activities, please refer to the Events section. Furthermore, we also received many interesting applications to our FAMIGRO Award. The FAMIGRO Award is a prize of €5,000 for the most inno-

vative and sustainable entrepreneurial project. Karl GROTFELT and the Young Friends had the pleasure to award the FAMIGRO Award to our French member Gaspard DE MOUSTIER for his business project COUCOO. COUCOO offers a new way of eco-tourism in one of the most beautiful areas in France and is worth a visit! The Young Friends are particularly grateful to Karl GROTFELT for his very generous support with the FAMIGRO AWARD. We have once again received many applications for 2019. Do not hesitate to send in your innovative projects for 2020!

Overall, we could not be more grateful for 2018 and are looking forward to introducing new projects and events in 2019. We are also looking forward to welcoming new members and strengthening our network across Europe. Please do not hesitate to drop us an email!

Marie-Christine Schönborn

Website: www.yfcs.eu

Email: elo@elo.org

Facebook: <https://de-de.facebook.com/youngfriendsofthecountryside/>

Events 2018

The Young Friends of the Countryside's **Forum for the Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE)** took place in Scotland on the weekend of the 16th to the 18th of March 2018. On Friday, the Young Friends met up in Edinburgh before heading to St Andrews on Saturday morning for the conference for the FCE. The Young Friends were very fortunate to listen to some inspiring speakers during the conference at St Andrews.

First of all, Lord JOICEY (FCS board member) introduced his concept of rural entrepreneurship to the Young Friends, explaining his idea of bringing life back to the countryside by supporting local entrepreneurs. The Young Friends were fascinated by his idea and a lively discussion took place after his presentation. Then Ana ROCHA, Senior Policy Officer for Agriculture and Forestry at the European Landowners' Organisation, explained current misconceptions about the Common Agricultural Policy and updated YFCS' members on the current negotiation statuses. Following Ana ROCHA's very engaging presentation, Geoffroy DE CANNIÈRE, YFCS board member, urged the audience to look out for rural start-ups and entrepreneurial projects concerning the countryside. He introduced



the winners of the two last years, CIDRE WIGNAC and TINY HOUSE, to the audience and showed the impact the Famigro Award, a yearly prize given by the Young Friends for the best rural entrepreneur-

al project, can have for the winners of the projects. Applications for this year's FAMIGRO AWARD are now closed. We look forward to announcing the winner soon.



In the afternoon, the Young Friends were welcomed by Edward BAXTER, who showed Gilmore Estate to the Young Friends. He brought two key ideas to the Young Friends. First, he showed the Young Friends how he integrates sustainable projects supporting the environment on his estate. Secondly, he pointed out how important the power of 'we', compared to 'I', is. Having joined forces with two other estates, he outlined how the power balance can favourably shift towards a powerful 'we', helping to provoke a change and having an impact on the Scottish countryside. Last, but not least, he also showed how social media can be a helpful tool for landowners. After his presentation,

Edward BAXTER showed some of his projects to the Young Friends.

In the evening, the Young Friends then hosted a gala dinner at Edinburgh Castle. Shortly before the gala dinner the Young Friends were given a short historical excursion on Scottish history by discovering the crown jewels of Scotland, known as the Honours of Scotland, and the Stone of Scone. Finally, on Sunday, the Young Friends went on a guided tour of Edinburgh Castle before the FCE was officially ended.

The Young Friends would like to particularly thank its generous host, Edward BAXTER and speakers, Lord JOICEY and Ana ROCHA, for sharing their ideas with us and to have taken the time for the Young Friends. We were very grateful and hope to implement the new ideas gained in one way or another.

In March the Young Friends took part in the **Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA)** in Brussels and had the chance to learn from world-renowned experts who work at the forefront of the most pressing issues around agriculture. The FFA is a tremendous opportunity to learn more from leading thinkers and it is an incredible opportunity for the Young Friends to be able to join the FFA.

In June we then joined the **General Assembly of the Friends of the Countryside in Constance.**

The Young Friends first joined the General Assembly of the Friends on Friday and were excited to take part at the Gala Diner on Friday evening,

which was hosted by the BERNADOTTE family. The incredibly beautiful surroundings on the island of Mainau were a beautiful setting to a fantastic dinner and many inspiring conversations.

The following day, the Young Friends held their own General Assembly – also on the island of Mainau. At our General Assembly we had the pleasure to hear more about how the island, with its outstanding diversity and high variety of different plants is managed. In addition, Christoph STOLBERG, a Young Friend who has also previously won the FAMIGRO Award, told the Young Friends about an exciting congress in Berlin designed for rural entrepreneurs. Very generously he invited the Young Friends to join the congress "StartupLand" in November in Berlin. Overall, the weekend with the Friends of the Countryside is always particularly treasured by the Young Friends with the Friends giving us incredible support and advice on all matters concerning not only the organization, but also our own projects. We are very grateful for the close cooperation with the Friends are already looking forward to the next General Assembly in 2019.

The **GA 2019** of the Young Friends will take place in historic **Anjou**, in France, again joining the Friends for what will most certainly be an engaging and compelling weekend. Please note June 14-16 in your agendas and contact Alberto HERMOSEL for reservations.

Marie-Christine Schönborn





events





Perspectives

Looking back to 2018 I would like to first of all thank Alberto for his invaluable help with the administration, communication and organizing of our latest events, especially as the current Board is undergoing a period of transition, his presence has proven invaluable to the organization.

Recruitment and strengthening the links with the FCS remains an important topic for our organization, therefore I would like to encourage all YFCS members who are approaching the age of 35 (or who have passed it), to consider **moving on to the FCS** in order to continue together the journey we started already many years ago. YFCS members who decide to become FCS members are entitled to a 50% discount on their first year of membership. Also, as a member of FCS you can of course still join all YFCS events as well.

I would like to remind you all that we need your effort in recruiting new members, therefore we encourage you to **invite a friend** to our events, whom you think shares our values and common interest in entrepreneurship and a prosperous European countryside.

In 2018 we had a total of 9 new members that joined the YFCS, while in the first three months of 2019 we already have 13 new members. When looking at the overall ratio between termination of existing memberships vs. new ones we do not see a drastic reduction in numbers, but it is clear that rejuvenation remains a very important topic.

I also take this opportunity to remind you that the very existence and scope of the YFCS depends on your active involvement and yearly financial contributions.

Since 2016 we have introduced an additional, faster method of payment of the annual membership fee - you can now subscribe to our new **Automatic Payment Form** by sending an email to Alberto Hermosel: elo@elo.org. **Those of you who subscribe to the Automatic Payment form will get one year membership FREE.**

Please keep in mind that we still very much depend on your commitment and involvement, this means we need, and welcome, your ideas, opinions, concerns, and of course your presence in our events.

So please do not hesitate to get involved and keep in touch with us through the **YFCS secured intranet and Facebook page**, and keep bringing your voice and ideas to us in order to better shape the future of the European Countryside!

And finally it is with a bit of nostalgia that I inform you I will soon be stepping down as Secretary General of the YFCS, the official announcement will be made during the upcoming GA in Angers. For the past six years I have tried to repay all that this wonderful organization has given me in terms of memorable experiences and lasting friendships. Although I feel I could have perhaps done more, I feel now is the right time to let others take my place as I have already become a member of the FCS. Having said this, I am sure this is not a "goodbye", since I will be seeing many of you still, but rather a big THANK YOU for all the wonderful moments spent together and all your support during these years.

Francesco Kinsky dal Borgo
YFCS Secretary General



Famigro 2018

In order to raise awareness of the importance of a sustainable, economic and dynamic countryside, Karl GROTFELT created the FAMIGRO AWARD back in 2013. The award recognises a start-up in the rural sector that brings innovative and fresh ideas and supports the project financially allowing it to grow as well as giving exposure through the YFCS network. This is at the heart of the philosophy of the Young Friends : that entrepreneurial projects are one of the cornerstones of the evolution of the rural countryside.

In the words of Karl GROTFELT:

From my own experience I know the demands that young farmers and landowners encounter when looking at alternative ways to develop their enterprise. Traditional farming does not necessarily provide the income to develop and enhance the farm. Without these innovative young entrepreneurs we risk seeing our countryside become depopulated.

The idea behind the FAMIGRO AWARD is to award a young countryside entrepreneur that has started an innovative business providing income and employment in the countryside.

The winner of FAMIGRO 2018 was the startup “Cou-



coo” which was created by two friends and young entrepreneurs Gaspard de Moustier and Emmanuel de La Bédoyère. They convinced the owners of 4 estates to build huts, cabins and treehouses together in order to attract eco-tourism.

In the words of Coucoo:

In 2009, Gaspard de Moustier chose to promote a family-owned land in Franche-Comté by offering a new kind of holiday - an authentic experience in cabins perched in the top of trees.



In 2011, Gaspard crossed paths with Emmanuel de La Bédoyère who had just left the realm of investment banking for his family farm. Driven by their shared passion for nature, and their appetite for challenges, the two men founded a second eco-resort in Picardy in 2015.

Already at the head of four eco-resorts that are the figureheads of alternative, unusual and responsible tourism in France, the inseparable duo looks forward to extending the Coucoo philosophy to other areas relying on their three core values:

- *The amazement and satisfaction of the customer;*
- *The promotion of local lands and artisans;*
- *Technological and ecological innovation.*

Coucoo discovered the Famigro Entrepreneurship Award thanks to Geoffroy de Canniere, a business developer in the forestry sector. We were very happy to have received the award in 2018. It opened up to us a great network of entrepreneurs. We very much hope that it will help us find new locations to develop our Coucoo eco-resorts.

www.coucoo.com

Previous winners have included:

Grafenschaft Stolberg from Germany, CO2 Logic, Trusted Family, Wignac natural cider from Belgium, Wilderdest the tiny house from Belgium.

Applications for 2019 are now closed. The winner will be announced during the General Assembly in Anjou this June.



We look forward to receiving applications from our members or any European entrepreneur under the age of 35. Please do not hesitate to contact us for more advice and information at elo@elo.org.

For more information on the FAMIGRO award and how to apply for next year please visit : <http://yfcs.eu/famigro>