



2nd Mediterranean Macro-Regional Network Cluster meeting

**French regional rural networks'
contribution**

Wednesday 17th October 2012
Lefkosia, Cyprus

**3 mediterranean regions,
3 Regional rural networks interested in the cluster :
Corse, Languedoc-Roussillon and Provence-Alpes-Côte
d'Azur**



General organization of Regional rural networks

Co-steering by :

- State authority in charge of the Regional rural development program (DRAAF),
- Local authority (Regional council)

Actions led by :

- Regional network support unit (« contact point »)





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Work on Short Food Supply Chains Association of French Regions

Nicosia, the 17th of October 2012



Lobbying for a recognition of mediterranean agricultural specificities

- Lobbying of four french regional councils : Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Corse, Languedoc-Roussillon and Rhône-Alpes
- Main agricultural and mediterranean issues :
 - Shortage of water and good agricultural practices in water management
 - Important natural risks / climate change
 - Fragile soils
 - Mountain omnipresence with extensive agricultural practices and pastoralism responsible of landscape and preservation of biodiversity
 - Wine-growing sector, and fresh fruit and vegetable sector
 - Great diversity of quality productions / small-sized farms on disadvantaged territories : traditional practices, territories attractiveness and cultural identity
 - Strong pressure on farmlands (peri-urban and mountain areas)

Lobbying for a recognition of mediterranean agricultural specificities

- **On the first pillar / direct payment :**

- Art.4 : To enlarge the definition of ‘permanent crops’ for all pastures (even the forest areas...) / economic, fire risks prevention, landscape opening
- Art.11 : More limitation of direct payments in order to balance better the support between farms
- Art.22 : A weighting system /direct payments linked to the crop
- Art. 34/35 : Additional payments for specific natural constraints areas
- Art.38/39 : Extension of coupled support for certain crops (rice...) and for protein productions in order to improve food self-sufficiency within the animal breeding sector

- **On the second pillar / rural development :**

- Art.8 : Possibility to create a sub-programme for producers with irrigated areas in mediterranean regions
- Art.18 : Investment supports to water access (only water management is quoted)
- Art.33 : certain ‘specific natural constraints areas’ should still be supported for the investments
- Art.46 : a difference between collective and individual investments
- An.2 : To change the definition of ‘specific natural constraints areas’ with the notion of lack of water during the growing period

SFSC work group of french Regions

- Since 2011, the Regional council of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur has led a network of french Regional councils on the SFSC thematic
- Aims and issues :
 - Benchmarking and exchange of views on regional policies targeting two general aims :
 - Increase producers basic annual income
 - Facilitate local and quality consumption of products at home, in restaurants and catering services
 - Think tank on common concerns :
governance and observation ; restaurant and collective catering services, logistics platforms ; territorial integration ; feedback capitalization, legal and political monitoring ; regional label for local products ; diversification of SFSC (new way of saling); greenhouse gas
 - Proposals presented to the agricultural commission of the association of french regions, linked to the reform of the European Agricultural Policy.

Definition of Short Food Supply Chains

- Official definition (french Ministry of Agriculture): supply chains integrate 0 or 1 intermediary between producers and final consumers
- Evolution to « Short and **local** Food Supply Chains », which is closer to consumers and producers' wishes, and those of local authorities. Processed fresh products are included
- A great diversity of 'SFSC' :
 - Direct sales on the farm, collective retail outlet, local market (reserved or not for productors), Community Supported Agriculture, restaurant and catering services , Internet saling, sale of local products baskets at train and bus stations, cooperative specialised in direct saling, local products commercialized in supermarket, community gardens....

Key elements of the french context

Agricultural Census 2010

- In 2010, 21 % of the farms were concerned by short food supply chains
- Features of these farms : small farm, more labor necessary (2,2 AWU (Annual Working Units) against 1,4), younger (3 years old less), all sectors, in particular honey and vegetables
- For 75% of farms which sale in short food supply chain, this way of saling represents more than 75 % of their annual sales
- South-East, North, Alsace, Rhône-Alpes. Less short food supply chains in regions specialized in few productions. For example, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Rhône-Alpes and Languedoc-Roussillon sale less fruits by this way than Ile-de-France or Nord-Pas de Calais
- First SFSC : direct sale at the farm

SFSC's issues

- **Economic issues**

- Added value for producers
- Job creation
- Savings made on some parts of the commercial chain (transport,...)

- **Environmental issues**

- Greening of farming practices
- Landscape, biodiversity
- Greenhouse gas : positive or negative effects (necessity of mutualizing the supply chain)

- **Social and societal issues**

- High demand from consumers and territories (collective catering service in schools)
- Social link between farmer and consumer
- Promotion of local food products
- Knowledge and acknowledgment of regional food products (local products, official quality label, freshness, quality ...)
- Preservation of local skills
- Public awareness / environmental education

- **Town and country planning issues / agricultural and rural development**

- Preservation of collective production equipments
- Added value on intangible investments (label, territorial rooting, authenticity, social link)
- Preservation of agriculture, to make more dynamic peri-urban areas (link between cities and countries)

Works and subjects 2011/2012

- Subjects undertaken :
 - Definition and issues of the SFSC for french Regional councils,
 - Regional inquiry to know all the political tools used to develop the SFSC
 - Logistics platforms (virtual and physical)
 - Structuration of the local offer to answer to the demand of the restauration and collective catering services
 - observation and governance
 - Survey of the restauration and collective catering services demand
 - Proposals for the reform of the common agricultural policy (second pillar)
 - _ Local food products promotion
 - _ Call for projects as tools for the development of SFSC
 - _ Study on the legal obstacles of the SFSC
- A presentation to the european commission made by Jean-Louis Joseph, vice-president of the agricultural commission of the regional Council of PACA, and representant of the ARF and the Comitee of Regions

Legal obstacles to the SFSC

- Principle of free play of competition is a problem (European directive + French Public Procurement Contract)
- Current means used to introduce local products, without saying so :
 - Request for proposal targeting local products thanks to specifications which correspond to their specificities ;
 - Allotment of public contract to enable local producers to answer to one part of it ;
 - Specifications of public contract including the shortest period between the harvest and the delivery (for fresh products only)
 - And so on...
- Current study for concrete proposals for the French Parliament and for the European Commission

Draft of the Rural Development Policy 2014-2020

Details of proposals made by the group SFSC of ARF

- **1 – General proposals**

- Outlook opinion of the Committee of the Regions on Local Food Systems (january 2011) : interesting/ a ‘Local Food System’ and a label ‘Local Products’ for the products without any Official Quality Sign. This label has to be established in coherence with other territorial quality schemes.
- Art 8 : Possibility to create sub-programmes / SFSC with higher support intensities

- **2 - Integrated territorial approach / RDP**

- Outlook opinion of the Committee of the Regions on Local Food Systems (january 2011) : more integrated territorial approach in order to develop ‘local food system’ ;
- Art.42 to 45 : To encourage territorial innovation and experimental projects implemented by Local Action Group (LEADER), Regional and Natural Parks, and other local authorities ;

- **3 - Support the producers for production**

- Art.17 : 132 « Participation of farmers in food quality schemes » : not an individual subsidy but a collective one. ;
- Art. 16 : Support for employment targeting agricultural group of employers / overwork on the farms in SFSC ;

- **4 - Animation / Advice / Formation / RDP**

- Art. 15 : 111B « Scientific knowledge and innovations broadcasting and information Actions » ;
- Art.16 : Support for advices and management targeting the farm advisory services and local development structure, local authorities ;
- Art. 36 : Support for the network and the observation targeting local authorities, farm advisory services and local development structures at a district or regional scale
- Art. 15 : Implementation of a specific program of agriculture training for the new form of jobs in SFSC;

- **5 - Support to producers for processing and marketing**

Several current measures support investments :

- Art.18 : 121 « Modernisation of agricultural holdings » 123 A : “investments for food industry”
- Art. 20 : 311 « Diversification into non-agricultural activities » 312 « Support for the Creation and Development of Micro-enterprises”
- Support for logistic platforms for warehouses, for packaging and for e-trade ; **Art. 36 but not on the investments ?**
- Art. 18 : Support for the transport targeting collective producer organization which sales in SFSC ;

One measure for operating support is currently missing :

- Support during 5 years for logistic employment targeting collective producer organization like micro-small and medium-sized enterprises and NGOs ; **Art. 20 ?**

- **6 – Promotion / RDP**

- 133 « Information and promotion activities on food quality schemes » ; **not in the art.17 ?**

Conclusions

Expectations toward the « mediterranean cluster »

In a short term :

- To know and let know specificities and specific issues of the mediterranean agriculture,
- To share ideas on the elaboration and implementation of national and regional rural development programs.

Mediterranean countries and regions share other difficulties which are closely linked to our subject and question also the future RDP.

For example, how European funds can help to face land pressure on farmland?

Expectations toward the « mediterranean cluster »

In a longer term :

- To create a platform of co-operation and dialogue on mediterranean agriculture, by opening the cluster to various actors operating in this field.

Examples of co-operation projects in our regions :

- *Corse : **L'orma di u cusinu** (LAG transnational co-operation), project on pastoralism between two Regional Parks (Corse and Queyras) and one italian LAG.*
- *Languedoc-Roussillon : **RED BIO** (INTERREG IV), transnational network between France, Spain and Andorra for experimentation, exchange and transfer of good practices on organic agriculture.*
- *Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur : **NOVagrimed** (Med programme), common works on the issues of Mediterranean agriculture and public policies with the Region of Thessalie, Pouilles, Sardaigne and Murcie.*

