



# Coping with citizen demands : a field study of suckling processes in dairy herds

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# A very strong demand from citizens, catalysed by abolitionist associations

Paris 2015 : in the subway



Her Mother's Day  
**dream**

Watch **her baby** grow

But that won't happen

See Ventura *et al.*, 2013

**To bring back the calves to their mother (or a nurse cow):**

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**Is it possible?**

**Is it relevant?**



# To bring back the calves to their mother (or a nurse cow):

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It's already done in the field:

❖ For organic farming:



❖ As well as for others

*« calves to be fed with natural / entire milk, ideally from their mother, for at least 3 months »*



Identify, via a survey:

**Who** are these farmers?

What are their main **motivations**?

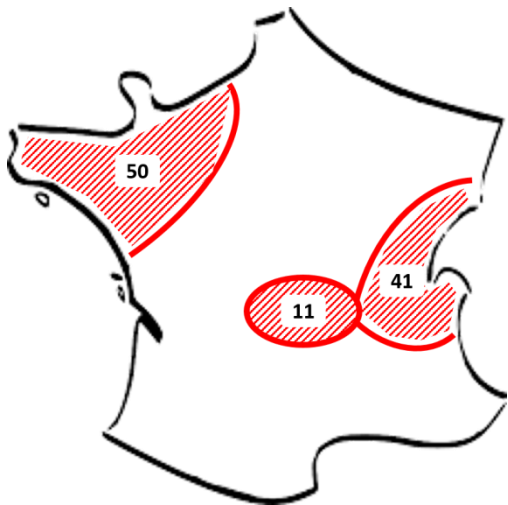
What are their main **practices**?

What are the **impacts** felt?

# Investigation process

Farms involved (102/155)

Selection by network



Towards a representative diversity of systems

Data collection



January/March 2018



Data processing


A screenshot of a data processing software interface. The window title is 'StatSoft STATISTICAL ANALYSIS SYSTEM'. The main area displays a table with multiple columns and rows of data, including numerical values and text labels.

Descriptive statistics

# Results: **Who** are these farm(er)s?

## A wide **diversity** of systems

Farmers	Min-Max	Median value
 (y)	19-65	48
 FTWU	0.5-8.5	2

Farms	Min-Max	Median value
(ha)	11-500	88.5
 number	8-210	60



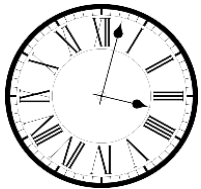
56%

Plain and mountain, Farm product  
Housing, **Milking facilities**,  
Calving season ...

# Results: What are their main motivations?



**Of the calves : mainly diarrhea and growth (52)**



**Saving time (41)**

**Simplification of the work (47)**

**Reduced penibility (for calf feed, 32)**



**Milk vs milk replacers prices, recovery of milk not marketed... (37)**

*And also: organic, natural, animal welfare, recommendation, attractiveness, places available in the barn, willingness to keep older cows ...*

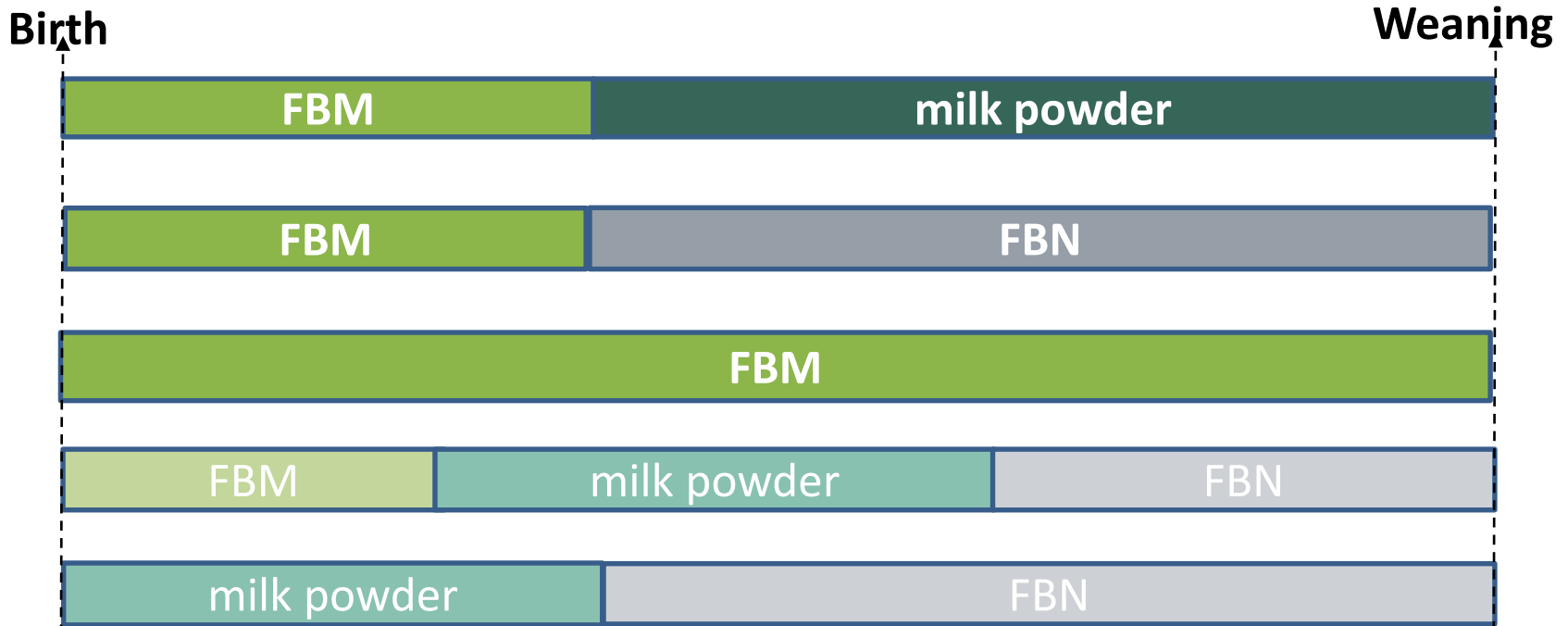
# Results: What are their main practices?

A wide **diversity** of practices

Fed by Mother (FBM); n = 59

Fed by Nurse (FBN) ; n = 13



FBN / FBM ; n = 30





# Results: What are their main **practices**?

A wide **diversity** of practices

<b>Duration</b>	<b>From 7 to 180 d</b>
<b>Access for suckling</b>	<b>From 2*30'/d (mainly before milking) to full time</b>
 <b>selling/renewal</b>	<b>From equivalent to 19d for selling and 180d for  renewal</b>
<b>Nursing</b>	<b>From 1 to 6 calves/cow. Average 2.3 calves/cow</b>
<b>Separation</b>	<b>From entire separation to keeping calf and mother in the same building</b>

# Results: What are the main felt **impacts**?



Less  
diarrheas  
and mastitis  
frequency

Calves:  
better  
growth  
Cows ?  
Some  
difficulties  
when milking

Limited or  
no impact  
on milk  
production

Some handling  
problems with  
heifers

**Cows and calves  
cry at weaning  
(2.5d)**

**Improved working comfort**

# To bring back the calf to her mother(or a nurse cow), it's **possible**



**DIVERSITY** of breed, equipment, suckling systems, milking systems...

**OF PRACTICES**



**DIFFERENT** motivations, with respect of production systems, localisation ...

Numerous **POSSIBILITIES** for each farm

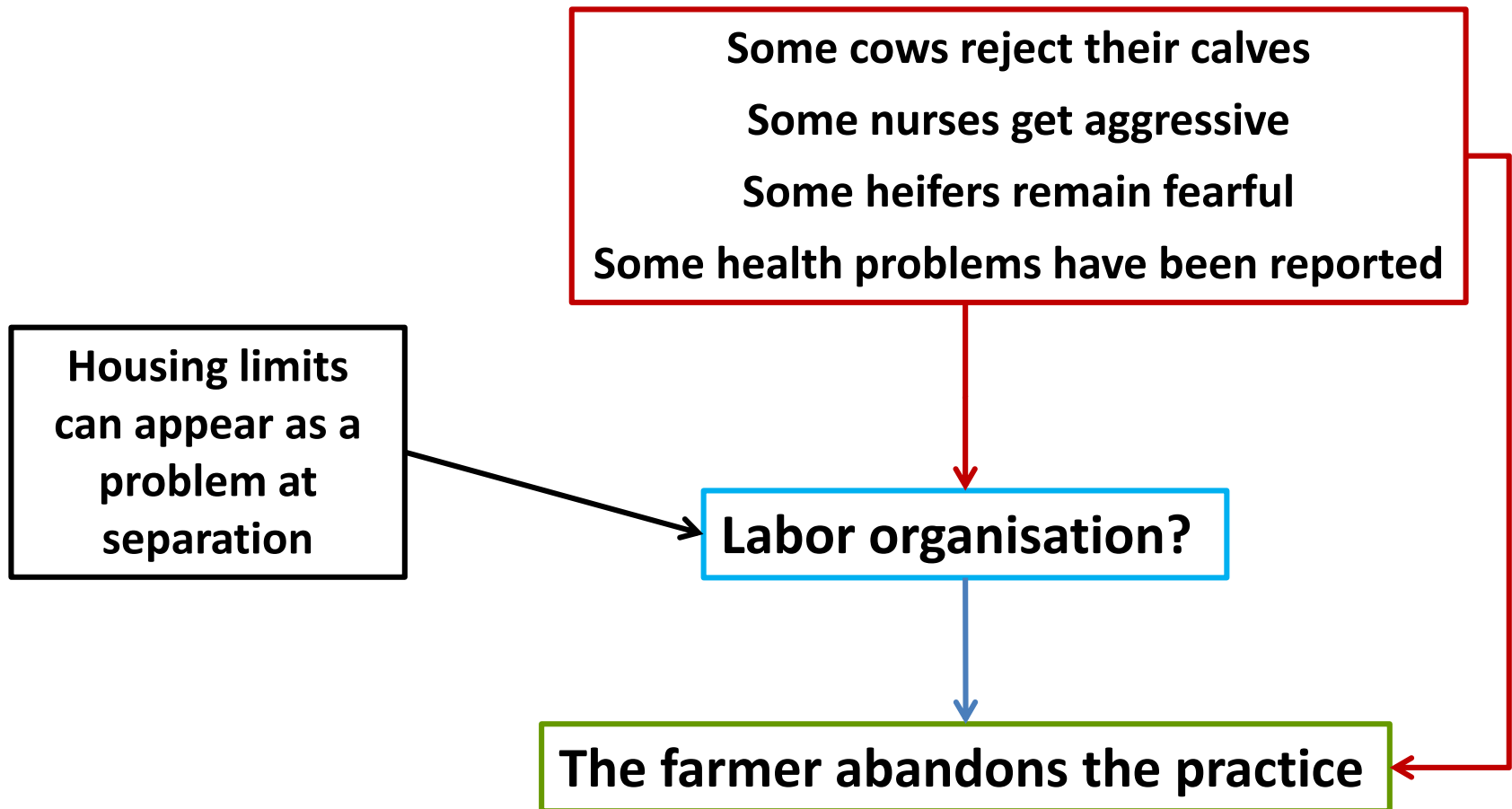


**CONVICED AND MOTIVATED** farmers, ready to share their experience

**SOME ADVISERS** are missing

# To bring back the calves to their mother (or a nurse cow): it's possible **but not so easy**

In our survey (8):



# In conclusion: to bring back the calves to their mother (or a nurse cow):



It is possible

Is it relevant?



[https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-ab&biw=1472&bih=708&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=7N1\\_W-7TNluia\\_vnuYAN&q=consommateur+achetant+du+lait&oq=consommateur+achetant+du+lait&gs\\_l=img.3...](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-ab&biw=1472&bih=708&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=7N1_W-7TNluia_vnuYAN&q=consommateur+achetant+du+lait&oq=consommateur+achetant+du+lait&gs_l=img.3...)

# Many thanks to:

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## Students



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**What about you ?**

