

# 3 X 5 TIPS MORE WOMEN ON AGRICULTURAL BOARDS

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS, HOW DO YOU RECRUIT (MORE) FEMALE BOARD MEMBERS, AND WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE ON A BOARD POSITION?**

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?**

*THE ADDED VALUE OF FEMALE BOARD MEMBERS FOR COOPERATIVES, ASSOCIATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS.*

### **BETTER REFLECTION= BETTER DECISIONS**

- Women on the board ensure better representation of the membership.
- More perspectives bring more insights, more needs, and better solutions to the fore.

1.

### **OPENNESS AND CONNECTION**

- Women often bring a different dynamic to discussions; more openness in discussions.
- This leads to greater connection and often better decision-making.

2.

### **NEW ENERGY AND COMMITMENT**

- Female directors have a good focus on the bigger picture and the human dimension.
- They inspire other female members to also take on a role (on the board).

3.

### **MORE SUPPORT, INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY**

- Your board appeals to more target groups, both within the organization as well as externally.
- This increases support and strengthens the image of the organization.

4.

### **STEP TOWARDS BROADER DIVERSITY**

- A board with genuine diversity is more agile and future-proof.
- To achieve the most diverse board possible, also consider age, lateral entrants (experience outside the sector), distance from the labor market, and cultural background.

5.

# 3 X 5 TIPS

## MORE WOMEN ON AGRICULTURAL BOARDS

### HOW DO YOU RECRUIT (MORE) FEMALE BOARD MEMBERS?

#### PRACTICAL TIPS FOR COOPERATIVES, ASSOCIATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

##### START WITH THE BOARD ITSELF

- Discuss the topic within the board and create support.
- Make one board member responsible for diversity and set aside a budget.
- Make an inventory of existing and missing competencies.
- A KPI (% of women on the board) can help. Evaluate progress annually.

1.

##### INFORM, ENTHUS, INSPIRE

- Actively share with members the ambition to form a diverse board.
- Emphasize that (female) managers can make an impact. New ideas are heard and create new opportunities (for themselves and the next generation). You don't have to be (fully) involved in the agricultural business to do this. The commitment to and knowledge of the sector is always there anyway.
- Take the female (co-)manager seriously. Organizations often show in their communications that they are family businesses, but do not always act accordingly. In practice, the focus is often on the male farm manager.
- Let women speak at meetings and in the media.

2.

##### PERSONAL AND TARGETED APPROACH

- Approach women personally, preferably through a (female) acquaintance from the organization.
- Offer a non-binding trial period on the board.
- Adapt meeting structures to the practical availability of women.
- Ensure a clear structure in board work and decision-making.

3.

##### DEVELOP AND GUIDE TALENT

- Set up a board academy for administrative talent.
- Pair new women with a buddy within the board.
- Provide a sounding board and schedule regular evaluations.
- Give recognition and appreciation, including informally.

4.

##### MAKE RECRUITMENT INVITING

- Write job descriptions in accessible, inviting language.
- Emphasize that candidates with growth potential are welcome.
- State that, in the event of equal suitability, a woman will be given preference for the sake of diversity.

5.

# 3 X 5 TIPS

## MORE WOMEN ON AGRICULTURAL BOARDS

### WHY SHOULD YOU (AS A WOMAN) FILL A MANAGEMENT POSITION? MOTIVATIONS AND BENEFITS FOR YOURSELF AND THE SECTOR

#### MAKING AN IMPACT

- You contribute to the direction of the organization, influencing policy, advocacy, and practice.
- You contribute to issues that matter to your family, your business, and the next generation.
- You translate policy into what really matters on the farm - and vice versa.

1.

#### DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

- You will develop your administrative skills and increase your self-confidence.
- You build a strong network, both within and outside the sector.
- A board position provides depth, variety, and often a surprising amount of pleasure.

2.

#### INVESTING IN YOURSELF

- You will increase your knowledge of various topics.
- You strengthen your personal resume, which offers opportunities both within and outside the sector.

3.

#### FROM INVOLVEMENT TO INFLUENCE

- Sometimes (dis)satisfaction with policy is a reason to take a seat at the table yourself.
- Instead of watching, get involved. From involvement to movement.

4.

#### CONTRIBUTING TO A STRONGER SECTOR

- You make a social contribution by doing something that benefits the entire sector.
- You are a role model for others - and you are paving the way for those who come after you.

5.



Grass Ceiling is a European study in nine countries focused on innovation by women in the agricultural sector and rural areas. The Netherlands is participating through LTO Vrouw & Bedrijf and Wageningen University. Want to know more? [vrouweninagrarischebesturen@gmail.com](mailto:vrouweninagrarischebesturen@gmail.com)