

MINI COMPANY - COYC EUROPEAN CONTEST

BUSINESS REPORT

VEGET'ACTEURS



10th grade students in the general high school École Jeannine Manuel, Paris



Executive Summary	2
Company overview: genesis, aim, visual identity.....	2
Solution: product, operations.....	4
Market study: concept benefits, competition.....	6
Promotion: social media presence, tools.....	7
Management: organisational structure.....	8
Sales and financials: profitability, investments, projections.....	9

Executive Summary

Veget'ACTEURS offers and delivers at home, baskets of fresh seasonal vegetables, grown in the respect of the values of Sustainable Farming and using no chemicals. Sustainable farming wishes to find a middle ground between the clear and too often dissuasive constraints of organic farming and the efficiency, economic advantages and valuation of the producers permitted by conventional, industrial farming practices. We are convinced that this flexible method has the potential to democratize a healthy and balanced diet that calibrates both affordability through efficiency and sustainability through the respect of the planet, the soil and the seasons.

Thanks to Adeline et Guillaume Péron, two owners of a familial farm in Beauce who are committed to the sustainable farming charter, Veget'ACTEURS puts together baskets of 5 kg in reusable bags, along with original recipes, and delivers them to customers.

By June 2022, Veget'ACTEURS has successfully organised 8 sales. The company is active in Paris and has served more than 60 customers. 177 baskets have been sold, allowing for an income of 3288€ and a profit of 1291€. 7 sales have already been organised and a final one is planned. Benefits will be donated to « Terre de Liens », an association whose fight for the preservation of agricultural land and the sustainable transition of growers prolong our actions.

Company Overview

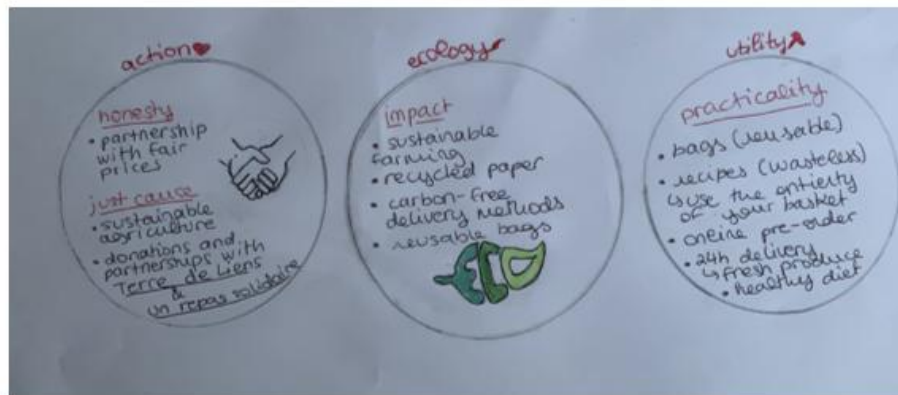
Genesis

Our project is rooted in the bedrock of values shared by all col inter members of the company: honesty, ecology, utility. Within the first sessions, we all aspired to realize a project that had a clear purpose, that defended a just cause for which we could concretely act. All entrepreneurs progressively united around a wish to improve our urban society through a renewed link to nature and to the agricultural sector, having identified the need to facilitate access to a healthy balanced diet of fresh and quality products, at affordable and just prices.



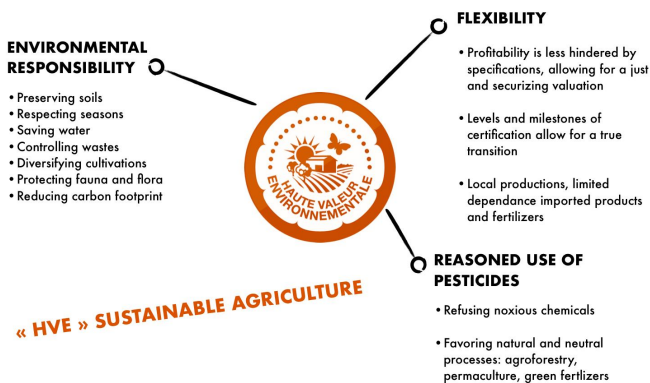
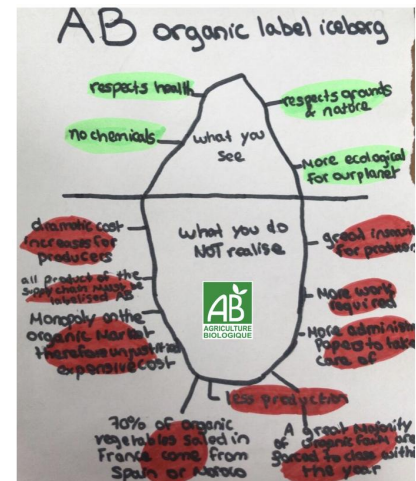
Diverse paths were laid before us, particularly aquaponic practices and organic agriculture. We chose to meet individually with growers, taking the time to discover their jobs, experiences, values, aspirations and problems. The diverse actors of the agricultural sector, though essential to our society, are rarely put forward, even as growing numbers of producers face strong hardships often related to economic or climate hazards. As a result, the agricultural sector faces the highest suicide rate in France - more than 1 per day reported to Public Health France -, and more than 100 farms shut down every week, according to the Ministry of Agriculture. Our conversations have opened new perspectives for the company as we were directly confronted to the state of the sector, and precisely to the difficulties caused by a very restrictive « Organic » Label.

OUR VALUES



Aim

Direct exchanges with growers have allowed us to better discern the challenges of the domain. It appeared that the «Agriculture Biologique» label that has a quasi-monopoly in France's organic food production imposed heavy specifications. All materials must be organic, from tarpaulins to packaging, causing dramatic cost increases. These are counterproductive and often suffocate or discourage small producers as well as the public, through higher prices.



Adeline and Guillaume Péron, growers who were very enthusiastic about the project, introduced to us the concept of sustainable agriculture, which aims to find a fair middle ground between valuation of the production and respect for the environment. Its principles are stated in the legally regulated «Haute Valeur Environnementale» charter, which doesn't arbitrarily ban all pesticides but rather certifies a maximum respect of the environment. Flexible, the sustainable model incentivizes more producers to convert to it, without the insecurity of drastic changes and growing costs.

The transparent and authentic relationship that we developed with the Jardins de Beauce familial farm allows us to guarantee an optimum quality and freshness.



We are convinced that responsible means of production that do not fall into too strict a dogma have the potential to democratize respectful modes of production and consumption, too often hampered by constraints and specifications. We have therefore engaged in raising awareness, in the Parisian environment, about this beneficial concept.

Visual identity

The company's identity has been built to reflect the values we defend. The mention of « vegetal » alludes to the fresh products that we sell and that, we hope, will bring some freshness to the city. The mention of « ACTORS », capitalized to visually communicate our enthusiasm, speaks of our commitments: justly value the quality vegetables of our partners, spread the idea of a sustainable agriculture, and develop a model of a balanced diet, respectful of the natural cycles.

In their support to the « Veget'ACTEURS » initiative, clients also become actors of the change at their scale through the company's ecological impact and the donation of all benefits to the association « Terre de Liens ». Finally, we chose a French name to highlight the local and direct dimension of our sells.

The logo was designed to allude to the themes of our action. Simple, green and yellow colors are in tune with nature and farming, and the radiating beams symbolize our will to have a positive impact across the city and give visibility to responsible growers.






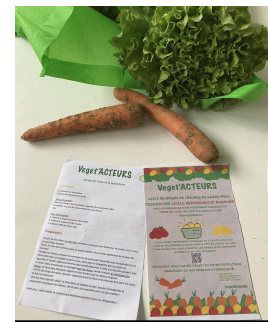
Solution

Product

Veget'ACTEURS offers one unique product to clients: a readily packed bag containing around 5kg of vegetables, selected by the producers.

What do we offer ?


-  5kg assortment of seasonal vegetables
-  Packaged in green fabric reusable bags
-  With comprehensive and original recipes



Operations

Veget'ACTEURS organizes regular sales two weekends per month.

What do we perform ?

 Deliveries on Sundays in 3 Parisian neighborhoods: the 15eme, 16eme, 7eme arrondissements

 A fixed booth to retrieve orders on monday afternoons



Sales planning

INITIALLY, the prototype was a family size basket for 25€, with a 6€ supplement for deliveries at home. This price was chosen by comparing various competitors in the outfield. However, our first **test sale followed by a Customer survey** demonstrated that clients weren't ready to blindly pay that much, and preferred smaller packages.

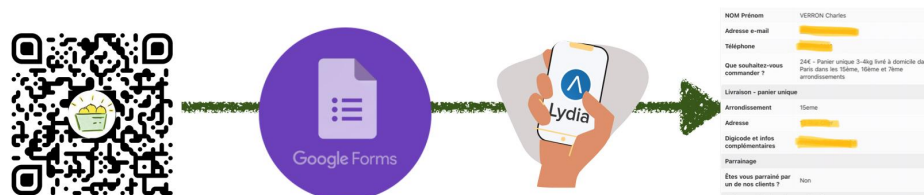
So we reduced our charges by adapting packaging and quantities. We also limited our margins to propose these new prices, closer to the customer's demand.

To go further, employing people to efficiently receive and package vegetables, and opening new delivery points for the producer would mean new costs that could be compensated by reducing margins, and negotiating lower prices that would still decently value production. The storage room can hold at least 5 times its current capacity, and the growers can provide **up to 100 baskets each sale**.



Baskets are ordered via a Google Forms at: <https://forms.gle/HPex4XAimcxSNYZE7>, binded with a QR Code present on all flyers. The process is automatic. An invoice is generated, and the orders are compiled in a Google Sheet chart. Payment is safely taken through a Lydia money pot. This system is accessible and simple, but we always remain open to cash payments.

Ordering process



To plan deliveries

Orders are taken at least 3 days in advance

We rely on voluntary students and partner Scouts groups who subscribe for a particular sale, payed with the 6€ fees

Initially, the number of available Scouts were irregular, endangering the functioning of deliveries.

So we advertised deliverer opportunities to students, granting them HSD « community service hours » necessary in our school. This pool of new deliverers added regularity and security to the process.

To go further, a formal, automatic, binding system to subscribe as a deliverer could be made available for anyone in the city. Combined with more delivery spots for the producer, this would allow the company to extend its activities to all neighborhoods.

The single basket is priced at 18€, but a binding subscription to buy all remaining baskets grants 2€ of discount on every basket. This offer enabled us to retain more than 15 clients. Finally, the supplemental cost of a delivery is 6€, to cover the payments to delivery people.

Market Study

Concept benefits

The Veget'ACTEURS basket wholly contributes to sustainable development and enhances respect of the planet, soils and seasons. For consumers who wish to adopt responsible habits, it is a complete, coherent, and practical solution.

Our distinctive features >

ACTIVISM FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The final donation to Terre de Liens and our dedication to raise awareness in the urban world about the importance of sustainable agriculture are the first purpose of our action. We believe that encouraging reasoned agriculture is an innovative and coherent approach to contribute to the actual and the right ecological transition, without falling into strict or absurd criterias.

PROXIMITY

The vegetables' origin and the growers are put forward. Adeline and Guillaume Péron are special to us. We apply no arbitrary size calibration to their products. We know that their engagement is sincere. This proximity allows us to affirm true support to the model of local, family farms and small, environmentally responsible growers who do not have the capacity to address the harsh specifications of the AB label.

PRACTICALITY

Our surprise baskets include diverse vegetables always cultivated in maximum respect for nature and the seasons, along with interesting and complete recipes that facilitate and encourage healthy and original meals. All products are delivered within 24h of their picking, and the company's carbon footprint is extremely limited. We affirm trustworthiness and customers do not have to worry about the environmental coherence of their diet.

3 WAYS IN WHICH WE ARE SPECIAL

Competition

The market of delivery vegetable baskets is certainly somewhat competitive, with actors such as PotagerCity, MonPanierBio and BioCulture. However, few of the major providers highlight as much the local origin, valuation and privileged relationship with the producers. In addition, firms specialized in vegetables, like Bio c Bon and Naturalia, often choose the path of organic farming. It constitutes a major difference with our offer. Our product is not an original invention, but a needed evolution of an already proven concept. We aim to get closer to the consumers' needs and aspirations of a more respectful, coherent, and transparent production. Our solution is targeted primarily towards families and adult city-dwellers, especially those in our neighborhood, as we value direct relationships with customers to better satisfy them and raise their awareness about sustainable farming practices.

Promotion

Social media presence

A dedicated team of Veget'ACTEURS members has the duty to maintain the company's dynamic social media presence, mainly through our Instagram account. Social media grants decisive coverage to inform beyond our established community. Indeed, our content has reached 680 accounts, 90% of which weren't previous followers.



The media essentially serves two purposes to combine the promotion of our product and our values:

- inform and attract customers in presenting the baskets, the project.
- raise awareness on sustainability and modern agriculture's challenges

Through the instagram account @veget.ateurs and the email veget.ateurs@gmail.com, the company organises special events and discounts to uplift dynamism, enthusiasm and customer interest. In the Easter Contest, participants were encouraged to try our recipes and to share with us their successful creations to try to win a bonus vegetable basket.

Veget'ACTEURS has also developed a partnership with a Parisian association, « Un Repas Solidaire », which provides food for the homeless and the people in need. As we have the ability to do so, we donate a basket at each sale so that more people may benefit from quality vegetables and complete dishes.

Tools

The Veget'ACTEURS communication is rendered efficient through the simplicity with which it is possible to relay and share the project, and to order a basket. Hundreds of complete, comprehensive flyers, with a QR Code to order immediately, have been printed on reusable paper and distributed to teachers, students, family and friends, which made up the first base of potential clients.



A simple ready-made email model that presents the initiative has also been emitted for all clients to transfer it with no effort to their friends. Veget'ACTEURS has achieved some fame within the school, which radiates in the neighborhood. Communication remains a constant opportunity to trigger awareness and engagement about sustainability in agriculture.

Initially, in the race for profitability, gaining clients was the most important goal of the first sales. We identified **transmission by word of mouth** as a crucial aspect that needed to be boosted to increase visibility.

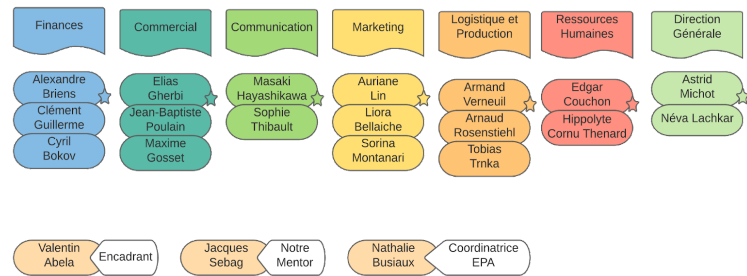
So we added incentive to recommend and share the project through a **patronage system**. When a client brings in a new client, a **5% discount** is applied on both their orders. This system works seamlessly through the ordering Google Forms. This encouragement policy is profitable, as the **steady enlargement** of our customer base is of great value.

To go further, our activity could be extended on other social media. New promotional partnerships could be developed, and flyers could be distributed around Paris. We are in the process of creating a **website to be referenced** and accessible in a Google Search. **Open events** and contests could be organised for new customers to discover our products.

Management

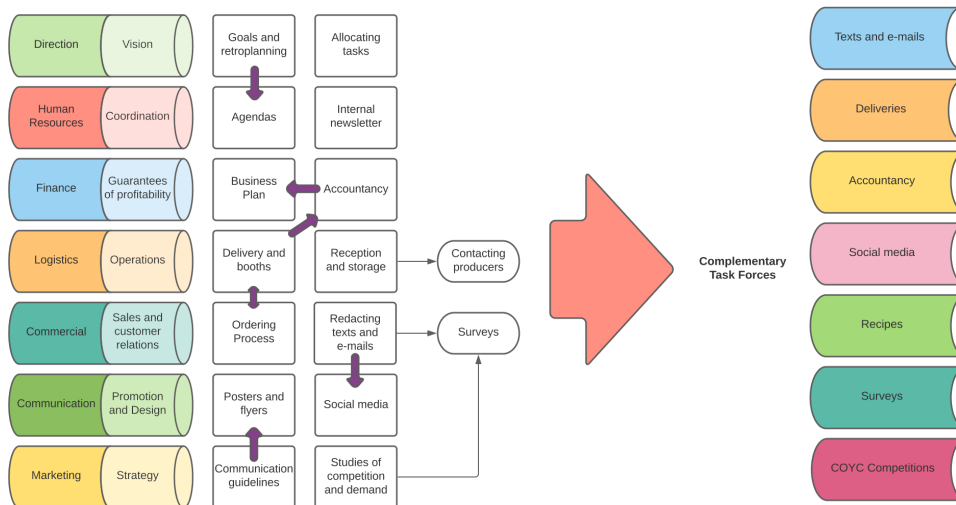
Organisational structure

The company has rapidly structured in distinct departments, in charge of general tasks in the perspective of an empowerment of the directors of sales, finance, marketing, logistics, communications and human resources. The CEO (Directrice générale) and the deputy CEO were elected, and they conducted realistic job interviews with the help of our mentor Mr Sebag. Each candidate prepared a resume and letter to highlight his skills and motivations.



Workflow

Following the goals and agendas set by CEOs and Human Resources coordinators, teams have taken on specific and often coordinated tasks.



Initially, the abstract definitions of sectors meant that the limits of the fields of action of the diverse sectors weren't perfectly clear, which impeded individual decision making and autonomy. Directing members had to be involved in the distribution of all complex tasks in a time-consuming process.

So we are progressively evolving towards a hybrid organization, putting in place Task Forces where it is relevant. These regroup individual talents and interests and are targeted on concrete objectives. They are more adaptable and human focused.

To go further, opening decentralised storage selling points would mean appointing responsables for the local logistics and drastically increasing autonomy. Some teams would have a geographical dimension.

Sales and Financials

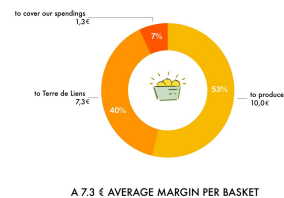
Profitability

The Business Plan established at the beginning of the year has proven adequate to describe the company's success. Prices were calculated to limit the possibility of a failure, characterized by the impossibility to refund the 240€ of fixed expenditures.



The gross income changes with the number of patronage discounts, and especially the number of subscriptions. The average price of our basket, 18.6 €, positions it well on the market, so comfortable margins were permissible as Veget'ACTEURS is not an ordinary company: the entire margin is donated to a selected nonprofit organization, so it seems very coherent that a large part of the price goes to the profits - directly to the association Terre de Liens.

The estimates realized by the Finance team modeled three cases: the realistic, best and worst potential outcomes. Throughout the year, meticulous accounts have been kept at each sale. Currently, 177 baskets have already been sold for an income of 3288€ and a benefit of 1292€. The balance of the 7 sales is therefore largely positive. The figures of the last sales are tending towards the realistic case, so final profits of about 1370€ are within the realm of possibility.



	Projections for 8 sales			Current case
	Worst	Realistic	Best	7 sales
Number of baskets sold	144	185	255	177
Fixes spendings	240€	240€	240€	240€
Variable spendings	1430€	1830€	2520€	1756€
Total costs	1670€	2070€	2760€	1997€
Income	2680€	3440€	4740€	3288€
Profit	1010€	1370€	1980€	1291€

Projections and actual case of the Business Plan

Investment

At the beginning of the year, the costs of fixed charges were covered by 5€ refundable cheques granted by investors canvassed by students. They included many of our parents and family members. A general assembly has been organized on January 31st to expose the aims and eventual risks of the project. The refund of these 240€ is planned and taken into account in the Business Plan.

The sales of vegetable baskets brings in regular income, and clients' annual subscriptions guarantee financial security. Our partnership with the producers is stable and trusting. It is true that agricultural production is subjected to important hazards, and the recent crises have exposed its fragility in the face of climate and, like many other sectors, supply chain problems caused by pandemics or wars. Nonetheless, our partners the Péron are not dependent on imported pesticides, and they work locally. We have also kept the contacts of other farms that we had visited at the beginning of the year, in case our current production faces a disruption.

Veget'ACTEURS has demonstrated its profitability and serious potential, in the perspective that the company should call for further investments.

Projections

The results of the 7 sales seem to be in tune with the realistic model, and we might expect a total income of about 3400€, allowing for profits around 1370€ for the end of the year.

After the last sale of June 19th, profits will be donated to the association « Terre de Liens » that fights against the disappearance and conversion of agricultural lands, and accompanies growers in their transition to sustainability. Active nationwide, the association has proven very efficient. These donations represent a way for Veget'ACTEURS to act concretely at a higher level.

The company's closing is planned for this summer. It has been a fantastic human experience in which we have all learned much about our own autonomy and organization, and about how to create, govern and sustain a company. Despite the one year term of the project, we have all been committed to creating the most complete and durable company possible. Veget'ACTEURS has the capacity to extend its actions by developing new storage and selling points in the city, and tying new bonds with student and scouts groups. Intensifying the communication and augmenting the company's visibility for customers and deliverers alike would be crucial and also represent new opportunities to convey the company's values and messages. These evolutions suppose a greater number of people employed, a more complex hierarchy and less direct internal communications as well as, in time, new ties and partnerships with new producers. The processes themselves have been automated at many points, and steadily scaling the company's activities would require no fundamental changes. The concept has proven purposeful and profitable.

