Contributions to Management Science

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Innovation in Food Ecosystems

Entrepreneurship for a Sustainable Future

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Chapter 7
Innovative and Sustainable Food Business Models

Abstract Companies are called upon to solve the great challenges of the new millennium. The food sector, from this point of view, plays a strategic role. Poverty, malnutrition, hunger, climate change, and social inequalities are just some of the trends which the agri-food sector has to cope with. The digital transformation that companies will need to embrace to survive requires new ways of creating, thinking, and working with technology-driven tools to provide value for their businesses and customers. Digitization, whether it pertains to new technologies, the analysis of big data or the development of on-line and spatial applications, can contribute to achieving systemic food production transformation in a way that aligns the sector more closely with contemporary sustainability and health challenges. Digital techniques are leading established companies to renew and innovate their business models by connecting producers to consumers, setting up innovative marketing channels, and improving logistics. Artificial intelligence for smart farming, precision and urban farming, data management for waste-less, blockchain for supply chain traceability and auditability are just some of the disruptive technologies which have been adopting by both start-ups and an increasing number of established companies, redefining their business models. This chapter aims to analyse how these new paradigms are impacting the food sector by providing examples from the real world.

Keywords Business model · Food industry · Business model innovation · Grand challenges · Sustainability

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