

# SLUkurs

## **Agriculture Programme - Rural Development (270 hec)**

**Version 1.** Is valid between autumn 2008 and spring 2010

**Programme code:**

NY007

**Scope:**

270 ECTS

**Level affiliation:**

1 - First cycle

**Degree**

Degree of Master of Science (MSc) in Agriculture

**Responsible faculty:**

Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences

**Appendices**

- Appendix for students admitted in the autumn 2008
- Appendix for students admitted in the autumn 2009

### **1. Decision**

The programme syllabus was approved by the Faculty Board at the Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences on 10 June 2008, to be valid from the 2008/2009 academic year.

Parts of the programme syllabus was revised in accordance with a decision by the Vice Chancellor on 10 May 2010, to be valid retroactively.

The Agriculture programme – Rural Development leads to a Master of Science in Agriculture, on advanced level, comprising 270 credits. The programme has the following programme code: NY007.

### **2. Prior knowledge and other requirements**

Admission to the Agriculture programme – Rural Development requires, besides general entry requirements, specific entry requirements according to the following:

- Mathematics C
- Social Studies A
- Natural Studies B (or Physics A, Chemistry A, Biology A)

- Swedish B/Swedish 2B
- English A.

Grade requirements: in each individual course above, the applicant must have earned

at least a pass grade.

The requirements for special eligibility as described above can also be fulfilled with corresponding qualifications from current or earlier Swedish education. The requirement can also be fulfilled if the corresponding knowledge has been acquired in

some other way.

Admission to the different courses included in the programme is subject to individual eligibility requirements for each one.

### **3. Intended learning outcomes**

#### *3.1 General learning outcomes*

In accordance with the Swedish Higher Education Act (Chapter 1, Section 8), firstcycle

programmes “shall develop the students’

- ability to make independent and critical assessments,
- ability to independently perceive, formulate and solve problems, and
- preparedness to deal with change in working life.

In the educational field concerned, in addition to knowledge and skills, students shall

develop an ability to

- seek and evaluate knowledge at a scholarly level,
- follow the development of knowledge, and
- exchange knowledge with other people, including people without specialist knowledge of the field.”

In accordance with the Higher Education Act (Chapter 1, Section 9), second-cycle programmes “shall involve a deepening of knowledge, skills and abilities relative to first level education and, in addition to what applies to first level education, shall

- further develop the students’ ability to independently integrate and use knowledge,

- develop the students’ ability to deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations,

and

- develop the students’ potential for professional activities that demand considerable

independence or for research and development work.”

### *3.2 Specific learning outcomes for Master of Science in Agriculture*

In accordance with the supplement to the Ordinance for the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), the student must achieve the following learning outcomes for a Master of Science in Agriculture (MSc in Agriculture):

For a MSc in Agriculture the student must demonstrate such knowledge and ability as are required for working independently as an agronomist.

#### Knowledge and understanding

For a Master of Science in Agriculture the student must

- demonstrate both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field, including insight into the multidisciplinary basis of the field and insight into current research and development work; and
- demonstrate specialised knowledge of the agriculture sector's conditions, function and interaction with the environment and society, both nationally and internationally.

#### Competence and skills

For a Master of Science in Agriculture the student must

- demonstrate the ability independently to identify and formulate advanced problems related to the agriculture sector's complex system of resources and value-creating processes, and the ability, using adequate methods and within a given framework, to implement and analytically evaluate different solutions;
- demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge, analytically and systematically, from relevant areas and the ability to analyse, assess and manage complex circumstances, issues and situations, particularly in respect of the sustainable development of the agriculture sector;
- demonstrate the ability clearly to present and discuss his/her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments that underlie them, in dialogue with different groups, orally and in writing, in both national and international contexts; and
- demonstrate such skills as are required for participation in research and development work or independent work with other advanced tasks in the agriculture sector and related areas, thereby contributing to the development of the profession and the activity.

#### Judgement and approach

For a Master of Science in Agriculture the student must

- demonstrate the ability to apply a holistic approach to making assessments of the use of the agriculture sector for different purposes, taking account of relevant scientific, social, economic, environmental and ethical aspects, and the ability to weigh different aspects against each other;
- demonstrate the ability to work in a team and in collaboration with groups of varying composition; and
- demonstrate the ability to identify his/her need for further knowledge and to develop his/her skills on a continuous basis.

*3.3 Detailed learning outcomes for the Agriculture programme –  
Rural Development*

Within the framework of the learning outcomes in the qualification description, SLU

has further specified the following learning outcomes for the Agriculture programme

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Rural Development:

Knowledge and understanding

For a Master of Science in Agriculture, the student must

- demonstrate both broad knowledge within the area of social sciences and agricultural sciences and also significant in-depth knowledge within the multidisciplinary field that rural development constitutes,
- demonstrate such knowledge and understanding of central concepts, methods and perspectives within rural development that is necessary for the study of and work with development of rural areas,
- demonstrate insight into the multi-disciplinary basis of the subject area and insight into current research and development,
- demonstrate broad knowledge about the agricultural sector's resources, systems and methods for production of goods and services, demonstrate in-depth knowledge of analytical models for the connections between agriculture and rural development,
- demonstrate understanding for how the complex systems of the agricultural sector work (interplay and dependency) and how they impact on individual farmers, the environment and society, locally, regionally, nationally and globally,
- demonstrate insight into the various interests and power relationships that exist within the agricultural sector.

Competence and skills

For a Master of Science in Agriculture, the student must

- demonstrate ability to reason about central concepts and research issues within the multi-disciplinary field that rural development constitutes,
- demonstrate ability to use different methods of study in and the work with rural development,
- demonstrate ability to independently and critically identify and formulate advanced problems relating to the development of rural areas and the agricultural sector, in particular in terms of natural resource management and food supply, both locally and globally,
- demonstrate ability to select relevant scientific and professional methods and to analyse problems, carry out and evaluate various solutions within a set framework,
- demonstrate ability to independently search, gather and evaluate sources, to critically interpret information and to draw own conclusions,
- demonstrate ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge within social and agricultural science and to analyse, assess and handle complex phenomena, questions and situations, in particular relating to the sustainable development of rural areas,
- demonstrate the ability to relate analytically and critically to set objectives for development,
- demonstrate the skills required to work independently with commercial operations, public administration or knowledge dissemination, or to participate in research and development work or other advanced tasks within rural development, the agricultural sector and neighbouring subject areas,
- demonstrate good ability to speak and write about rural development in Swedish,
- demonstrate ability to speak and write about rural development in English,
- demonstrate ability to communicate knowledge and opinions to different target groups, both specialists and those with no knowledge of the subject area.

#### Judgement and approach

For a Master of Science in Agriculture, the student must

- demonstrate ability to make overall assessments relating to the importance of the agricultural sector for rural development,
- demonstrate ability to reflect on his/her own values in relation to humankind's use of nature and relate these to generally accepted standards,
- demonstrate ability to make assessments on issues relating to the agricultural sector and rural development with consideration for relevant scientific, social, environmental and ethical aspects,
- demonstrate insight into the role and importance to society of various forms of knowledge,
- demonstrate ability to identify and analyse the interests of different parties within the agricultural systems,

- demonstrate ability to function in groups, both as leader and as participant,
- demonstrate ability to identify his/her need for further knowledge and to continuously develop his/her competence,
- demonstrate ability to reflect on his/her own role both in the research process and development work.

#### **4. Possibilities for further study**

A student who has completed the Agriculture programme – Rural Development with a

Master of Science in Agriculture meets the special eligibility requirements for admission to further studies in the third cycle.

The available subjects are specified in Appendix 1, which is approved by the Study programmes board.

Additional qualification for Master's degree

There is also the possibility of extending studies by one term in order to earn a Master's degree in addition to the Master of Science in Agriculture.

#### **5. Content and outline**

##### *5.1 Courses*

The courses included in the Agriculture programme – Rural Development are approved by the Study Programmes Board and presented in a supplement to the programme syllabus which also contains a description of the course structure (framework timetable). Intended learning outcomes and course content are presented

in the syllabus for each course. Special instructions regarding independent projects (degree projects) are also approved by the Study Programmes Board.

##### *5.2 Outline*

The Agronomy programme – Rural development is a vocational programme including

studies at both first and second-cycle studies. The programme is intended to give students an overall introduction to the subject of rural development and its most common working methods, and also tools for structuring, analysing and contributing

to the development of rural areas.

The programme is multi-disciplinary and based on a social science perspective, yet has strong connections to practical implementation in real life. This means that contacts with both domestic and international countrysides are included at an early

stage and form a fundamental part at both basic and advanced level. These contacts

occur in the form of guest lecturers and study visits, but also in the form of project tasks and, later on in the programme, independent project (degree projects).

In the first cycle the programme begins with an introduction to rural development as a practical and theoretical field, with special reference to agriculture and natural resource problems based on a social science perspective. The introduction to the programme also aims to reinforce the students' level of generic knowledge at an early stage. Special emphasis is placed on written and oral presentation, which continues throughout the programme, but information searches of databases, as well as library studies and computer use in the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences' network are also part of the training.

Apart from the introduction to the programme, for the first two years, the students do basic courses about the meaning of a local perspective, the importance of the institutional frameworks, agricultural history, natural resource management and administration, introduction to countryside sociological and ecological perspectives, globalisation and the actors in rural areas. Many of the courses have clear elements of international outlooks and comparisons. During the third and final year in the first cycle, the emphasis is on project work, issues of methodology and an individual essay.

Here there are opportunities for specialisation, for example business development and/or international issues, and the year ends with an independent project. Following

the third year, there is the opportunity to take a Bachelor's Degree. The training in the first cycle concludes with an independent project (degree project), where the student can implement his/her knowledge, abilities and attitudes on a current issue within the subject area of the programme.

The second cycle starts in year four, with a major thematic course together with students from the other Agriculture programmes. This is followed by studies of development issues and specialisation by means of an elective course. The advanced level concludes with an independent project (degree project) lasting one term.

At the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences there are courses within several different subjects that can be taken by students within the subject area of rural development, such as environmental science, law, history, communications and economics. During the programme, the students' knowledge about agriculture is broadened within the areas of domestic animals, economics, soil/plants and food. Rural development students will then be studying alongside students from other Agriculture programmes, and create valuable contacts for their future working lives. The Agriculture programme also provides opportunities for vocational practical experience.

## 6. Examination

Each course includes one or several tests. The terms U, 3, 4 or 5 are used for grading the courses, unless there is an exemption decision. Grading criteria are (from 2009) described in a supplement to each course syllabus.

Grades are determined by an examiner appointed by SLU. General rules and guidelines for assessment and grading are presented in internal directives for grading systems and examination rights and in regulations governing education on the first and second cycles at SLU.

## 7. Degree

### *7.1 Degree awarded after completion of the programme*

A Master of Science in Agriculture as described in the programme syllabus for the Agriculture programme – Rural Development is awarded following completion of course requirements comprising 270 credits, according to the following:

- a minimum of 90 credits for agronomist-specific programme courses as described in a supplement to the programme syllabus
- a minimum of 90 credits for courses in subject areas specified in a supplement to the programme syllabus
- a maximum of 45 credits for elective programme courses or other courses relevant to the programme
- a minimum of 15 credits for independent project work on the first cycle
- a minimum of 30 credits for independent project work (degree project) on the second cycle, with an agricultural sciences orientation according to directions for the programme.

The supplement to the programme syllabus referred to is the programme's study plan, which is approved by the Study Programmes Board.

A student who fulfils the requirements for Master of Science in Agriculture will,

upon request, receive a degree certificate. The degree certificate will specify the qualification as a Master of Science in Agriculture.

*7.2 Other degrees the student may be awarded after completion of the programme*

The courses included in the Agriculture programme – Rural Development also allow

for the awarding of the following degrees, provided that the specified requirements are fulfilled:

- Bachelor's degree with a major in rural development
- Master of Science (60 credits) with a major in rural development

## **8. Miscellaneous**

### *8.1 Credit transfer*

Credits for courses from another higher education institution, in Sweden or abroad, may be transferred and recognised in the degree. Credits may be deducted if there is

significant overlap between the courses passed at SLU and the external courses the student wishes to include in the degree. Credit transfer cannot be done if there is a considerable difference between the courses.

Credit transfer requests are considered on an individual basis. Once transfer has been

approved, equivalent knowledge and skills acquired professionally may also be recognised.