

Do agricultural pretests differ from business survey pretests?

QUEST workshop meeting

April 27th to 29th

Granada (Spain)

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Overview

- **Agricultural Pretesting at the FSO**

- **Application of the Response Process Model (Willimack/Nichols 2010)**
 - **Agricultural surveys differ from business surveys**

- **Discussion: Do you share my experience?**

Agricultural Pretesting at the FSO

Subject-matter unit has to connect two competing perspectives:

- **Transfer of EU regulation into the national context**
- **Disburden of respondents in favor of high data quality**
- ➔ **Testing and revising the draft questionnaire in order to make it applicable to “reality”**

Agricultural Pretesting at the FSO

- **Recruitment with the help of the Länder offices**
 - **Regional setting the most important characteristic**
 - **Structural differences between different parts of Germany**

- **Company-site-visits (at least 12 farms)**
 - **Self-completion of the questionnaire in advance**
 - **Cognitive interviewing (audio-taped)**
 - **In presence of a subject-matter colleague**
 - **Narrative description of the agricultural operation**

- **In addition, expert reviews useful**

- **Evaluation of the self-completed questionnaires**

Meeting unknown perspectives

- **“Time is money” (farmer)**
 - Cancellations due to weather conditions
 - No self-completion in advance
 - Time pressure during cognitive interviewing

- **“All I know is I know nothing” (survey methodologist)**
 - Imbalance of knowledge: subject-matter colleague and test person as experts
 - Clear allocation of roles during warming-up

- **“I thought I knew the topic and the problems” (subject-matter statistician)**
 - Gap between theory and practice
 - Positive experience: being open for “reality”

Agricultural surveys differ from business surveys

- **Record formation:**
 - **Different levels of professionalization**
 - **Data availability is no major problem (basic numbers by heart)**

- **Respondent selection/identification:**
 - **Less problematic due to hierarchic organization: manager in the center of all crucial decisions (incl. external requests)**

- **Assessment of priorities:**
 - **Dependent on weather conditions and the natural production cycle**

Agricultural surveys differ from business surveys

- **Comprehension:**
 - **Office workers: familiar with terminology of accounting**
 - **Field and barn workers: terms as close to daily farm routine as possible**

- **Information retrieval:**
 - **Coordination is no problem (farms = small or medium-sized enterprises, two respondents maximum)**

- **Release of the data:**
 - **Dependent on EU subsidies, questionnaire regarded as control instrument**
 - **Concerns that statistical data used to discredit the branch**

Thanks for your attention.

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