

The CAP according to farmers as its key stakeholders

How conventional farmers in the Netherlands view the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union

A Master Thesis in the field of Public Administration

by

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2019

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Summary

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is currently being redesigned. How do farmers feel about the policy? Through qualitative data collection and analysis, attitudes of Dutch conventional farmers toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union (EU) are examined. This research can be considered explorative and its developed framework functions as the basis for further quantitative research. A better understanding of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework is useful in designing the national implementation for the next budgetary period of the CAP, since it could say something about farmers' willingness to participate in the framework.

It was found that the attitude of farmers toward the direct support framework of the CAP is multi-dimensional, meaning that various aspects of the framework receive different judgments. These dimensions were identified in this research as farmers' attitude toward the existence of direct support; toward the degree of clarity of the framework; toward the degree of strictness of controls in the framework; toward the height of the subsidies; toward the existence of cross-compliance criteria; toward the focus of the criteria, which is increasing sustainability; toward the effectiveness and the logic of the criteria; toward the degree of connection with other regulations; toward the changeability of the criteria; and toward the specificity of the criteria. These dimensions can be considered aspects of the support framework that are relevant in farmers overall attitude, providing the first most important finding of this research. Additionally, explanatory factors are identified as administrative burden; perceived hindrance in business operation; trust in knowledge of decision makers; recognition and appreciation coming from the market, the society, and the government; and the perceived influence of media and activist organizations on this recognition. This framework of attitudinal dimensions and explanatory factors is a great contribution to scientific knowledge.

Practically, policy makers should take the attitudes of farmers, which were found in this research, into account. In short, practical situations and a truthful and fair image of the agricultural sector should be the basis of a clear-cut, straightforward design of the CAP, with logical measures that are effective in practice and take circumstances into account, as a result of consultation and cooperation between farmers' organizations, researchers, and the government.

Samenvatting

Het Gemeenschappelijk Landbouwbeleid (GLB) wordt op het moment herontworpen. Wat vinden boeren van het beleid? Via kwalitatieve dataverzameling en analyse worden attitudes van Nederlandse conventionele boeren tegenover de directe betalingen van het Gemeenschappelijk Landbouwbeleid (GLB) van de Europese Unie (EU) onderzocht. Dit onderzoek kan als verkennend worden beschouwd en het ontwikkelde raamwerk ervan fungeert als basis voor verder kwantitatief onderzoek. Een beter begrip van de houding van boeren ten opzichte van de directe betalingen is nuttig bij het ontwerpen van de nationale implementatie voor de volgende budgettaire periode van het GLB, omdat het iets kan zeggen over de bereidheid van boeren om deel te nemen aan het systeem.

Er is vastgesteld dat de houding van boeren ten opzichte van de directe betalingen van het GLB multi-dimensionaal is, wat betekent dat verschillende aspecten van het systeem verschillende beoordelingen ontvangen. Deze dimensies werden in dit onderzoek geïdentificeerd als: de houding van de boeren tegenover het bestaan van directe betalingen; tegenover de mate van duidelijkheid van het systeem; tegenover de mate van striktheid van controles in het systeem; tegenover de hoogte van de subsidies; tegenover het bestaan van randvoorwaarden; tegenover de focus van de criteria (duurzaamheid); tegenover de effectiviteit en de logica van de criteria; tegenover de mate van verbinding met andere regelgeving; tegenover de veranderlijkheid van de criteria; en tegenover de specificiteit van de criteria. Deze dimensies kunnen worden beschouwd als aspecten van het systeem van directe betalingen die relevant zijn voor de algehele houding van de boer, wat het eerste belangrijke resultaat van dit onderzoek is. Daarnaast, verklarende factoren worden in dit onderzoek geïdentificeerd als: administratieve lasten; belemmering bij bedrijfsvoering; vertrouwen in kennis van beleidsmakers; erkenning en waardering vanuit de markt, de maatschappij en de overheid; en de invloed van media en activistische organisaties op deze erkenning. Dit kader van attitudinale dimensies en verklarende factoren is een grote bijdrage aan de wetenschappelijke kennis.

Praktisch gezien moeten beleidsmakers rekening houden met de attitudes van boeren, die in dit onderzoek zijn gevonden. In het kort, praktische situaties en een waarheidsgetrouw en eerlijk beeld van de landbouwsector moeten de basis vormen voor een duidelijk, eenvoudig ontwerp van het GLB, met logische maatregelen die effectief zijn in de praktijk en rekening houden met omstandigheden, als resultaat van consultatie en samenwerking tussen boerenorganisaties, onderzoekers en de overheid.

Preface

In your hands or on your screen you have the Master thesis of Nienke Valk, written to fulfill the requirements of the MSc program Public Administration, with a specialization in Sustainability, at the University of Twente. I chose the subject of this research, farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework of the CAP, due to my interest in relations between governments on the one hand and stakeholders on the other hand, as well as my personal affinity with the agricultural sector. The whole process of research design until this final end product took place between November 2018 and June 2019.

Never having done qualitative research before, a challenge was ahead of me. But since this was the best option regarding this topic, about which I am passionate, I took the challenge upon me. I did this under the supervision of Martin Rosema and Frans Coenen, whom I would like to thank for their helpful guidance, but also for letting me figure things out myself, stimulating my independence in academic research. My gratitude goes as well to all farmers who participated in my research, since without them, this would not have been possible. In addition, I would like to thank my boyfriend, family and friends for their support and keeping me focused, as well as for their welcome distractions at some moments.

I hope you enjoy reading,

Nienke Valk

Wierden, June 19, 2019

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research problem and purpose

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union (EU) is one of its oldest policies. Over time, the policy has gone through many reforms and its focus has shifted from increasing food production, to coping with overproduction; from intensive farming methods, to sustainability. The CAP is currently being reformed again for the new Multiannual Budgetary Framework of 2021-2027. Policy support, especially among its stakeholders, is important and therefore, stakeholders' opinions need to be identified. Politicians and interest groups will make their voices heard, but how do farmers feel about the policy? Farmers are affected directly by the CAP and they are the recipients of the subsidies, and therefore key stakeholders, making it relevant to know, for both interest groups and governmental institutions, how they feel about the policy, and how these feelings can be explained. Therefore, with this research, we want to provide an answer to the research question: "How can the attitudes of conventional farmers in the Netherlands toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union be described and explained?".

Farmers' attitudes toward the policy are central to this research, because of an expectation that these attitudes relate to the behavior of farmers, based on theory and research by Bagozzi (1981) and Ajzen (1991). They argue that attitudes relate to behavior. However, their focus is on attitudes toward certain behavior, while here the attitude object is not behavior as such, but rather a framework in which farmers behave. A relation between attitudes and behavior is relevant here, because the current and also the newly proposed CAP can only work, when farmers decide to comply with it. There are certain criteria for farmers when they wish to receive CAP subsidies and through these criteria the European Commission tries to reach their goals, for example with relation to sustainability. However, the accomplishment of these goals depends on the participation of farmers. Farmers can also decide not to apply for subsidies, and thus not participate in the practices related to the criteria. Following the expectation that attitudes are related to behavior, this would mean that farmers' attitudes toward the CAP could influence their choice for applying for the subsidies and thus complying with set criteria, and hence be of major concern to decision makers.

Currently, discussions about the future of the CAP after 2020 are ongoing. Erisman and Van Doorn (2018) have performed an impact analysis of the choices the Dutch government has in the national implementation of the newly proposed CAP, which was commissioned by the

Dutch commission for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Parliament. In this impact assessment estimations were made on the participation of farmers in various scenarios of the direct support framework, based on earlier participation. However, circumstances might have changed and the policy has evolved, so earlier participation is not a clear-cut predictor for future participation. In order to understand the choices a farmer makes with regards to his behavior, and how he/she reacts to changes in policy, it is important to understand his/her convictions, and attitudes (Schoon & Te Grotenhuis, 2000). The participation of farmers in such policies has also been examined by Toogood, Gilbert, and Rientjes, who find several explanatory factors of which one is their attitudes, values and beliefs (2004). We believe that in making predictions of farmers' behavior in participation in the support framework, a better understanding of farmers' attitudes could be used. Therefore, we aim to provide an overview and explanation of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework.

The main things known about current attitudes and beliefs of farmers are to be found in newspapers and not in academic literature. Every now and then an interview with a labor union employee or a farmer is published, and often the views that are expressed are not merely positive toward policies. An example that sketches the sphere nicely is found in a local newspaper, where an employee of a Dutch farmers' labor union, who is a farmer herself, points out that much is expected from farmers. The expectations, responsibilities and duties increase in scope and size. With every change or increase in regulation, farmers feel, as the labor union employee puts it: "What's coming at us now?" (Kunst, 2018).

Even though the attitudes of farmers toward the CAP have not been examined extensively empirically, general attitudes toward the EU or EU policies have, as well as attitudes toward environmental policies. This latter category can be relevant here as well, due to the increasing focus of the CAP on climate measures (Markovic, Njegovan, & Pejanovic, 2018; Matthews, 2013). The most prominent explanations for support are utilitarian argumentations (Gabel & Palmer, 1995) and trust in political actors (Franklin, Marsh, & McLaren, 1994; Drews & Van den Bergh, 2016; Fairbrother, 2016; Harring & Jagers, 2016). The utilitarian theory suggests that the (experienced or expected) influence of policies on citizens' personal financial situations is an important explanatory factor for support for European integration. Argumentations on trust suggest that the trust citizens have in key political actors determines their attitudes toward environmental policies.

The aim of this research is to understand attitudes of farmers toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy, in order to provide knowledge for decision makers in designing the national implementation of the CAP after 2020. This will be reached

by performing and analyzing 11 semi-structured interviews with farmers in the Netherlands about their attitudes toward the direct support framework, and potential explanatory factors for this. These interviews were conducted by the researcher in spring 2019. Unfortunately, there is not much academic research done into the topic. Thus, the main part of the research will be rather fundamental and explorative. The research can partially be seen as an exploration into the concepts that should be present in any discussion on the topic, but also as an advocacy for farmers' interest, and as assistance for the government through providing information on stakeholder support.

This research will add to existing scientific knowledge in multiple ways. Firstly, a gap in literature exists on explaining attitudes toward agricultural policies. There is various research on participation in such policies, and in some of these it was established that attitudes can help determine this participation. This study will, based on this reasoning, try to explain these attitudes, which was not done before. Secondly, this research will form a strong basis of concepts and their dimensions that are relevant in a discussion on farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework, which until now, is still rather unclear. Thirdly, and more practically, this research will form a large information resource for the Dutch government and interest groups. The government can use these explanations of attitudes, which might influence farmers' participation in the direct support framework, in designing the national implementation of the CAP after 2020. And fourthly, the reasoning and methods that are used here can be applied in other national contexts, to create a larger pool of information, useful for the European institutions, as well as for other national governments.

1.2 Research focus

The geographical focus of this research is the Netherlands. One of the proposed changes for the CAP after 2020 shifts its' "one policy fits all" mentality toward a more specified approach per Member State (European Commission, 2018a). This increased subsidiarity imposes more responsibilities on national governments, giving them the possibility to shape the policy toward their national circumstances. Therefore, it is useful to perform a country-specific analysis, providing information for governmental institutions on their stakeholders' attitudes toward the CAP to guide them in their decisions on the policy's national implementation. Due to the national focus of this research, the farmers' attitudes that will be described and explained are thus toward the Dutch implementation of the CAP.

Conventional farmers are the subject of this research. A historical divide in agricultural discourse exists between the Jeffersonian, rather utilitarian, tradition and the land ethic, which

focusses on respect for the environment (Sullivan, McCann, De Young, & Erickson, 1996). This divide can be translated into types of farmers, as done by Sullivan et al. (1996), wherein organic farmers follow a land ethic, and conventional farmers relate to the utilitarian Jeffersonian tradition. Since the CAP's focus has been shifting to sustainability (Markovic, Njegovan, & Pejanovic, 2018; Matthews, 2013), and the criteria in the direct support framework have become more agro-environmental (European Commission, 2013a; European Commission, 2018a), conventional and organic farmers might have opposing attitudes toward the direct support framework. We have chosen to focus on conventional farmers only, for various reasons. Firstly, because of their quantity. In the Netherlands, the large majority of farmers is a conventional farmer. In 2017, there were 1.750 certified organic farms (Bionext, 2017), of the total amount of 54.840 farms in the Netherlands (CBS, 2018). Secondly, because of the potential differences in attitudes, based on the expectations described above. This way we hope to give in-depth insight in attitudes, and to see whether conventional farmers' attitudes do indeed follow this utilitarian tradition. Due to the explorative nature of this research, we believe it is better to focus on one of the two categories, since comparing the two categories would decrease the amount of interviewees within one category. And thirdly, because of additional regulations and subsidies that are applicable to organic farmers (European Commission, 2008).

The focus on the direct support framework, instead of the complete CAP, or other parts of CAP, will be addressed in Paragraph 1.3, where the policy and the framework will be explained.

1.3 Introduction to the Common Agricultural Policy

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union (EU) was created in 1962, and was at first focused on ensuring food security, in order to make sure we would never experience hunger, as in WWII, again. The agricultural sector in the Netherlands became highly intensified, in order to produce large amounts of food, in efficient ways. In 1992, farmers are encouraged for the first time to be more environmentally friendly. However, they receive financial support per production unit, making it still attractive to produce more. This changed in 2003, when the financial support is decoupled from production, and is provided per hectare. The reforms in 2013 introduced the greening payments, rewarding environmentally friendly agricultural practices. Over the period of the CAP's history, we can see a shift in focus from food safety, to efficiency, to sustainability.

The CAP is financed by the European Agricultural Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. In 2018, the budget of CAP was 58.82 billion euros (European Commission, 2018b), which is more than one third of the complete EU budget (36.74% in

2018). The budget of CAP, as well as its activities, are divided in three categories: 1.) income support; 2.) market measures; and 3.) rural development measures. Income support, through direct payments, is provided to ensure income stability and to reward certain behavior which contributes to goals of the CAP or of the EU in general. The category market measures covers international trade, competition, marketing, and interventions to improve the agricultural market. Rural development measures are area-specific measures that support the development of rural areas, addressing their specific needs. The largest share of the CAP budget is assigned to income support, namely 70.96% in 2018, which is the category that will be focused on in this research.

The category income support, also called the direct support framework, has also been evolving over time. Whilst farmers were first payed per production unit, since the reforms in 2003, they receive support per hectare. Under the current CAP regulations, the framework consists of a basic payment per hectare, available for every farmer, and additional specific payments, of which the main ones are the young farmer payment and the greening payment (European Commission, 2013a). Young farmers receive extra support, as well as farmers who engage in practices that are beneficial for the environment. In the Netherlands, the height of the subsidies is, currently, as following: €260,- basic support per hectare; €115,- greening payment per hectare; and €50,- young farmer payment per hectare (Ministerie van Economische Zaken, 2014). CAP subsidies are linked to certain rules through cross-compliance (European Commission, 2013b). When farmers who receive direct support do not comply with these rules, they will not receive (part of) their subsidy. These rules consist of the standard Statutory Management Requirements under Union Law, which also apply to farmers not receiving the subsidies, and additional Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAECs). These latter conditions can be considered criteria for receiving support in the direct support framework. Examples of such criteria that are currently in place are: “Establishment of buffer strips along water courses (GAEC1)” and “Minimum soil cover (GAEC4)”. In order to receive the greening payment, there are additional criteria, of which examples are crop diversification and maintaining permanent grasslands (European Commission, 2013b).

The direct support framework is the main aspect that will be focused on in this research, for several reasons. Firstly, focusing on one aspect rather than the whole policy allows us to create a more in-depth analysis. Secondly, for decision-makers the attitudes toward and the participation in this framework are very important, due to the linkage with their goals. Thirdly, for farmers this framework is important due to the financial support they receive through it.

And fourthly, since the largest share of the CAP budget is directed toward it, as was expressed above, it is economically relevant for the whole European governance system.

In 2018, proposals for reform for the CAP after 2020 were launched by the European Commission, consisting of three regulations. There is a clear focus in the reform proposals toward sustainable development. One of these proposals, on Strategic Plans, is relevant for the direct support framework (European Commission, 2018a). It is proposed that all Member States draw up Strategic Plans in which they clarify their goals, priorities, interventions, and most importantly, the allocation of subsidies. A framework to do this is provided, in which the direct support system would now consist of an enhanced conditionality framework and eco-schemes. The enhanced conditionality framework consists of various criteria for receiving subsidy, applicable to all farmers who apply for subsidy. The criteria cover more grounds and are more environment-based than those for the basic payment of the current CAP, due to some modifications and the inclusion of the criteria for the greening payments. Additionally, eco-schemes would go further in their criteria than the enhanced conditionality framework, in which farmers can voluntarily participate, which would give them the right to more financial support. However, it is up to national governments to decide on the strictness of the criteria for receiving support in both frameworks (enhanced conditionality and eco-scheme), as long as they can account for their actions and how they contribute to the goals of the CAP, which are mainly focused around sustainable development.

Since the success of compliance with rules, and hence the meeting of goals attached to these subsidies, depend on farmers' participation in such schemes and their attitudes toward it, these attitudes are subject to the current research. Literature from various academic fields will be used next, to establish expected influences on the attitudes of farmers, which will form the basis of our empirical research.

Chapter 2: Theory

2.1 Conceptual framework

Concepts that are used in our research questions and reasoning, and that are important to our research are: attitudes; attitudes toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy; conventional and organic farmers; (criteria for receiving subsidy in) the direct support framework; burden; financial concerns; and trust in political actors. How and why these concepts are relevant to our research will become apparent in the literature review. In this sub-chapter, it will be made clear what we mean by these concepts. However, as the research is explorative and unfolding, other variables could come into play later, which are then clearly identified.

Attitudes are defined by Ahnström, Höckert, Bergeå, Francis, Skelton and Hallgren (2009) as “a mindset that is used by an actor to act and judge in situations of decision-making” (p. 44). This definition will be followed, since it resembles our starting point that attitudes help determine behavior, and since a farmer’s mindset is precisely what we will be looking for in interviews. Importantly, not a strict psychological view toward ‘attitude’ as a concept is taken here, in which the attitude object can only be perceived as positive or negative. Instead, a perspective is taken that can be encountered more in public administration literature, in which an attitude is a mindset, or a person’s belief or opinion. The question is whether “attitude toward the direct support framework of the CAP” can be considered a multi-dimensional concept. In the field of Psychology, various researchers argue for the possibility of ambivalent attitudes (Conner & Armitage, 2011; Jonas, Broemer & Diehl, 2000). Attitude ambivalence refers to the simultaneous positive and negative evaluation of an attitude object. This means that one aspect of the object can be experienced as positive and negative at the same time, or that one aspect of the object is seen as positive, while another aspect is seen as negative, leading to an ambivalent overall attitude. It is therefore, that we argue that splitting an attitudinal concept in various dimensions is beneficial for research into attitudes. The attitudinal objects become more specific, and individuals can be positive on some dimensions, while negative on others, thereby decreasing the chances for ambivalent overall attitudes.

Boomgaarden, Schuck, Elenbaas and De Vreese (2011) discuss the slightly more general concept of European Union support and argue for its multi-dimensionality. They differentiate between five dimensions: performance, identity, affection, utilitarianism and strengthening. However, our main concept is much more specific, focusing on one part, the direct support

framework, of one policy, the CAP. Therefore, we do not apply the same dimensions as Boomgaarden et al. (2011), but we do take from them the expectation of the multi-dimensionality of the concept of attitudes toward the EU. Since our specific concept is not commonly used in academic literature, no theoretically grounded expectations of the various dimensions can be made. Examples of potential dimensions could be based on various aspects of the direct support framework. For example, attitudes toward: existence of the subsidies; height of the subsidies; focus of criteria for receiving the subsidies; and understandability of the direct support framework. Data collection will further help us to find out and then examine the different dimensions, when they appear to be present.

The historical divide that was slightly touched upon in the introduction, and will be further discussed in the literature review, can be translated into types of farmers, as was done by Sullivan et al. (1996). Some farmers' main focus is an agro-environmental ethic (organic farmers) and others' main focus is more on profit (conventional farmers). This distinction is followed here, and only the conventional farmers are focused on, for reasons explained in the introduction. In the Netherlands, organic farmers can be recognized by labels on their products, e.g. EKO or the European quality mark. Thus, organic farmers can be defined as those farmers who adhere to the criteria of these organic marks. Examples of such criteria to be fulfilled in order to receive the organic label on your products are: taking into account animal welfare; and not using chemical pesticides. Such criteria are based on animal welfare, protection of the environment and preservation of nature. All other farmers are considered conventional farmers. In our research, only conventional farmers will be selected, who will be recognized by the absence of an organic quality mark. It is expected that all farmers who operate in ways that qualify for such a quality mark, will actually have the mark, because the use thereof is beneficial for their profits.

The direct support framework is the scheme for subsidies paid directly to farmers through the Common Agricultural Policy. Criteria are set for each budgetary period of seven years (Multiannual Budgetary Periods), which need to be met by farmers in order to receive the subsidy. Examples are the preservation of permanent grassland and the diversification of crops. It has been pointed out that these criteria have an increasing focus on agro-environmental aspects (Markovic, Njegovan, & Pejanovic, 2018; Matthews, 2013; European Commission, 2013a; European Commission, 2018a).

The criteria and the framework in itself could be experienced as a burden in two ways. Firstly, through a potential increase in workload (administrational burden), especially when this increased workload is mainly administrative, and farmers have less time to spend on their

lands. Secondly, through the imposition of rules/decisions from an external force potentially making farmers feel hindered in their business operation, and creating a sense of non-ownership for farmers, when not feeling in control over their own farms. “Burden” is thus, in our research, a multi-dimensional concept consisting of two dimensions: administrative burden and perceived freedom or hindrance in business operation. “Financial concerns” is in this context related to the need of farmers for more financial support, and the dependency of them on this support. Both the current situation and potential future concerns are included. “Trust in political actors” refers to the trust farmers hold in political actors that are connected to the CAP, both nationally and on the European level. This includes whether farmers trust their expertise, and their statements and commitments.

2.2 Literature review

Participation of farmers in biodiversity policies, or EU agro-environmental schemes like the newly proposed CAP, is examined regularly. Their attitude toward these schemes, and the direct support framework as a whole, is something far less examined. However, attitudes and values of farmers in general do come back in the literature on explaining participation in such frameworks. Explanatory factors for participation in biodiversity policies and agro-environmental schemes that are most apparent include economic factors, communication, image of officials, perceived expertise of officials, farming culture, attitudes and beliefs, complexity of administration, and adaptability and flexibility of the policy (Lastra-Bravo, Hubbard, Garrod & Tolón-Becerra, 2015; Siebert, Toogood & Knierim, 2006; Toogood et al., 2004). The attitudes of farmers toward the direct support framework, and thus among other things, toward the focus of the framework which is more and more on environmental aspects, are part of a farmer’s culture, attitudes and beliefs, and are sought to be described and explained in this research.

A historical divide in American discourse on agriculture exists. On the one hand there is the Jeffersonian tradition, and on the other hand the land ethic (Sullivan et al., 1996). In the Jeffersonian tradition, or agrarian creed, it is stressed that when a farmer pursues his/her own self-interest, the public purpose is served as well (Bultena, Nowak, Hoiberg, & Albrecht, 1981). This tradition can be considered utilitarian, since it pressed the importance of the rights of farmers as landowners to utilize the land in a way maximizing their profit, without a focus on externalities for the environment. Jefferson would not approve of criteria for receiving subsidy, since it would decrease production (Malone, 1993). Nevertheless, in the Jeffersonian tradition a free market was argued for, without any subsidies, due to their focus on competition. Beus

and Dunlap (1990) provide six major characteristics of this conventional agricultural paradigm: 1.) Centralization, due to their national, and sometimes international production, as opposed to local markets 2.) Dependence, due to the reliance on external sources and the intensity of production; 3.) Competition, because of the focus on profit and speed; 4.) Domination of nature, as opposed to harmony with nature, due to the use of chemicals, processing of food and non-renewables; 5.) Specialization, because of specialized farms, with single crops or a narrow genetic base and standardized systems; and 6.) Exploitation, due to ignorance of external costs and focus on short-term benefits. In the late 1970s this ethic was indeed present in the whole farming community, as was concluded by Bultena et al. (1981), and it was also referred to as mainstream agriculture (Beus & Dunlap, 1990).

The land ethic, developed by Aldo Leopold (1949), presses the importance of balance between the environment, animals, and people, to live harmoniously with respect for other species. Leopold stressed that a land ethic implies respect for the land, resources and species, and the use of these resources, without harming their existence in the future. Other authors refer to it as alternative agriculture, merging a multiplicity of terms, such as sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, natural farming, and eco-agriculture (Beus & Dunlap, 1990). All these varying concepts have in common that they focus on organic agricultural practices, such as smaller farms, reduced use of chemicals, and conservation of non-renewable resources. Sullivan et al. (1996) translate this divide in discourse into a distinction between two types of farmers: organic farmers and conventional farmers, wherein organic farmers follow a land ethic, and conventional farmers are closer to the Jeffersonian tradition. They found that organic farmers put importance on living ethically, more so than conventional farmers, and that conventional farmers have greater concerns for financial aspects. Malone (1993) acknowledges that conventional farmers can also engage in experimental methods, that might even be good for the environment, but they do it for different reasons. Conventional farmers choose their methods based on increasing productivity and profitability, while for organic farmers environmental concerns are decisive in their choice of methods.

The foci of policies have changed toward a more land ethic perspective, emphasizing environmental aspects. In Europe, the CAP becomes more and more focused on sustainability (Markovic et al., 2018; Matthews, 2013), which can also be found back in the current proposals for reform, for after 2020. This focus on sustainability fits better with the land ethic perspective than with the Jeffersonian tradition. Farmers following a more utilitarian mindset might feel less appealed to such changes in policy. Following Sullivan et al.'s (1996) distinction, this would suggest that conventional farmers are not too positive about the focus of the CAP on

sustainability. In the conceptual framework the potential multi-dimensionality of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework was addressed. This focus on sustainability is an aspect of the framework, and might therefore be one of its dimensions. Relevant to find out then, is whether conventional farmers now still follow a utilitarian creed, with regards to their attitude toward the direct support framework of the CAP. And if so, why?

First, we will take a broader view, into theories on explaining support for the European Union and its integration in general, which can help in forming a basis for explaining support for the direct support framework of the CAP. Since the focus of the CAP is more and more on environmental aspects, next, literature on explaining public support for climate related policies will be discussed, which can also help in finding explanatory variables for support for the direct support framework. However, an important difference to keep in mind with this type of research is that in studies on attitudes toward the EU or toward environmental policies the subjects are all citizens, i.e. those represented by the governing actors. In our research we want to focus on farmers only with regards to CAP, i.e. those most affected by the policy, its primary stakeholders.

Gabel (1998) examined five theories of European integration and compared their relative importance in explaining support for European integration. He concluded that the Utilitarian Appraisals of Integrative Policy (Gabel & Palmer, 1995) was most robust in explaining the support. This theory proposes that the socioeconomic situation of citizens leads to different experiences of costs and benefits from European policies. These experienced differences influence their attitudes toward European integration. Thus, one's personal financial circumstances are, according to Gabel (1998) most important in explaining support for European integration. The more benefits people expect to derive from European integration, or more general, European policies, the more positive their attitude toward it. These ideas fit well with the commonly known Rational Choice Theory, through which it is tried to understand social and economic behavior. One of the main points of this theory is that individuals make decisions about their behavior based on considerations about the costs and benefits of certain behavior or situations (Scott, 2000).

The utilitarianism and rational economic considerations that can be found in attitudes toward the EU, can also be found in agricultural practices. The few studies that have looked into the attitudes of farmers toward the CAP, as we aim to do, also come across this utilitarian aspect of profit-oriented agricultural practices, concerned with finances. In a cross-country analysis of five European Union Member States: France; Sweden; England; Lithuania; and Slovakia, Gorton, Douarin, Davidova, and Latruffe (2008) examined the attitudes of farmers

toward agricultural policy in the EU. They found that the majority of farmers still has a productivist, or utilitarian, mindset, focusing on agricultural production. This suggests that (at least part of) the American Jeffersonian tradition, was also present in Europe in the 21st century. Various scholars found confirmations of this. Aggelopoulos, Pavloudi, Manolopoulos, & Kamenidou (2008) found that farmers are concerned with the effect of policy (changes) on their income. Ahnström et al. (2009) stressed that financial concerns seem to be prevalent in the farming sector. In their cross-country analysis, Gorton et al. (2008) additionally found that according to farmers, the need for policy support is high, believing their farms will not survive without subsidies (Gorton et al., 2008). This focus on production and income had been found before in various parts of the world (Carr & Tait, 1991; Miller & Curtis, 1999). In many cases it was reported that it cannot be afforded financially to leave a merely productivist mindset.

However, more recently, Boomgaarden et al. (2011) argued that the explanatory power of the utilitarian perspective has decreased, and that “emotional or gut commitments” (p. 243) have become an additional important explanatory factor for support of European integration. Nevertheless, they do acknowledge the remaining importance of utilitarianism and economic evaluations. Such emotional attitudes become more important and present in public and academic debate. However, these often regard topics like immigration and safety, which could make them less apparent in considering the attitude toward a subsidy framework for agriculture. When farmers would have negative emotional attitudes toward the European Union or European integration, they can still be positive about the direct support framework, due to the multi-dimensionality of EU support (Boomgaarden et al., 2011).

Next, we are turning to studies and theories on environment related measures and policies. The subsidy scheme of the CAP can be considered an incentive, which is a policy instrument that stimulates the recipients of the subsidies to act in a certain way. This strategy is present in the CAP through the cross-compliance criteria. The fine line between the efforts recipients have to make in order to meet the criteria and the subsidy they receive for it, is important to consider, since when this line is crossed, the policy instrument loses its function. Incentives are used in environmental policy, in order to use the market forces that negatively affect the environment, in a positive way (Tietenberg, 1990). Incentive-based policy instruments can be seen as opposed to so-called command and control instruments, which are clear-cut rules (Hahn & Stavins, 1992). Following this distinction, it means that incentive-based policy instruments have a larger degree of flexibility, where the goal is more central, and not just the rule. For the CAP this means that there should be a certain degree of flexibility in the subsidy framework, in order for the incentive to work properly.

In examining support for climate policies, Drews and Van den Bergh (2016) created a review of multiple studies and found many explanatory variables, among which the knowledge of correct information, both with regards to the effectiveness of the policy, and with the topic of the policy. People who had more correct knowledge on climate change, were more likely to support climate policies, as well as people who had correct knowledge on the effectiveness of the policy at stake (Drews & Van den Bergh, 2016). They point out the importance of clear information provision by policy-makers and other political actors. In our case, this relates to the understandability or clarity of the direct support framework, and adds to the importance of including this aspect as a dimension of attitudes toward the framework. However, in the research by Drews and Van den Bergh (2016) information provision is an explanatory variable for support, while we argue that support for policies, or attitudes toward these policies have various dimensions, of which one could be related to their clarity. We expect that when a farmer's attitude toward the degree of clarity is negative, his/her attitude toward the existence of the policy can still be positive.

Various recent studies into public support for climate related policies emphasize the importance of trust in political actors who create the policies, and who enforce them (Drews & Van den Bergh, 2016; Fairbrother, 2016; Haring & Jagers, 2016). When citizen's trust the key actors related to climate policies, they are more likely to support these policies. Concerning the CAP, not only the European actors should be considered. Franklin, Marsh, & McLaren (1994) argued that European politics is very much tied to national politics, in their Support for Government theory on European integration. The main argument in this theory is that citizens' support for their national government influences their support for European governance. This is due both to stances of national parties on European Integration, and to the fact that all national (prime-) ministers hold decision-making positions within the European governance network. With regards to the CAP this would mean that trust in both national and European governance actors can influence support, and hence citizens' attitudes, toward the direct support framework. This trust can be related to believing what these actors say, promise or commit to, but also to trusting the expertise of those political actors in making policies on agricultural practices. Toogood et al. (2004) point out the potential differences in knowledge about nature and farming, between farmers who have direct experience and know the land they work with, and policy advisors, who mainly rely on scientific facts. Additionally, European politics might feel as a 'far from my bed show', something that happens 'over there' in Brussels. Actual geographical distance matters in explaining support for rule from afar. Berezin and Díez-Medrano (2008) found that the further a person lives from Brussels, the less likely he or she is

to be positive about European Integration. But distance can also be a non-geographical perception: a feeling of not being connected or close to what happens in Brussels, which might add to the trust farmers have in political actors in European governance structures.

Previous research has shown that farmers are afraid of increased policy restrictions on the way they farm (Carr & Tait, 1991), or already feel restricted by agricultural policy (Gorton et al., 2008). Ahnström et al. (2009) also stress the fear of farmers to lose control over their farms. These fears can lead to a feeling of hindrance or a sense of non-ownership, due to decisions being made for you by an outside force, which can feel as a burden. Another burden that is experienced by farmers due to the CAP and other agricultural policies is an administrative burden (Ahnström et al., 2009). Bieling and Plieninger (2003) found that farmers think of most policy as over-regulation. Both these perceived burdens are also captured in the quote in a local newspaper: “What’s coming at us now?” (Kunst, 2018). When such burdens are experienced, it might influence the way they feel about the support framework. Such burdens are important to consider, since when they lead to a decrease in participation, when burdens and costs outweigh the benefits, the policy instrument of an incentive is no longer working.

Multiple explanatory factors that are suggested to be related to farmers’ attitudes toward the direct support framework overlap with explanatory factors in the literature on participation in such frameworks. This can be said for economic factors, trust in officials, and complexity of administration. However, it is argued here that especially trust in officials and complexity of administration are a matter of beliefs and attitudes, and that their influence on the participation in agro-environmental schemes could go indirectly, via attitudes toward the framework, instead of directly. Economic factors, especially when negative factors are experienced, can also influence participation through attitudes, for example by leading to more hesitance in trusting political actors. However, these indirect relationships and the placement of attitudes and participation in a complete model of explanatory factors are subject to further research, in which quantitative methods are needed, to build further on this explorative study.

It can be concluded that there are only few studies that are examining the attitudes of farmers toward the CAP direct support framework, the dimensions of this concept, and the most important explanatory factors. Some studies have been found and discussed that do look at farmers’ attitudes and beliefs toward (European) agricultural policies, but most of them are rather old, the most recent one being from 2009, and none was found that addressed the Netherlands. Due to the changeability of the topic, because of policy reforms or changes in political actors, and the increase in environmental awareness, it is relevant to keep studying this topic.

2.3 Expectations

An answer to our research question: “How can the attitudes of conventional farmers in the Netherlands toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union be described and explained?”, will be reached after having answered the following sub-questions, which are formulated based on the literature review:

- What are the attitudes of conventional farmers in the Netherlands toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union?
 - What are the different dimensions of farmers’ attitudes toward the direct support framework?
- What are the main explanatory factors of farmers’ attitudes toward the direct support framework and their conceptualizations?
 - Do farmers experience the criteria in the direct support framework as a burden, and if so, how do these experiences influence their attitudes toward the direct support framework?
 - Do farmers experience financial concerns and if so, how do these influence farmers’ attitudes toward the direct support framework?
 - How does trust in both European political actors, and national political actors that are concerned with the Common Agricultural Policy influence farmers’ attitudes toward the direct support framework?
 - Which other factors exist that can help explain farmers’ attitudes toward the direct support framework?

This explorative study contains a combination of factors based on our literature study, which made us able to formulate the above mentioned questions, and grounded theory. Grounded theory implies that the through research itself the basis of relevant factors will be formed, when these could not be identified from the existing literature. Hence, we expect that there are factors that are relevant in explaining farmers’ attitudes that did not come forward in the literature, since they are probably too specific to find back in more generalized literature. From the literature, we could make general expectations of relevance of aspects mentioned in our research questions. We have found factors through our literature review that we expect to play a role in explaining farmers’ attitudes toward the direct support framework, but how these relations work and of what these attitudes are build up is not clear yet. These expectations, based on the literature, are visualized in an explanatory model, see Figure 1. It is thus expected

that other variables play a role as well, but these could not be identified yet. The potential multi-dimensionality of the concept of attitudes is not incorporated in the model either, since no differentiations on theoretical grounds could be made.

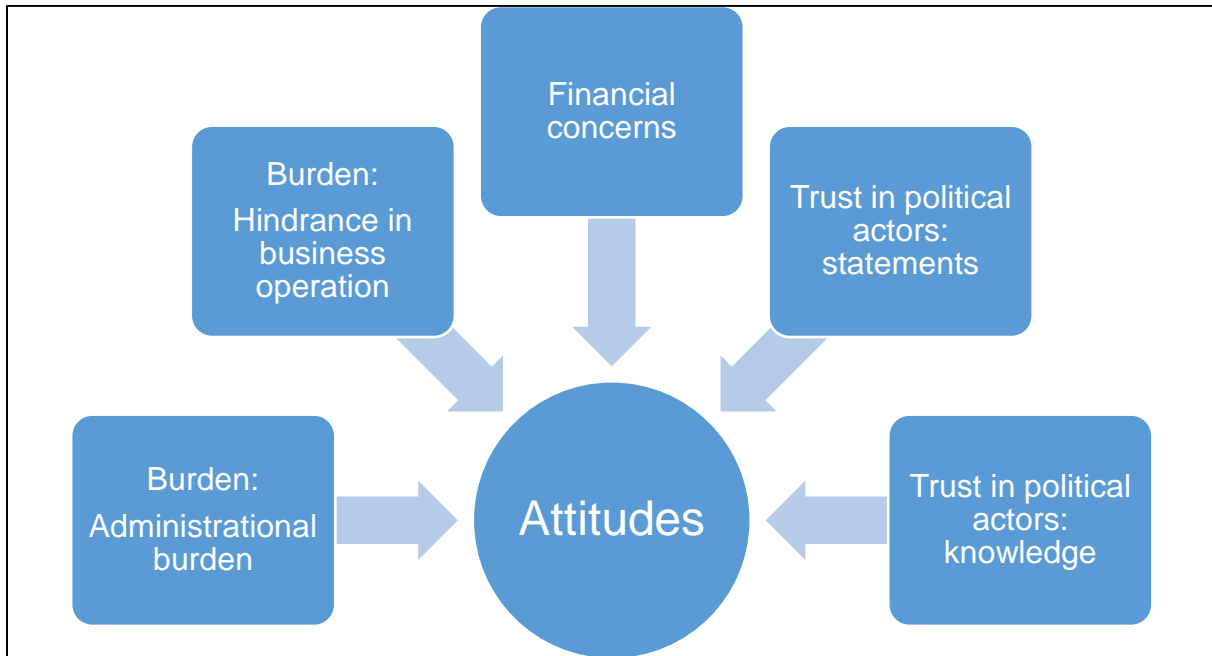


Figure 1: Expected explanatory model of attitudes of Dutch conventional farmers toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Chapter 3: Methods

3.1 Strategy and design

There were no available data that fitted the purpose of this research. Therefore, new data were collected by the current researcher, in order to measure the concepts that were mentioned in our conceptual framework, and that will be addressed again later in this chapter (see Chapter 3.3). To answer our research questions qualitative methods were used, in the form of semi-structured interviews. The subjects of these interviews were conventional farmers in the Netherlands. The choice for this group to focus on was explained in Chapter 1.2. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because we are looking for attitudes and opinions of the participants, and an interview allowed for them to personally share their perspective, without having to answer according to pre-determined formulations or closed questions. Interviews were preferred over focus groups since interviews are less demanding for farmers, because they can take place whenever an individual farmer wants. Some topics were prepared as a starting point, like financial concerns, administrative burden, and trust in political actors, but the interviews were very flexible, in order to grasp what the interviewees found most important. This flexibility comes to its right best in qualitative methods of data collection, since qualitative methods can be considered more explorative than quantitative methods. This fits the design of this research well, since there is not much theory or research on the topic to use as a basis for the current one. The current research lays a basis of relevant concepts and relations. Further research could use our qualitative data results as a basis for a larger, quantitative study.

The aim of the interviews was to find out more about the opinions, attitudes and beliefs of farmers, and how these could be explained. The interviews helped us learn about farmers' views toward the direct support framework, and also toward agriculture in general, enabling us to examine whether conventional farmers follow a utilitarian tradition and are more concerned with finances than with the environment. Additionally, the interviews helped us recognize the various dimensions of the attitudinal variable. Through the interviews, we wanted to come to know more about the farmers personally, giving them the opportunity to share their stories and perceptions of the much debated topic of agriculture and the environment. The farmers' perspective is one that is often overlooked by animal rights or environmental activists, by consumers who believe what they hear from activists, or by policy makers, while farmers themselves should be considered the ones that can best explain their personal attitudes and beliefs, and that can find, together with the researcher, explanatory factors for this.

3.2 Sample and sampling

The population of interest in this research is all conventional farmers in the Netherlands. For practical reasons it was decided to look for participants within a number of municipalities in the proximity of each other in the province of Overijssel. There are no scientific grounds to assume that farmers in other parts of the country, experiencing exactly the same policy changes, will have significantly different attitudes. However, a bias can exist in the diversity of specific types of farmers present in the area. In the province of Overijssel the large majority of farmers are livestock farmers, namely 82.26%, the remaining percentage being arable farmers or arable and livestock combined. When we look at this number at the national level, it is 59.25% (CBS, 2018). This difference in ratios was taken into account in selection of interviewees, aiming at a distribution of types of farmers that is similar to the national level. Another influence of this sample selection method on our research could exist if multiple of our interviewees know each other, due to their proximity. Social interaction in networks can influence the attitudes of interviewees, in either direction, when farmers take over opinions from other farmers in their networks (Toogood, Gilbert & Rientjes, 2004). These aspects were taken into account in our sampling methods, and potential biases are reflected upon in the discussion of this research (see Chapter 5.4). Nevertheless, there is also a positive aspect about having all respondents located in one province, since their institutional provincial context is the same. All respondents are also located within the same Water Board: Vechtstromen. Even though the regulations that are focused on in this research are not decided upon on these governmental levels, regulation or government might be perceived as one block, since it is often hard to distinguish what comes from where.

The only conditions participants had to meet is that they are conventional farmers, owning their own farm. Employees on a farm or family members that work on the farm and will eventually take over, but have not yet, are not part of our sample, since the person in charge is the one that will make the decisions and probably has most knowledge, and thus, whose opinion matters most. Sometimes the partner of the farmer was present during the interview, since it is often the case that they work together. Being a farmer is not just a job, it is a lifestyle in which a whole family is involved, and by which a whole family is affected. The partner was always more on the background during the interview. For these reasons we do not consider this an issue for our outcomes. Receiving the CAP subsidies and participating in the support framework is not a condition for participation in this research, since farmers who do not participate in the direct support framework might have interesting reasons for this. Nevertheless, data from the

institution that handles subsidy requests show that in 2018, 44.991 farms received direct support (RVO, 2018), which is 82% of all Dutch farms.

Participants were reached via social media, labor unions and acquaintances. Approximately a month before data collection started a message was shared on Facebook, LinkedIn, in farming communities and websites, like labor unions and agriculture focused news sources, and with acquaintances that know farmers. People who responded positively were contacted to check whether they fall into our target group. When these potential participants met the criteria, an appointment was scheduled for an interview. Additionally, snowballing method was used to reach more participants, by asking participants for contacts of other potential participants. The sample is thus partially created by self-selection of participants, since they could reach out to the researcher when they wanted to participate. Another part was reached out to by the researcher herself, by calling potential participants of whom contact details were acquired online, via acquaintances, or via other participants. The snowballing method in sampling was performed with caution, trying to avoid family members or neighbors of current participants, in light of the potential influence of social interaction, as explained above. Furthermore, a sample geographically spread throughout various municipalities was aimed for.

In total, there were 11 participants. They were all found via Facebook and acquaintances. Being too occupied with spring activities, especially among arable farmers, was the main reason for farmers to not participate, to reschedule, or to only be available for a short amount of time. A list of interviewees is provided in Appendix 1. Participating farmers come from 8 different municipalities. Respondents coming from the same municipalities come from different towns or villages. Of the 11 respondents, 4 are dairy farmers, 1 is a beef farmer, and 2 are arable farmers. The others have combined businesses, with 2 being dairy and beef farmers, 1 arable and beef farmer, and 1 poultry, beef and arable farmer. All participants receive the CAP direct support, of which one only receives the basic payment, one receives the basic, greening and young farmer payments, and all others receive both the basic and the greening payment.

3.3 Data collection

The interviews were held with conventional farmers in the Netherlands and took place in April and May 2019. The setting of the data collection was the interviewee's farm, in order to create a comfortable and friendly atmosphere for the farmer, and to make it the least time-consuming. The language that was spoken during interviews was Dutch. However, the interviewer does understand the regional dialect, Twents, so when interviewees felt more comfortable speaking

in their dialect, this was not a problem. Each of the 11 interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. All collected data come solely from these interviews.

Since our research involved collecting first hand data from human beings, ethical issues needed to be considered. Before collecting any data from participants, it was made sure they had read the informed consent information and voluntarily signed the accompanying form. All participants gave consent for making audio recordings of the interviews, and using these for the purpose of this research. Participants were assured that all data would be anonymized and that their names, exact ages, or the city/town they live in, would not be used in any publications. Participants can be mentioned in reports by e.g. specific profession (type of farmer) and/or age range. Additionally, all participants were aware that their participation was completely voluntary and that they could exit the process at any time. Even after having given their consent, participants were given 5 days the chance to withdraw this consent. If this would have happened, the data obtained from that individual would not have been used. Fortunately, none of the participants withdrew their informed consent. Proof of signed informed consent forms can be accessed upon reasonable request through the researcher. The research proposal, including the informed consent information, that laid the foundations for this research was presented to and accepted by the Ethics Committee of the faculty of Behavioral, Management and Social sciences (BMS) of the University Of Twente, before data collection started.

Even though the interviews are flexible and explorative, a structure was made beforehand, and questions and topics are prepared. The list of questions, translated into English, can be found in Appendix 2. A pilot was performed before the actual data collection started. A trial interview was held with someone close to the farming sector, who could easily relate to farmers. Additionally, the question list was discussed with a farmer. These two activities were done in order to examine the understandability of the questions, whether they would suffice for finding answers to our research questions, and to practice interview skills of the researcher. Based on this pilot some minor changes in the question list were performed, mainly regarding understandability and the practicality of questions.

With these slightly adapted questions data collection started. At the beginning of each interview general questions were asked with regards to type of farm and its size; history of the farm and investments; and whether the farmer receives CAP subsidies. The rest of the interview was semi-structured around the following topics: attitudes toward the direct support framework, and potential diversity in aspects thereof; criteria for receiving subsidy in the framework and their agro-environmentalism, as part of their attitude toward the framework; financial concerns; trust in political actors related to the CAP; and experienced burdens because of the framework.

The variables that we aimed to learn about based on our literature research are similar to these topics, namely: attitude toward the direct support framework (potentially multi-dimensional); financial concerns; trust in political actors related to the CAP; freedom or hindrance in business operation; and administrative burden. However, due to the explorative nature of the current research, other variables could come to the light because of this research, which are reflected upon in a later chapter (see Chapter 4.1).

The dependent variable, the attitude toward the direct support framework, was examined, keeping in mind the potential multi-dimensionality of the concept, as discussed in the conceptual framework (see Chapter 2.1). Participants were asked to give their opinion on the framework as a whole, as well as on various aspects of the framework, for example: existence of the subsidies; height of the subsidies; criteria for receiving the subsidies; and clarity of the direct support framework. There was room for the participants to bring up any other aspects of the framework that they perceived as important or remarkable. These categorizations were detected and analyzed through coding processes, in which all text fragments were given labels that indicate subcategories, which is described in Chapter 3.4.

Administrative burden, as one of the independent variables, was measured by asking questions about workload, stress, and proportion of time spent on administration, as well as the perceived change in this over time. Freedom or hindrance in business operation was measured by asking questions about whether they would do things differently if they could. The relation between either type of experienced burden, when present, and the farmer's attitude toward the direct support framework was discussed as well, as to whether the farmer perceives it as such. The variable financial concerns was measured by asking farmers about potential financial problems. Their need for financial support was discussed, as well as whether the current amount of support suffices for them to make ends meet financially. The perception of the farmer of the relation between their financial concerns, when present, and the farmer's attitude toward the direct support framework was discussed as well. Burden was measured on the two dimensions separately: administrative burden and freedom or hindrance in business operation. Trust in key political actors was learned about by asking about beliefs in expertise of political actors, and beliefs in their promises or commitments. Additionally, questions were asked considering other potential explanatory factors, from the perspective of the farmer.

Every interview was audio-recorded, after permission by the interviewee was granted. Afterwards, the audio-recordings were turned into intelligent transcriptions. The transcripts of the interviews constitute the raw data of this research. The audio-files were destroyed after data analysis, so interviewees could not be recognized by their voice, in order to safeguard their

privacy. Additionally, after each interview, a short summary of the interview was written and was shared with the interviewee, accompanying the question of whether the interviewer has sketched the opinions of the interviewee correctly. If not, the interviewee was offered 5 days, starting when the summary was received, to make any corrections, or to withdraw any information he/she has provided. This is done in order to increase the validity of the data, and to overcome misunderstandings in an early stage of the analysis. Revisions in the summaries were made when needed. These summaries, when confirmed, were not included as raw data, but were mainly used as a confirmation for the researcher, and formulations in these summaries could be used as an alternative to direct quotes of the interviewees. Including these summaries as raw data would lead to an overestimation of frequencies of codes, since it is just a different formulation of something that is already present in the raw dataset. The data that were collected to measure our variables thus consist of 11 transcribed interviews. Since the interviews were held in Dutch, the dataset also is in Dutch. Quotes that are used in this report, are translated into English. Nevertheless, in Appendix 3, the Dutch original quotes are provided.

3.4 Data analysis

For the whole process of data analysis, a computer program was used, namely Atlas.ti. This program can be used to easily categorize files and data, and to efficiently analyze text fragments from multiple documents. Data analysis began by coding the raw data gathered through the interviews. Through coding, all text fragments are assigned labels, so they are categorized and specific topics can easily be analyzed. Multiple codes can be added to each text fragment, making it possible to look for fragments with combinations of codes, which are likely to be fragments in which the relationship between two aspects is discussed. Before data collection started, codes were formulated based on the existing literature and on our research questions. These corresponded with the variables of interest in our research that were presented in Chapter 3.3. Other codes could be added during the process of coding, especially concerning the various aspects of attitudes toward the direct support framework and potential overlooked explanatory factors. After each set of 2 or 3 interviews, the transcribed interviews were coded. This was done in rounds, so after each round of interviews, knowledge of codes, and possibly aspects that needed more attention, could be taken into account in the subsequent interviews. When new codes were created, since text fragments appeared that needed to be attributed a different code than those already established, this code was added to the list of codes. Based on frequency statistics, it could be analyzed whether this code is applied to multiple text fragments. When the code, and thus the topic related to that code, appeared frequently, it could be considered

relevant in our research. After all data were coded, all raw data were reread, in order to see whether, with the experience of all interviews done, the codes given to fragments were still accurate.

There are seven empirical sub-questions in our research, some descriptive and some explanatory. Per empirical sub-question in our research the continued steps in the analysis are explained next.

- *What are the attitudes of conventional farmers in the Netherlands toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union?*

The first question is descriptive, and was answered by analyzing the frequency and tone of text fragments related to farmers' opinion of, feelings about, and attitudes toward the direct support framework of the CAP.

- *What are the different dimensions of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework?*

The second question is related to the first question, in the sense that the variable of interest is the same. Both questions cannot be answered without each other, and were analyzed simultaneously. Here, we aimed to analyze whether our dependent variable, attitude toward the direct support framework, is multi-dimensional. If we find out, through our research, that there are several dimensions to this attitude, these will be measured separately. The possibility of this multi-dimensionality (e.g. attitude toward height of subsidy, attitude toward usefulness/type/strictness of criteria, attitude toward services/processes), was specified after the first rounds of interviews. Later rounds of interviews showed whether this specification could be confirmed, adapted and then confirmed, or denied.

- *What are the main explanatory factors of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework and their conceptualizations?*

This question was answered through answering the questions that are following this one. However, for answering this specific question establishing the relation between certain explanatory factors and the overall attitude suffices, without knowing through which dimensions the attitude is influenced, which would be a step further. Additionally, here the conceptualization of concepts is important, especially of those that were not yet indicated in the conceptual framework that was based on the literature review.

- *Do farmers experience the criteria in the direct support framework as a burden, and if so, how do these experiences influence their attitudes toward the direct support framework?*

The first part of this question is descriptive, while the second part is explanatory. As expressed in the conceptual framework, burden can have different dimensions (i.e. administrative, or hindrance in business operation). This multi-dimensionality and the presence of a burden in general can be confirmed, adapted or denied in answering the first part of the question, by analyzing text fragments about workload, stress, freedom, and preferred way of working. The potential relation between a farmer's perceived burden and his attitude were analyzed by looking at text fragments in which the relation between the two is discussed. Additionally, the combination of these variables per interviewee was checked.

- *Do farmers experience financial concerns and if so, how do these influence farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework?*

This question is similar to the fourth one, on potential burdens. The question was answered by analyzing the interviews with farmers expressing financial concerns, and their attitudes, as well as with those explicitly expressing the absence of financial concerns, and their attitudes. Additionally, the text fragments in which the perceived relation is discussed were analyzed.

- *How does trust in both European political actors, and national political actors that are concerned with the Common Agricultural Policy influence farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework?*

This question is explanatory. As expressed in the conceptual framework, trust refers both to the trust in expertise, and to the trust in promises and commitments. This multi-dimensionality and the importance of trust in general could be confirmed, adapted or denied. The potential relation between a farmer's trust in key political actors and his attitude was analyzed by looking at text fragments in which the relation between the two is discussed. Additionally, the combination of these variables per interviewee was checked.

- *Which other factors exist that can help explain farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework?*

The exact topic of this question could only be determined during data collection. When several interviewees emphasized the importance of explanatory variables not included in other points in the research, they were included for this question. New codes were created and these were used to analyze the perceived relationship between this new aspect and farmers' attitudes, in the same way as was done with other explanatory variables.

These steps toward an answer to our research question are made, explained and reported on in the following chapter, where we discuss the results of the analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Reflection on conceptual framework

Our data analysis began by coding the data gathered through the interviews. This happened continuously, interwoven with the process of data collection. After each two or three interviews, the data were coded and the coding list was reflected upon. When needed, codes were reformulated, added, taken together or deleted. The codes that are assigned to text fragments were partially designed beforehand, based on the literature review. However, due to the unfolding nature of this research, a clear and coherent coding scheme, including the various dimensions of our concepts could not be provided yet. Therefore, one of the main aims of coding the data, as well as from this whole research, was to design a clear list of relevant themes when discussing this topic. In the beginning, codes that were assigned were rather specific, not generalized. When two or three interviews were coded, the assigned codes were reflected upon, looking for similarities, so codes could be taken together, and for differences, so codes needed to be split up. After a few more rounds of data collection and coding, we were able to identify categories of codes, and various dimensions of our main concepts. When all data were coded, a clear overview of codes could be created, including their dimensions. An overview of the complete coding list with all codes and their descriptions can be found in Appendix 4. The assigned codes were all readdressed, making sure that, with this clear overview of codes, all text fragments received the appropriate labels. Through the various rounds of coding, we were able to identify the main building blocks that are relevant when discussing the attitudes of farmers toward the direct support framework of the CAP, as well as identifying the various dimensions of these building blocks. Therefore, we have to make some reflections on the conceptual framework that was presented based on the literature, since now, through our analysis, we are better able to identify and define the main concepts. In this section, the concepts will simply be described, their relevance and role in our model will be addressed in subsequent sections.

The most complicated concept in our research, regarding conceptualization, is our dependent variable: the attitude of farmers toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy. Besides measuring this variable, we also have to examine the potential multi-dimensionality thereof. Before our data analysis we could only suspect a multi-dimensionality in this concept, but were unable to identify the exact dimensions. The dimensions of this concept that we identified based on our research are visualized in Figure 2.

It can be discussed whether the attitude objects in our dimensions should be independent variables rather than part of dimensions of the dependent variable. Nevertheless, they are presented as attitude objects of dimensions of the dependent variable, since they are all aspects or characteristics of the direct support framework. Because they are part of the framework, they belong, as properties, to the dependent variable, and are therefore its dimensions.

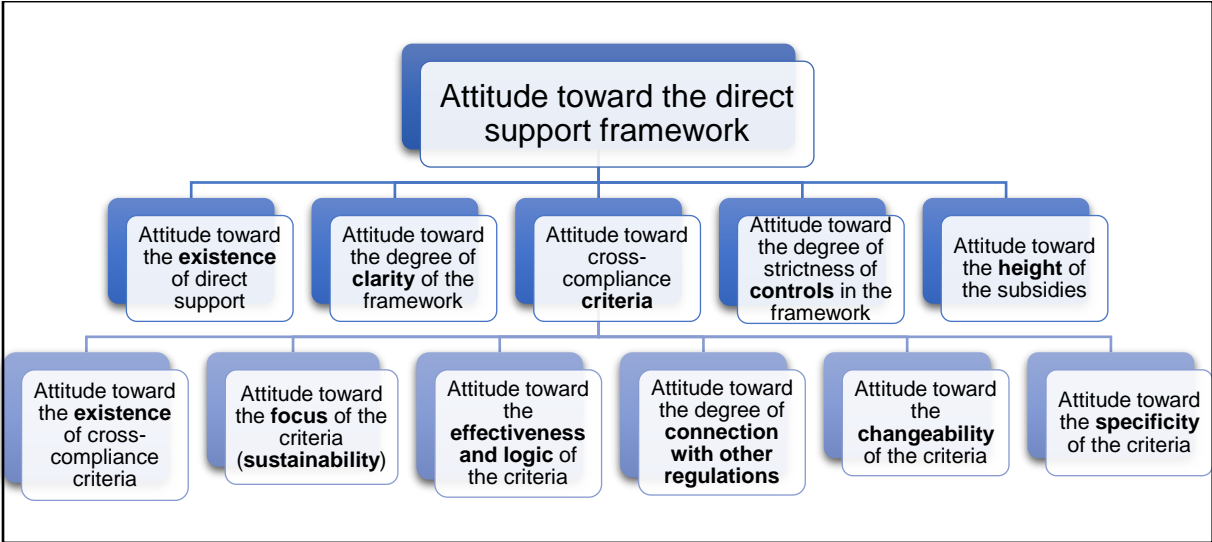


Figure 2: Dimensions of the dependent variable, identified in this research.

The formulation of dimensions is done based on aspects or characteristics of the framework that were considered worrying or positive, or at least remarkable, by the respondents. When multiple respondents brought up particular aspects of the framework as remarkable, which did not fit in with other dimensions, new formulations were considered. After all data was collected, the text fragments in which these dimensions came forward were examined again, in order to see whether the allocated dimensions were correct, and whether dimensions needed to be taken together, deleted, or split up. The figure clearly shows the complexity of the concept and the large variety of aspects that is part of it. We can identify five dimensions of the attitude toward the framework. Again, as was established in the conceptual framework, the attitude objects mentioned in the dimensions cannot only be considered positive or negative, but can be any belief or mindset that is felt toward it. Firstly, the attitude toward the existence of direct support, referring to the opinion of farmers on whether subsidy should be available or not. Secondly, the attitude toward the degree of clarity of the framework, implying the opinion of farmers on how comprehensible the framework is, encompassing everything from the application, through the criteria, to the control. Thirdly, the attitude toward the cross-compliance criteria, which are the criteria that need to be complied with in order to receive the subsidy. This is where things get more complicated, since in its turn, this dimension has six dimensions, which we will turn to

later. Fourthly, the attitude toward the degree of strictness of controls in the framework, referring to the controlling system that is part of the direct support framework and the strictness thereof. And finally, the attitude toward the height of the subsidies.

When we move one layer down in Figure 2 we see the six dimensions of the attitude toward the cross-compliance criteria, which thus can be considered sub-dimensions of the attitude toward the direct support framework. The first of these is the attitude toward the existence of cross-compliance criteria, referring to farmers' opinion on the fact they have to do something and to comply with certain rules, in order to receive the subsidy. Secondly, the attitude toward the focus of the criteria, which is increasing sustainability, as was explained in the literature review. This thus also relates to the utilitarianism in attitudes of farmers, as opposite to a land ethic. Thirdly, the attitude toward the effectiveness and the logic of the criteria, referring to the understanding farmers have for the criteria and how effective these are; how they, with their practical experience, perceive the logic of setting these specific criteria for reaching their goals. Fourthly, their attitude toward the degree of connection with other regulations, as well as between various criteria. Fifthly, their attitude toward the changeability of the criteria, meaning the stability of criteria over time, and whether they often change. And sixthly, their attitude toward the specificity of the criteria. This dimension refers to their opinion on the specificity or genericity of the criteria, and thus how they feel about general rules applying to every farmer in the same way, and about specific rules considering business-, regional-, and/or national circumstances. These five dimensions and six sub-dimensions came forward in our research as being part of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework.

Independent variables that appeared to be relevant from our coding analysis, which were not identified based on our literature review are the recognition and appreciation for farmers, with four sub-categories. Firstly, financial recognition and appreciation for the quality of products, produced by farmers, on the market from the consumers and market forces. Secondly, the perceived recognition and appreciation that farmers receive from society, in the image that citizens have of farmers and the knowledge they have of what farmers do. Thirdly, the perceived recognition and appreciation that farmers receive from the government for the things they do, e.g. for the environment, in the form of subsidies, but also immaterial appreciation. And a final sub-category that can be identified is the perception the farmer has of the influence of media and activist environmental and animal welfare organizations on the recognition and appreciation that farmers receive. Now we know which concepts are important, we will turn to the actual content of them in our dataset, in order to report measurements and to develop an explanatory model.

4.2 Measurement of dependent variable

First, the findings on our dependent variable, the attitude of farmers toward the direct support framework of the CAP, will be presented, following the dimensions as presented in Figure 2.

Attitude toward the existence of direct support

A large percentage of the budget of the European Union goes to the CAP, and through the direct support framework to farmers (see Chapter 1.3). However, farmers are not too content about it. Seven out of the eleven farmers that participated in this research pointed out that they would rather not have subsidies at all. They would rather receive more appreciation for the quality of their products on the market, through higher prices and less power for brokers. Nevertheless, various farmers acknowledge that this is not likely going to happen. Therefore, subsidies are right, as a compensation for the lower price on the market, and for the costs that they make for complying with high quality standards and rules concerning the environment and nature preservation. One farmer puts it as following:

“So we in the Netherlands, with all our criteria and extra obligations, have to measure up to countries that have it much easier in that sense, like America and Australia, they don’t have all those rules there. If in Europe it is wanted that farmers do meet those criteria, then there must also be extra compensation for that, because we won’t get it from the milk price.” (Interview, Respondent 8, 03-05-2019).

Additionally, various times it is put forward that farmers fulfill a social role through their work by providing the first basic need of humanity at a high quality for a low price, and by maintaining the landscape. Thus, according to farmers, this social role and their compliance with strict criteria justify the compensation that is available for farmers, when this cannot come from the market, and hence the overall attitude toward the existence of subsidies is positive.

Attitude toward the degree of clarity of the framework

The attitude of farmers toward the degree of clarity of the framework of application, criteria and control is mixed. More than half of the participants indicated that it is very complicated, and some of them pointed out that they would not be able to understand it without specialized help from accountants. The remaining participants did not have such issues with the clarity of the framework, but were not extremely enthusiastic about it either. All agreed that the fact that rules and circumstances often change over time makes it more difficult to understand.

Attitude toward the existence of cross-compliance criteria

The attitude of farmers toward the existence of cross-compliance criteria is positive. The fact that farmers have to do something and comply with certain rules in order to be able to receive the subsidies, is accepted and supported by all participating farmers. As one farmer put it:

“I do think that if you get a subsidy you have to do something for it. There must be certain regulations, so that the implementation of agricultural policy will have a certain direction, otherwise you could say let’s just produce and catch money. No, there must be a guideline.” (Interview, Respondent 6, 30-04-2019).

Attitude toward the focus of the criteria (sustainability)

The overall attitude toward sustainability, as the focus of the criteria, is positive. This suggests that farmers are not completely following the Jeffersonian tradition in their attitudes anymore. As was established in the introduction and literature review, the CAP is becoming more and more focused on sustainability. All but one farmer agree that it is right for the subsidy system to have sustainable and environmental goals. They recognize that taking measures for the environment is inherent in the time we live in. The one farmer who disagrees argued that the agricultural sector already does a lot for the environment, and that this should be enough. However, more negative comments are present, even though most support the goal of sustainability. This has to do with the practical feasibility of the criteria set to reach this goal, as well as, and mainly, with a perception that farmers have of unfairly distributed responsibilities when it comes to environmental measures. They recognize that there is a responsibility for farmers to work sustainably and they want to do this, but they also argue that this is unequally expected from them, compared to other sectors. When asked about the responsibility for making steps toward a sustainable society that lays with farmers, one farmer said:

“How much has air traffic increased... How many cars... The cow is the biggest problem of course, as you can see. The number of cows has decreased, three times as many cars, three times as many airplanes, the cows have halved, but the cows did it.” (Interview, Respondent 3, 25-04-2019).

When asked about the motivation for complying with environmental measures that are related to the direct support framework, the most-given answer is finances, simply because they need it. Nevertheless, many times the effect on the environment is mentioned as well, as an extra motivator to comply with such rules. As one farmer put it:

“I think it is *and and*, in the end you just need those subsidies, I think. But of course [...] we are a steward on this globe and we have to deal with that properly [...]. We have done things in times when we did not know it was harmful, but if I know it can be done differently, and you are encouraged in that too, then you should definitely do it.” (Interview, Respondent 4, 26-04-2019).

Attitude toward the effectiveness and logic of the criteria

The overall attitude toward the effectiveness and logic of the criteria is negative. The fact that there are criteria and that those are focused on environmental goals is accepted, but multiple farmers do not see the logic of creating the criteria that are in place now, when wanting to reach environmental goals. In practice, some criteria do not have the effect that was supposed to be reached, and sometimes even have opposite effects. An example that is often mentioned here is the strict dates that are set for when the harvest must be taken of the land, and the green fertilizer must be sown, while farmers need to rely on weather and other natural circumstances and rather not take the harvest of the land, before it is ready. Multiple farmers emphasize that when there are criteria that seem effective and logic to them, in practice, then they are understandable and positive about them being there. But when the logic is far to be found, and criteria are not applicable in practice, then their whole attitude is more negative.

Attitude toward the degree of connection with other regulations

In half of the interviews the relation of the criteria with other regulations, and the relation between the various criteria was brought up. The attitude of these farmers toward this relation was not too positive. Other farmers did not bring this up as remarkably positive or negative, which makes the overall attitude on this dimension mixed. They feel you can never do it right on all aspects, and that it is always about finding a balance. An example here is the sustainable goal of getting 65% of protein that is needed for your animals from your own land, and the sustainable goal of having only 20% of your complete agricultural area as arable land, with the remaining 80% being grass. A dairy or beef farmer needs to get energy and protein from his land, for his cows. Energy can be found in products like corn, and protein in small proportions in grass, and larger proportions in other arable yields, e.g. soy. However, when you want to have more protein from your own land, you would have to do this on the 20% arable land, and thereby trading some land that you have to use for corn, resulting in a lack of energy in the food for your animals.

Attitude toward the changeability of the criteria

The overall attitude toward the changeability of the criteria is negative. At the moment the CAP is being redesigned for after 2020. This changeability of the policy and the criteria in the framework is something that was often brought forward during the interviews, especially with regards to investments farmers need to make, and the uncertainty whether this investment is still meeting all the criteria after a few years, e.g. with regards to animal welfare, or machine criteria. Multiple farmers expressed their concerns:

“Today you think you are doing it right and tomorrow there is a new law, then maybe it should be completely the other way around.” (Interview, Respondent 7, 01-05-2019).

“Weeding was also compulsory at first, we did that for a few years, and then it was no longer mandatory, now it [machine for weeding] is there, you could take it over...” (Interview, Respondent 11, 08-05-2019).

Attitude toward the specificity of the criteria

The overall attitude of farmers toward the specificity of the criteria is negative, since they all find it too general, and not differentiated enough. Almost all farmers addressed the large differences that exist between European countries, in economic, environmental, but also political circumstances. The price one pays for land, or for groceries, the type of land that is available and the amount, and the strictness of criteria and controls of the subsidy system are all variable in the different European countries. And even the differences within countries are discussed, for example when looking at the highly intensive agriculture in Twente, compared to more extensive agriculture in Friesland. Due to these considerations farmers are not too positive about the genericity of the CAP, in that it applies in an equal way to different countries. Multiple farmers argued for more distinctive and specific rules, as one argued:

“I think if you really want to achieve goals, then you have to set different goals in certain areas than in other areas, then I think you have to be more specific. If you keep it very general, and the differences remain that for one person this actually has to be done and for the other that, considering rules, then you stay somewhere in between and you actually get nowhere.” (Interview, Respondent 9, 06-05-2019).

Attitude toward the degree of strictness of controls in the framework

The overall attitude toward the degree of strictness of the controls that are related to the framework is mixed. Various farmers perceive the controls as being fussy and having too strict consequences for minor mistakes. Due to the complexity of the system, it is easy to make a small mistake, but the consequences are large. However, multiple farmers do acknowledge that

a strict system of control is needed, so people will not ignore the rules and still receive money. Nevertheless, sometimes farmers feel like controllers only look at ticked boxes and not at real-life situations.

Attitude toward the height of the subsidies

The overall attitude toward the height of the subsidies is mixed, due to the ambivalence of farmers' opinions. The height of the subsidies has been decreasing and is still decreasing. Some farmers point out that it actually is not high enough, but at the same time that you should not want to be too dependable on it, so it should not be higher. Again it is stressed that the subsidy should not per se become higher, but that the financial appreciation of their products on the market should be higher.

Summary of findings on dependent variable

All attitudinal measures, that together form our dependent variable, have been discussed now. Figure 3 shows a clear overview of the findings per dimension.

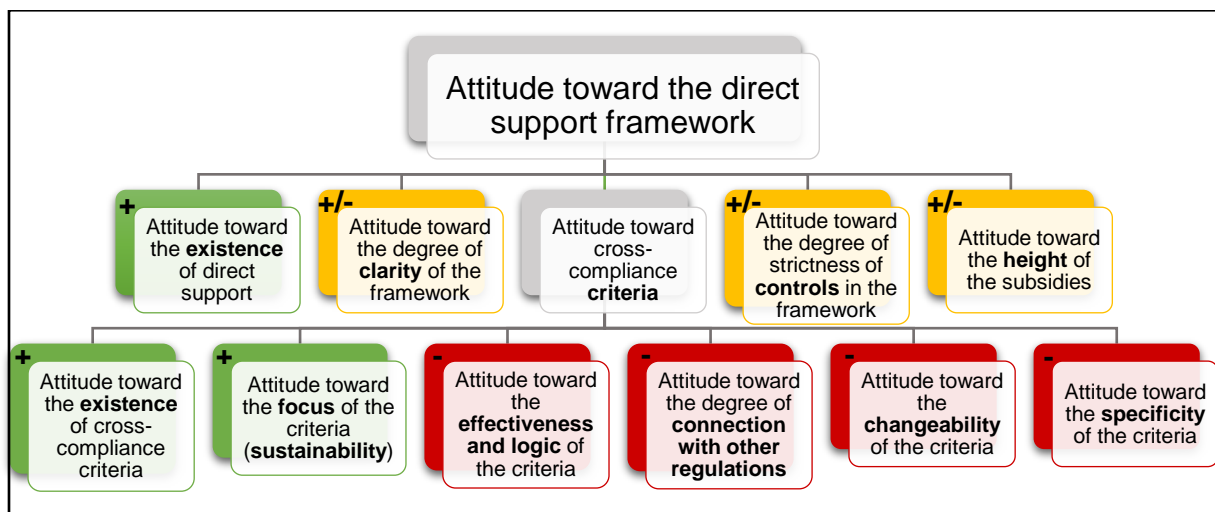


Figure 3: Summary of findings on farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework, per dimension. (Green, + = positive; orange, +/- = mixed; red, - = negative).

4.3 Measurement of independent variables

Next, the measurement of all independent variables that came forward from both theory and our research will be discussed. The first five variables were identified based on our literature review, whilst the last four only came forward during data collection and analysis.

Burden: administrative

Firstly, farmers experience the administrative tasks related to the direct support framework as negative. Various farmers indicate that they need professional help for doing the administration related to the direct support framework, or that their partner actively helps in this aspect, due to lack of time and proficiency, and the many changes in the framework, in other regulations and in circumstances. One farmer pointed out nicely:

“I am not an administrator or an accountant, or a lawyer or so on. And I feel like all of those sometimes, because sometimes you just have to deal with those things. And then a dilemma comes forward, you are not trained for it, but you actually have to work with it, that is very difficult.” (Interview, Respondent 4, 26-04-2019).

However, multiple farmers are, at the same time, very down-to-earth, accepting that it is just something that has to happen, even though they do not like it. Some realize that only when you start to see it as a burden, it will be a burden.

Burden: freedom/hindrance in business operation

A second dimension of burden is the sense of non-ownership, or the freedom or hindrance farmers perceive in their business operation. All farmers can point at things they would do differently if they had the freedom to do so. They feel hindered in their business operation. An example:

“Why should we have potatoes, we have much more to benefit from corn. That is also a rule from Brussels, if you have more than 15 hectares of land, you have to grow two crops. We have all our machines and the knowledge for corn.” (Interview, Respondent 10, 08-05-2019).

Nevertheless, most farmers still perceive the criteria as doable, in relation to their freedom. As one farmer stated:

“It is still possible, but not much more should be added, because then you will come to a turning point, do we go for the subsidy or do we go for freedom. And that playing field is getting closer to each other.” (Interview, Respondent 1, 23-04-2019).

It should be noted that not going for subsidies is, at the moment, for many farmers not an option, regarding their financial situations.

Financial necessity subsidy

Most farmers agree that when the appreciation of the quality of products on the market remains the same, then there is need for financial compensation in other ways, through subsidies. One respondent expressed discontent with the logic of the criteria and added:

“You just have your back to the wall, you just do it, because in principle you just have to because otherwise you will not make ends meet.” (Interview, Respondent 10, 08-05-2019).

Farmers thus accept the way things are, since they cannot afford to lose the subsidy.

Trust in statements of policy makers

Farmers did not seem to be too worried about the trustworthiness of the statements that are made by policy makers, at least not in the sense of trusting that they will do what they say they will. Every time trust came up during interviews, farmers referred to the capability of policy makers to make decisions for the agricultural sector. Therefore, in our model, trust will be taken as one variable, referring to trust in the knowledge that decisions of policy makers are based on.

Trust in knowledge of policy makers

This knowledge of policy makers is not very well trusted by farmers. Farmers are worried that decisions of policy makers are too little based on the actual practice, and knowledge thereof, and too much on theory, ideas that are designed behind a desk, the public image, and activist lobbies. Multiple farmers express their concerns:

“So governance is a bit based on public opinion and not on the real results, and I think that's a bit of a shame.” (Interview, Respondent 11, 08-05-2019).

“They have no idea what is happening on the farm. I recently heard from someone, who did not even realize that during the weekend, the cows also have to be milked. Then I'm thinking, how do you get it into your head to perform a function somewhere that should be for agriculture or, of which agriculture is a part, while you don't even know what is happening there. I think that it is too ridiculous for words that that is possible.” (Interview, Respondent 8, 03-05-2019).

Additionally, farmers argue that there is a lack of an integrated approach, since everyone has a rather specific field of knowledge and focus, while there should be more focus on the overall picture.

Recognition/appreciation coming from the market

The price that is paid on the market for farmers' products, both by the consumer, and by the retailer is perceived as being too low. Farmers argue that the quality of their products is not being recognized and appreciated enough financially. Multiple farmers refer to the original goal

of the CAP, that there should always be enough food available at a reasonable price, and how this has added to the remaining low price, that has not increased with inflation.

Recognition/appreciation coming from society

Another aspect that was often brought forward by farmers in the interviews was the recognition and appreciation coming from the society, considering citizens' knowledge of what farmers do, and the image they have of farmers. This recognition and appreciation is perceived by farmers as being very low: people have too little actual knowledge of what farmers do, while they do have negative images of farmers. This negative image is worsened through the influence of media and activist organizations. People draw conclusions quickly and do not see that farmers take care of their animals and land very well. Various farmers point at the fact that if they would not take care of their animals and their land in the best way, the harvest from the land would not be as good and the animals would not grow, give milk, and reproduce. But, as the farmers argue, the harvest is good, and the animals grow, give milk and reproduce, and still people do not want to appreciate the way farmers work. Nevertheless, people who visit the farm tend to have more understanding, but the overall image of farmers is perceived as negative, since people draw conclusions without knowing the actual situation.

Recognition/appreciation coming from the government

Farmers express that they miss recognition from the government financially, but also in immaterial ways. There is a lack of appreciation for the things that farmers already do for the environment, especially in comparison to other sectors or countries, which is nicely illustrated by the earlier mentioned example of the increase in (air) traffic, in combination with the required decrease in livestock.

Influence of media and activist organizations on recognition/appreciation

The perception by farmers of the influence of media and activist organizations on the recognition and appreciation farmers perceive is something that farmers passionately put forward as well. Multiple farmers emphasized that an unreal image is being sketched by activist organizations and in the media, and how they experience that this negatively influences the knowledge and opinions of citizens, as well as the knowledge of and decisions made by politicians, and hence the appreciation and recognition they receive. The lack of proper argumentation and correctly nuanced images is something that frustrates farmers a lot.

4.4 Comparisons between farmers

Characteristics of the farm and the farmer could influence farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework as well, and comparisons between farmers could help make an explanatory model. However, the farmers in our sample seemed to have similar experiences, attitudes and opinions on most variables. Some opinions or feelings are more extreme than others, but never are they opposing, hence making comparisons can only result in expectations.

Some farmers were actively involved in labor organizations, or discussion groups, and indicated that this made them more aware of all the rules that are in place, and sometimes also more understanding. However, there were also farmers that are not active in such organizations and still found the system understandable. Nevertheless, many other farmers, both active and inactive in such organizations, brought forward that keeping up with all rules and changes is very time demanding, which is not always doable, and therefore they seek professional help.

Whether a farmer has a successor in mind or not, can have a great influence on his business operations, when he reaches a certain age. When there is no successor in mind, planning for the future is less part of the job, and finances start to play a large role. When there is a successor in mind, farmers are more focused on the future of their business, and how they can keep it lasting. However, this mainly influences the investments a farmer makes, and not so much his attitude toward the framework.

There was one farmer who only received a small amount of subsidy, which could have influenced his attitudes, but did not, since he sympathized a lot with the farming community as a whole. Multiple farmers showed such sympathy through reactions that were related to other farm types than their own. The farmers from different types of farms did, naturally, bring forward different practical examples of things they encountered. However, in their overall attitude toward the direct support framework, their attitudes were more general, and similar across different farm types.

4.5 Modelling relations

Next, it is important to examine how our independent and dependent variables relate to each other. Figure 4 shows our basic explanatory model. The attitudinal dimensions are not included, in order to show clearly which explanatory factors are relevant, overall. Due to this complex nature of the dependent variable and the explorative nature of this research, it can only be confirmed that these explanatory factors have an influence on farmers' attitudes in general. Which path, via which dimensions, they exert this influence can only be hypothesized about, based on our data, and should be examined further through quantitative analysis.

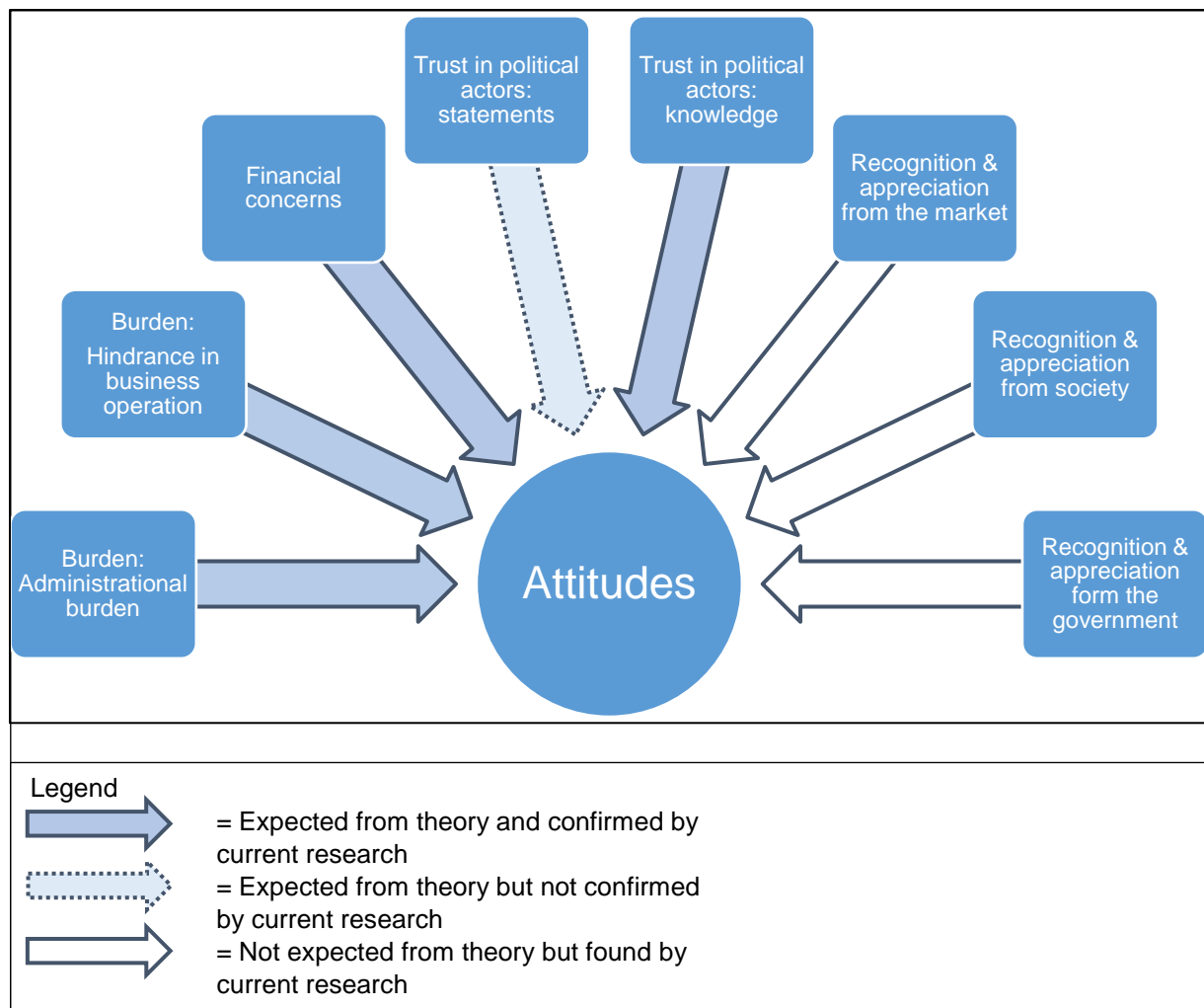


Figure 4: Basic explanatory model of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework.

Figure 4 shows all the explanatory factors that came forward in this research, both through theory and through our data analysis. Five factors were expected, of which one could not be confirmed, the trust in the statements of political actors, which became clear through our analysis not to be relevant for farmers. Besides the four other expected explanatory factors, three others were found through our data analysis. In this model, still, it is not indicated whether the explanatory factors have a positive or a negative influence on farmers' attitudes, since it sometimes is the case that the explanatory factor likely influences one dimension positively, while on the same time another dimension negatively. All confirmed relations and expectations on the influences on the various dimensions will next be addressed per independent variable. The influence of media and activist organizations is not incorporated in Figure 4, since this factor does not have a direct influence on farmers' attitudes, but indirect, through the various recognition variables, which was addressed in Chapter 4.3. Additionally, media and activist organizations also influence farmers' trust in the knowledge of policy makers, due to worries

and experiences that politicians take over information that is presented by them, without properly fact-checking them.

Turning to the independent variables with direct relations to farmers' attitudes, firstly, the administrative tasks related to the direct support framework, even though not always specifically recognized as a burden, do influence farmers' attitudes toward the framework. This influence is negative, on all potentially related dimensions, due to the time-consuming, complex, changing, and fussy nature farmers perceive of the administrative tasks related to application and controls. The dimensions this independent variable is likely related to are thus their attitude toward the clarity of the framework; the degree of strictness of controls; the degree of connection with other regulations; and the changeability of the criteria.

Secondly, when farmers feel hindered in their business operation by the criteria of the direct support framework, this negatively influences their attitude toward the direct support framework, as expected. This variable likely influences the attitude of farmers toward the existence of the criteria, since they rather not have all the rules connected to the framework; their attitude toward the effectiveness and the logic of the criteria, since when they feel hindered, they often do not understand why certain criteria are set; and toward the specificity of criteria, since this hindrance can be caused by the generality of criteria, making them more negative and frustrated about this.

Thirdly, financial concerns influence farmers' attitudes toward the CAP, due to their financial dependence on subsidies, caused by the lack of financial appreciation on the market. This dependence makes them accept the way things are, even though they do not agree with all of it. The independent variable recognition and appreciation from the market thus also influences the financial necessity of subsidies for farmers. When looking at the various dimensions, financial concerns are likely to influence farmers' attitudes toward the existence of subsidies, making them positive that there is financial support; their attitudes toward the height of the subsidies, making them negative when they perceive it as too low; and their attitudes toward the specificity of cross-compliance criteria, making them frustrated that other European farmers, with completely different circumstances, e.g. the price of land, get the same subsidies, due to the genericity of the policy, which they thus perceive as negative.

Fourthly, trust in the knowledge of political actors and decision makers influences farmers' attitudes toward the framework, negatively on all potentially related variables, due to worries that the framework is based on too little practical or scientific knowledge. This trust is likely related to the attitude toward the focus of the criteria, since in the view of farmers, this focus sometimes goes too far, when just following public opinion and activist organizations, without

looking at the practical situations. Other dimensions that this trust is likely related to are their attitude toward the degree of connection with other regulations, due to the perception that policy makers all have a very specialized area of knowledge and an integrated approach is lacking; and their attitude toward the effectiveness and logic of criteria, due to farmers' perception that a lot of criteria are ineffective or illogical because policy makers design them behind a desk, and do not look enough at the practical situations.

Fifthly, the perceived lack of recognition and appreciation that farmers receive from the market makes them more positive toward the direct support framework, since it influences their need for financial support. The dimensions that this variable is likely related to are thus their attitudes toward the existence of direct support, since when they cannot get it from the market, they are positive that this is compensated differently; and toward the height of the subsidies, since it the height of the market price influences the amount of subsidy that is needed to compensate for it.

Sixthly, the lack of recognition and appreciation that farmers receive from society can make farmers feel frustrated and as if they can never do it right. How this directly relates to their attitudes toward the direct support framework is difficult, but at least it makes them longing for appreciation, and probably be more positive about the fact that there is direct support. When we look at the larger society, the whole world, then the appreciation coming from society influences the market prices. It can also make farmers frustrated and negative in relation to their attitude toward sustainability, since people do not recognize what farmers have already accomplished.

And finally, the recognition and appreciation that farmers receive from the government influences farmers' attitudes toward the framework, since the government is the actor that implements the framework, and it can be compared with an employee wanting to get appreciation from his/her boss. This effect likely happens in various ways, both positive and negative. One of the dimensions that this variable is likely related to is the focus of the criteria, sustainability, since farmers feel that the things they already do for the environment, are not recognized and appreciated enough. Nevertheless, a positive relation might be found with farmers' attitudes toward the existence of cross-compliance criteria. The financial appreciation that they do receive, through the direct support framework, does make farmers acceptable of the fact that there are criteria connected to it. Because they receive financial support, they do want to do something for it. Additionally, the appreciation that farmers receive from the government influences another independent variable, the trust farmers have in them, since a lack of recognition of what farmers do, will make farmers less trustworthy of how that government can make the right policy decisions.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Answers to research questions

The aim of our research was to be able to answer our sub-questions, which together form an answer to our main research question. Here, the questions will be answered one by one.

Firstly, what are the attitudes of conventional farmers in the Netherlands toward the direct support framework of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union? From our research we can conclude that, as expected, there is not a single answer to our question due to the confirmed multi-dimensionality of the concept. Some aspects of the framework are perceived as positive, and some as negative, which brings us to the second question, what are these different dimensions? The dimensions of farmers' attitude toward the direct support framework that are identified here are: their attitude toward the existence of direct support; toward the degree of clarity of the framework; toward the degree of strictness of controls in the framework; toward the height of the subsidies; toward the existence of cross-compliance criteria; toward the focus of the criteria, which is increasing sustainability; toward the effectiveness and the logic of the criteria; toward the degree of connection with other regulations; toward the changeability of the criteria; and toward the specificity of the criteria. These dimensions can be considered aspects of the support framework that are relevant in farmers overall attitude. Due to their being part of the framework they are considered dimensions and not explanatory factors. Three attitudinal dimensions received a positive attitude, the existence of direct support and of criteria, and the focus of these criteria. Four dimensions of farmers' attitudes were negative: toward the effectiveness and logic, the changeability, and the specificity of criteria, and their degree of connection with other regulations. The other dimensions were mixed.

These attitudinal dimensions also tell us something about whether farmers still follow the utilitarian Jeffersonian tradition or not. The fact that they rather not want subsidies at all is in line with the Jeffersonian tradition. However, farmers now acknowledge that with the quality criteria present it is not possible to compete on the world market without subsidies. Additionally, in our research farmers were positive about the fact that the cross-compliance criteria are focused on the environment and sustainability. This suggests that they are more leaning toward the land ethic, since they care about how their actions affect the environment. Nevertheless, due to financial concerns, the main focus is on producing food, and making ends meet financially. This does not mean conventional farmers are utilitarian, since when they can,

and are stimulated to do so, they will take environmental effects into account. Therefore, we conclude that conventional farmers in the Netherlands do not follow the Jeffersonian tradition anymore, but also not the land ethic.

Next, what are the main explanatory factors of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework and their conceptualizations? The identification and formulation of explanatory variables came from both theory and our research. Based on this combination, the main explanatory factors appear to be: administrative burden, perceived hindrance in business operation, financial concerns, trust in the knowledge of policy makers, and recognition coming from the market, society and the government. These factors will be addressed through the next sub-questions. As first of these, do farmers experience the criteria in the direct support framework as a burden, and if so, how do these experiences influence their attitudes toward the direct support framework? Most farmers are rather down-to-earth and do not want to recognize the administrative tasks and the hindrance they perceive in their business operation as a burden, since only then it will feel as a burden. Nevertheless, they do experience these as negative and this influences various dimensions of their attitudes toward the framework negatively.

Second, do farmers experience financial concerns and if so, how do these influence farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework? Without the subsidies, multiple farmers would experience financial concerns, which influences their attitudes toward the framework. They are positive about its existence, but especially frustrated about the specific criteria and complexity. Third, how does trust in both European political actors, and national political actors that are concerned with the Common Agricultural Policy influence farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework? Trust appeared to be relevant in explaining farmers' attitudes, but not trust in the statements made by decision makers, as was expected from theory. Only the trust in the knowledge of decision makers seemed to be relevant. This trust was very low, and made farmers frustrated with the framework. And finally, which other factors exist that can help explain farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework? With our research we were able to identify other variables, which did not come forward from the literature review, that are relevant in explaining farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework. We found that the recognition and appreciation that farmers receive, from the market, society and the government, helps explain their attitudes toward the direct support framework. Farmers perceive the subsidy mainly as a compensation for the lack of appreciation from the market. Additionally, a lot of frustration among farmers is caused by a negative image of farmers based on untruthful information, and lack of recognition of what they do.

5.2 Key findings

The most important findings of this research are the identification of the various dimensions of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework, the measurement of these various dimensions, and the identification of explanatory variables. The complete list of codes, including the various dimensions of our dependent variable and the identified explanatory variables, as presented in Appendix 4, can be considered an important finding in this research since it shows the identified building blocks and their properties and dimensions, which are relevant when discussing the attitude of farmers toward the direct support framework of the CAP. The fact that these conceptualizations could not be perfectly made before data collection, solely based on a review of academic literature, shows the need for the findings that are presented here. Our categorization and specification add to the academic body of knowledge as a basic framework of relevant aspects, which can be applied in further research.

Of the explanatory factors, financial concerns and trust in the knowledge of decision makers seemed to be most important. Many farmers have to accept the way the framework is designed, since they are dependent on the subsidies, even though they might be very frustrated with parts of the framework. This frustration is mainly caused by the knowledge of decision makers. In farmers' view, this knowledge is far below standard, too much focused on public opinion, activist organizations, and theory, and too little on practical situations. Potential improvements were discussed during the interviews as well, which can point at aspects that farmers found most important. The main points that came forward included taking circumstances into account more, by creating a more specific framework, differentiating between different countries and regions. Another aspect of the framework that needs much improvement, according to farmers is the effectiveness and logic of criteria, looking at practical situations. Considering the independent variables, a large frustration that farmers want to see solved is the knowledge on which political decisions are based, arguing that decision makers should take practical situations and research more into account, instead of public opinion and activist organizations, and pursue an integrated approach.

5.3 Limitations

Naturally, our research knows some limitations. Firstly, we will reflect on the potential biases that are present in our sampling methods, in how we have come to the sample as it is. The respondents were all found through Facebook and LinkedIn, and via acquaintances of the researcher, which results in the first potential bias, since it only includes people that can be reached via contacts of the researcher. Additionally, our sample is far from random, since only

those farmers who want to participate, and likely are open and interested in the topic, end up in our sample. Part of our sample was created based on self-selection of farmers. This could have an influence on our sample, since farmers who do not sign up to be a participant, might have interesting, maybe different opinions from farmers who do decide to participate. What these potential differences exactly entail cannot be concluded based on this research, but it is important to consider the possibility of such differences.

Secondly, we will reflect on our sample composition. The geographical distribution of respondents was successful, and there was no indication of close ties between various respondents that would influence attitudes. The distribution that was sought between different types of farmers was more complicated. There are only 2 arable farmers in our sample. Nevertheless, since several farmers in our research have a combined farm, the total amount of farmers with arable businesses is 4. This brings arable farmers at 36,4% of the participants, which is close to the national percentage of 40%. The main reason for not finding more arable farmers available for our research is the timing of our data collection, precisely in the busiest period of the year for arable farmers. It was chosen not to increase our sample with more dairy or meat farmers, in order not to bring more imbalance in our sample composition. For practical reasons, it was decided to look for farmers in the region of Twente only. There were no theoretical grounds to assume a difference in attitudes of farmers between different regions. However, during the interviews it was brought forward various times that the circumstances in other parts of the country are rather different, e.g. when looking at the intensity of agricultural practices or the type of land. This could lead to a difference in opinions, especially on more practical concerns. Nevertheless, it could well be the case that the more general attitudes toward the framework do not differ, only the practical examples that are given along with them. These attitudes, e.g. toward effectiveness of criteria, are central to this research. The true effect of selecting this specific region can only be hypothesized about, and differences between regions could be tested in further research. In our sample, all farmers are recipients of the subsidies of the CAP. Opinion of farmers that do not receive the subsidies could be interesting as well, and the lack of these in our research can have influence on the outcomes. Nevertheless, the majority of Dutch farmers does receive the subsidies, hence finding non-recipients is difficult. Potentially, further research could look into this category specifically.

Thirdly, due to the explorative nature of our research and our small sample size, we were not able to make firm conclusions on the relations between the independent variables and the specific dimensions of the dependent variable. Additionally, we could not make clear comparisons between farmers. We found that the independent variables influence the dependent

variable, but through which dimensions, could not be firmly stated. Those relations are better to be tested through quantitative data analysis, without having to form the basis of concepts, dimensions and properties first. This basis is laid by the current research, and additional steps that need to be taken fell outside its scope. More of these steps include examining the relation between the different attitudinal dimensions, as well as the weight of those dimensions and of the independent variables. The various dimensions of the dependent variable could influence each other and some dimensions or explanatory factors might be more important than others, which can better be tested by quantitative research.

Additionally, further research cannot only strengthen the conclusions and suggestions made by this research, but can also expand the scientific knowledge base related to this topic. Firstly, a similar research can be carried out in other European Union Member States, to create a larger information source. Secondly, the relation between the attitudes of farmers and their participation in the framework can be further examined. And thirdly, the same type of research can be carried out among organic farmers, or a larger study can be done combining organic and non-organic farmers to be able to compare the groups.

5.4 Theoretical implications

Theoretically, our research serves as a rich basis, upon which further research should build. The identification of dimensions was made based solely on our research. Additionally, explanatory factors were tested, and additional factors were found, which were not present in other literature. The recognition and appreciation farmers receive from the market, society and the government, and the influence of media and activist organizations on this, has not received attention before, and should be taken into account in further research. This is also the case for the various dimensions of farmers' attitudes toward the direct support framework that were identified by this research. Former research (Boomgaarden et al., 2011) could only make us expect some sort of multi-dimensionality, and could not give us grounds for the dimensions' properties in our case. Nevertheless, the relative weight of the identified dimensions should be examined by a larger quantitative study that builds further where we ended.

The explanatory factors that came from the literature and were tested here, could almost all be confirmed. However, since our expectations were based on a broad base of more general literature, which made our research explorative in nature, these findings are not so much as confirmations of existing literature, but more a start of a new framework. Nevertheless, here we will reflect on the literature that was at the start of our exploration and that made us formulate the expected explanatory variables. Firstly, the expectation of an influence of a perceived

administrational burden on farmers' attitudes was based on studies by Ahnström et al. (2009) and Bieling and Plieninger (2003), as well as on a general atmosphere that could be picked up from news articles in which farmers were interviewed. The expectation of an influence of the perceived hindrance in business operation was based on various existing studies as well (Ahnström et al., 2009; Carr & Tait, 1991; Gorton et al., 2008). However, contexts of all these studies were different regarding time and place, and thus our expectation was not firm, but the start of further examination. Through our research we indeed found these effects, as well as the potential dimensions they relate to, which was not done before.

Secondly, various authors (Aggelopoulos et al., 2008; Ahnström et al., 2009; Carr & Tait, 1991; Gabel, 1998; Gorton et al., 2008; Miller & Curtis, 1999), through research from years ago in other countries, made us expect the influence of one's financial situation on his/her attitude toward the direct support framework of the CAP. We could confirm that this still is the case, in the Netherlands. However, it is not right anymore to conclude that farmers still follow the stricter Jeffersonian tradition, as was found by Sullivan et al. in 1996, even though they still have a productivist mindset, as was discussed in Chapter 5.1.

And thirdly, the expectation of the influence of trust in political actors and decision makers came from literature on environmental policies (Drews & Van den Bergh, 2016; Fairbrother, 2016; Haring & Jagers, 2016). However, there, trust seemed to be meant as an atmosphere of trust, in the sense of believing statements and promises. In our research, this type of trust was found not to be relevant for farmers. Nevertheless, trust did play an important role in explaining farmers' attitudes, in the sense of trust in the knowledge of political actors and decision makers of the agricultural sector. This expectation was made based on research by Toogood et al. (2004), in a study on farmers and the environment, who pointed at potential differences in knowledge about nature and farming, between farmers and policy advisors. The current research found that these differences are indeed experienced by farmers and that they do not trust the knowledge levels of decision makers. The influence of trust is thus different than found in various studies on environmental policies alone.

Taking our findings broader, into different fields of research, it is important to consider that attitude objects are often multi-dimensional. This multi-dimensionality should be taken into account, since it brings more depth to the understanding of relations. Aspects of the CAP that appeared to be relevant in our research, can also be relevant in other policy areas. The different dimensions that were identified can be of use in examining attitudes toward other policies, or specific decisions. Things like attitudes toward specificity, clarity, effectiveness and logic, changeability, and connection of rules and decisions can be relevant in all policy areas. This

also holds true for the explanatory factors that were found here. For example, the importance of recognition, trust and knowledge in explaining stakeholder attitudes can be generalized into other policy fields. For stakeholders, in any context, it is important to be heard, understood, and recognized, and to be able to trust decision makers in that they will make decisions based on correct knowledge.

5.5 Practical recommendations

The title of this research places farmers as key stakeholders. But are they treated as key stakeholders of the CAP in practice? In this research it came forward that farmers are worried that policies are too much based on activist lobby and untruthful information. It appears to be the case that farmers (organizations) are not involved enough in decision making, since there are many other powerful stakeholders that want to have their say. In order for the direct support framework to succeed governments need the cooperation of farmers in the implementation stage. However, in the design stage farmers do not feel represented or heard. In order for their cooperation to be completely successful, farmers (organizations) should be represented more in the design phase of the policy. When this is the case, farmers can feel a certain ownership of the policy and will sooner understand why certain rules are in place.

At the moment there seem to be no extreme implementation problems, since most farmers participate in the direct support framework. This can make you wonder why it is relevant for decision makers to take into account farmers' attitudes. The relevance can be found in the degree or quality of participation, and in participation in the future. Farmers' participation does not mean that they are positive about the policy. Some farmers simply cannot afford to not participate due to financial concerns. When farmers are negative toward the framework, it could be the case that they just do the least necessary effort for meeting the criteria, which is not the goal of an incentive. This can be worsened when they do not trust the policy makers to have come up with a clear, practical and effective framework. Additionally, farmers rather have no subsidies at all and a higher market price. At the moment this is not possible, but when this would be possible, farmers would no longer request the subsidy. For the government this scenario would not be beneficial, since then the government would no longer be able to steer the farmers in certain directions. This latter effect is also reached when the balance between the effort needed to meet the criteria and the benefits that are offered in exchange becomes too skewed. Multiple farmers indicated that decision makers should not go much further with the criteria, since it could come to a turning point where farmers choose for their freedom in business operation. When farmers' attitudes are taken into account, farmers will feel more

represented and will consider the framework more understandable and clear. A positive attitude toward the framework will make farmers do their best to cooperate with decision makers, which is something a negative attitude will never reach.

Hence, our research serves as a rich information source for decision makers. When designing the new national implementation of the CAP after 2020 the attitudes that were found in this research should be taken into account. Aspects to consider in this design are the connection with other regulations, as well as the specificity of the criteria, making sure the criteria fit well with national and perhaps regional circumstances. It appears that the new proposals give more room for this already, aiming to step off the ‘one policy fits all’ mentality, toward more focus on national circumstances (see Chapter 1.2 & 1.3). However, still then, attention should be paid to a fair distribution of resources and responsibilities between Member States. Furthermore, within the national implementation regional differences should be kept in mind. Making subsidy amounts vary per Member State is extremely difficult, since all Member States will want to get the best out of it for themselves. However, there should be, on the European level, stricter control on whether criteria are met and how the subsidies are distributed. Additionally, there should be possibilities for national consequences when things are not going according to CAP goals and rules.

Additionally, policy makers should take practical situations into account more, making sure their designed regulations or criteria fit in practice with the pursued goal. In order to reach this, policy makers should take an open and vulnerable attitude, reaching out to farmers and labor organizations, acknowledging those are the people that know practical effectiveness best. This would also help for building more trust between decision makers and farmers, which is important not only during the design phase, but especially during implementation. Furthermore, policy makers should be hesitant in following statements and information coming from media and activist organizations, without having listened to practical experts first. Extreme cases that get attention from media, or untruthful information that is spread by activist organizations, should not be at the center of attention in policy making and political discussions, which applies to all cases, and affects the image people have of the complete sector. This image is often negative, and there is too little recognition for how good we actually have it in the Netherlands regarding food safety, environmental protection and animal welfare.

In short, practical situations and a truthful and fair image of the agricultural sector should be the basis of a clear-cut, straightforward design of the CAP, with logical measures that are effective in practice and take circumstances into account, as a result of consultation and cooperation between farmers’ organizations, researchers, and the government.

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Appendix 1: List of in person interviewees

Respondent number	Type of farmer	Age range	Municipality
1	Dairy farmer	40-50	Borne
2	Dairy and beef farmer	50-60	Wierden
3	Dairy farmer	20-30	Hellendoorn
4	Dairy and beef farmer	50-60	Wierden
5	Arable and beef farmer	40-50	Hardenberg
6	Arable farmer	40-50	Twenterand
7	Beef farmer	50-60	Rijssen-Holten
8	Dairy farmer	40-50	Hof van Twente
9	Dairy farmer	40-50	Tubbergen
10	Poultry, beef, and arable farmer	40-50	Twenterand
11	Arable farmer	50-60	Hellendoorn

Appendix 2: Translated question list**General:**

- Can you tell something about your company and about yourself?
 - Type of farm
 - Size: amount of land / animals / different types of production
 - Development: Expanded or reduced over the years / investments
 - Farmer: age, taken over from parents, potential successor, involved in (trade union) organizations (LTO for example)

CAP subsidies:

- Do you receive the direct payments from the CAP?
 - Basic hectare payment
 - Greening payment
 - Young farmers payment

If not, why not? Did you not apply or are you not eligible? Continue to inquire about the motivation behind this, and possible explanation for this. Adjust follow-up questions to the given answer.

- What do you think about subsidies being available for farmers? Rightly or not?
- What do you think about the accessibility / comprehensibility of the system around the subsidies?
- Do you experience government control over this system, and if so, how?
- What do you think of the different types of subsidies (general, greening, young farmers) that are currently available?

Criteria:

- Do you think that farmers should receive a subsidy anyway because they are farmers, or is it right to connect criteria to it?
- How do you experience the current criteria that are related to receiving the grant?
- What do you think of the focus of the criteria?
- And the strictness?
- What do you think if more criteria are set for eligibility for subsidies?
- In new proposals for the CAP, these criteria are more and more focused on sustainability-related aspects, and the criteria of the basic subsidy have become stricter with regard to climate, what do you think about that?
- What would be the motivation for you to take measures that are good for the environment? Subsidy that you then receive and that it yields money, or really for the environment?

Financial concerns:

- Do you need these subsidies to make ends meet, or can you make ends meet without a subsidy?
- Are you satisfied with the current level of the subsidy to make ends meet or is the subsidy too low?

Trust in politicians involved:

- Questions about politicians involved in the CAP, both in NL and EU
- Promises / agreements: To what extent do you have faith in the promises and agreements made by them? In case of distrust, why is this?
- Knowledge: What is your expectation / understanding of the knowledge of these people about agriculture?

Administrative burden:

- How much percent of your working time do you have to spend on administrative tasks?
- Are you experiencing work pressure and / or stress? If so, what does this workload consist of?
- What could be the cause of this?
- Do the criteria set for receiving the subsidy contribute to this workload?

Hindrance in business operation:

- To what extent do you feel that you have the freedom to perform your own way of working?
- Do you feel limited by rules and criteria that are imposed on you? How do you experience this in practical terms?
- Would you do things differently if the criteria were not there? Can you give examples of this?

Perception of relationships between factors and attitudes:

- We discussed your opinion about the subsidy schemes and a number of factors, such as administrative burden and financial concerns. I am now curious about your understanding of the links between these factors and your attitude toward the direct support framework. I will go through the factors one by one.
- How does the increased focus on the environment influence your opinion about the subsidy schemes of the CAP?
- How do financial aspects contribute to your opinion about the CAP subsidy schemes?
- To what extent does your trust in the promises and knowledge of politicians and policymakers influence your opinion on the CAP subsidy schemes?
- How does work pressure influence your opinion about the CAP subsidy schemes?
- How does this sense of freedom or hindrance in the way you work affect your opinion about the subsidy schemes of the CAP?

General:

- Summarize points and ask for confirmation / response.
- Are there other relevant aspects from your perspective that have not yet been discussed and that you would like to introduce? Opinions or things that influence your attitude toward the direct support framework of the CAP?

Appendix 3: Original Dutch codes in order of appearance

Page 33: “Dus wij moeten zeg maar in Nederland met al onze eisen en extra verplichtingen moeten wij voldoen aan landen die het veel makkelijker hebben in die zin, zoals Amerika en Australië, daar hebben ze lang al die regels niet. Als dan men in Europa vindt dat de boeren wel aan die eisen moeten voldoen, dan moet daar ook wat extra’s tegenover staan, want uit de melkprijs komt het niet uit.” (Interview, Respondent 8, 03-05-2019).

Page 34: “Ik vind wel dat als je subsidie krijgt moet je er ook wat voor doen. Er moet wel een bepaalde regelgeving zijn dat er dus het landbouwbeleid uitvoerend beleid toch een bepaalde richting gaat geven, anders dan zou je kunnen zeggen van verbouw maar raak en ik vang maar geld. Nee er moet wel een richtlijn aan zitten.” (Interview, Respondent 6, 30-04-2019).

Page 34: “Hoeveel vliegverkeer komt er wel niet bij. Hoeveel auto’s. De koe is het grootste probleem natuurlijk, dat zie je dan. Het aantal koeien is natuurlijk zover gedaald, drie keer zoveel auto’s, drie keer zoveel vliegtuigen, de koeien zijn gehalveerd, maar de koeien hebben het gedaan.” (Interview, Respondent 3, 25-04-2019).

Page 35: “Ik denk dat het én én is, je hebt uiteindelijk die subsidies ook gewoon nodig, denk ik. Maar tuurlijk [...] we zijn rentmeester op deze aardbol en daar moeten we netjes mee omgaan [...]. We hebben dingen gedaan in tijden dat je niet wist dat het schadelijk was, maar als ik weet dat het anders kan, en je wordt ook daarin gestimuleerd dan moet je het zeker doen.” (Interview, Respondent 4, 26-04-2019).

Page 36: “Vandaag meen je dat je het goed doet en morgen ligt er een nieuwe wet, dan moet het toch misschien helemaal andersom.” (Interview, Respondent 7, 01-05-2019).

Page 36: “Wiedeggen was eerst ook verplicht, dat hebben we een paar jaar gedaan, toen het niet meer verplicht was, nu staat hij er, je kunt hem wel overnemen..” (Interview, Respondent 11, 08-05-2019).

Page 36: “Ik denk als je echt doelen wilt halen, en dan zul je in bepaalde gebieden andere doelen moeten stellen als in andere gebieden, dan moet je denk ik wel specifieker. Kijk want als je het heel algemeen houdt, en je houdt die verschillen tussen die regels van dat het voor het één eigenlijk dit moet en voor het ander eigenlijk dat, ja dan blijf je ergens tussenin zitten en eigenlijk kom je dan nergens.” (Interview, Respondent 9, 06-05-2019).

Page 38: “Ik ben geen administrateur of boekhouder, of jurist of noem maar op. En dat voel ik me allemaal wel eens, omdat je er gewoon soms daar zo mee bezig moet houden. En dan komt het dilemma gewoon naar voren, van kijk, je bent er niet voor opgeleid, maar je moet er eigenlijk wel mee werken, dat is wel heel lastig.” (Interview, Respondent 4, 26-04-2019).

Page 38: “Wat moeten wij met aardappels, we hebben veel meer aan mais. Dat is ook zo’n regeltje uit Brussel, als je meer dan 15 hectare grond hebt, moet je twee gewassen telen. Wij hebben al onze machines en de kennis voor snijmais.” (Interview, Respondent 10, 08-05-2019).

Page 38: “Het is nog te doen, maar er moet niet zo heel veel meer bijkomen want dan kom je een keer op een omslagpunt van gaan we voor de subsidie of gaan we voor de vrijheid. En dat speelveld dat komt steeds dichterbij elkaar te liggen.” (Interview, Respondent 1, 23-04-2019).

Page 39: “Je staat gewoon met je rug tegen de muur, je doet het gewoon, want in principe je moet gewoon want anders kom je niet rond.” (Interview, Respondent 10, 08-05-2019).

Page 39: “Dus er wordt een beetje geregeerd naar de publieke opinie en niet naar de echte resultaten en dat vind ik een beetje jammer.” (Interview, Respondent 11, 08-05-2019).

Page 39: “Die hebben geen flauw idee wat er op de boerderij gebeurt. Ik hoorde laatst ook nog van iemand, die had niet eens in de gaten dat er in het weekend, dat dan ook de koeien gemolken moeten worden. Dan denk ik van, hoe haal je het in je hoofd om dan ergens een functie uit te oefenen die dan voor de landbouw moet zijn of, waar de landbouw een onderdeel van is, terwijl je niet eens weet wat daar gebeurt. Dat vind ik te gek voor woorden dat dat kan.” (Interview, Respondent 8, 03-05-2019).

Appendix 4: Coding list with all used codes and their descriptions

Category	Code	Description
Characteristics of the farm and the farmer	Age	Age of the farmer
	Amount and type of animals	Amount and type of animals
	Amount of land	Amount of land (hectares)
	Involvement in trade unions or organizations	Whether the farmer is active in trade unions or organizations for agriculture
	Receipt of subsidy	Whether the farmer receives the subsidy from the direct support framework, and if so, which (basic, greening, young farmer)
	Successor in mind	Whether the farmer already has a successor in mind, does not (have to) worry about that yet, or that it is clear that there is no successor
	Type of farm	Type of farm (arable, meat, dairy, or combination)
	Type of crops	Type of crops
Dependent variables	Attitude toward the direct support framework	Attitude of the farmer toward the direct support framework of the CAP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence 	Attitude toward the existence of subsidies for farmers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of clarity 	Attitude toward the degree of clarity of the direct support framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of strictness of controls 	Attitude toward the degree of strictness of controls that are related to the direct support framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-compliance criteria 	Attitude toward the cross-compliance criteria that are set for receiving the subsidy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence 	Attitude toward the fact that there are cross-compliance criteria for receiving the subsidy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus (sustainability) 	Attitude toward the focus of the cross-compliance criteria, which is increased sustainability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness and logic 	Attitude toward the effectiveness of the cross-compliance criteria and the logic for setting these specific criteria when certain goals want to be reached.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of connection with other regulations 	Attitude toward the degree of connection between the criteria and other regulations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changeability 	Attitude toward the idea that criteria change often over time, whether farmers believe they do and how they feel about this

Continues on next page

Dependent variables (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specificity 	Attitude toward the specificity/generality of the criteria, (not) considering company, regional or national circumstances
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height 	Attitude toward the height of the subsidies
Independent variables	Administrative burden	Whether farmers perceive the administration that is related to the direct support framework as a burden
	Financial necessity subsidy	Whether subsidies are needed financially for farmers to make ends meet
	Freedom/hindrance in business operation	Whether farmers perceive the criteria related to the direct support framework as a hindrance in their business operation, that they might rather do things differently
	Recognition/appreciation	Perceived recognition and appreciation that farmers receive for the work they do
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming from the market 	Financial recognition and appreciation for the quality of products on the market, from the consumers and market forces
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming from society (image and knowledge) 	Perceived recognition and appreciation that farmers receive from the society, in the image that citizens have of farmers and the knowledge of what farmers do
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming from the government 	Perceived recognition and appreciation that farmers receive from the government for the things they do, in the form of subsidies, but also immaterial appreciation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of media and activist organizations 	Perception the farmer has of the influence of media and activist environment and animal welfare organizations on the recognition and appreciation that farmers receive
	Trust in policy makers	To what extend farmers have trust in policy makers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements 	To what extend farmers have trust in the statements made by policy makers, that they will live up to them
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge 	To what extend farmers have trust in the knowledge of policy makers