

WHICH QUALITY INDICATORS COULD BE THE SUCCESS KEY FOR THE RARE BREEDS DEVELOPMENT ?

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- Rare breeds (less than 5 000 cows, 8 000 ewes/goats, 1 000 sows) are very small part of French livestock even if they are 30 % of French breeds number.
- Most of these breeds reached a critical step in the seventies before to be saved by conservation programs, bringing them a new development. Outlets for economical valorization have to be found to carry on the development of these less productive and selected breeds.

VARAPE : A NATIONAL PROJECT FOR THE RARE BREEDS' VALORIZATION

VARAPE project is coordinated by Institut de l'Élevage with 7 technical partners and 13 associated breeds. It studies success factors and limits of a collective project to develop short supply chains.

The project is based on 13 breeds' survey (production and marketing inventory, local committee ...) and the analysis of 16 breeds with a significant products marketing experience.

Breed	Number of animals	Products	Form of valorization
 Gascon Hen	350 hens for reproduction 8000 chicken per year	« Chapon » (castrated roosters) « Poularde » (hen) « Coqs vierges » (young capons)	Collective brand « Noire d'Astaracq-Bigorre » PDO process: standby
 Boulognais sheep	2 500 ewes	Meat	Collective brand
 Rove goat	3 600 goats for milk and 4 250 goats for meat.	« Brousse » (local speciality) and other farmhouse cheeses Meat	PDO process for « brousse du Rove » cheese, 100% made from Rove's milk Rove goat is included too in the PDO « Pelardon »

RESULTS ARE THE PDO THE ONLY SOLUTION FOR RARE BREEDS?

- The studied breeds are waiting for better marketing structure, farms number increasing and products protection. **Protected designation of origin (PDO)** approaches, are regularly presented as the main economical success key for these breeds. Indeed we consider in France that the PDO indicator directly brings a notoriety to the product and can protect the breed.
- But the analysis results show that PDO indicator can efficiently protect a limited numbers breed product only in particular conditions, for example :
 - the farmers group has to be big and dynamic enough to assume the approaches' heaviness,
 - the inspection price need quite big production volume to be not too expensive.
- Then the question is to know if other quality indicators as **traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG)** or other could be better adapted to promote limited numbers breeds products.
- A diagnostic tool is now under construction. It will help the breeds managers to formalise their valorization project, and choose the best organization, taking in account the experience of the 16 breeds analysed during Varape project.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- Products differentiation/protection has to be well thought out in the same time as the **structuration of the supply**. Indeed several rare breeds have to deal with this issue : demand for their products is higher than supply.
- Economical valorization leads to animal selection. Then it is important to pay close attention to **genetic variability**, and to breeders' cohesion, especially when professional and non-professional breeders coexist.
- **Human management** in the groups that bring the reflexion is very important too. Thanks to the agreement of all operators and to an open questioning, the group can find a **solution well adapted to its own situation**.

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