

The horse meat market in France



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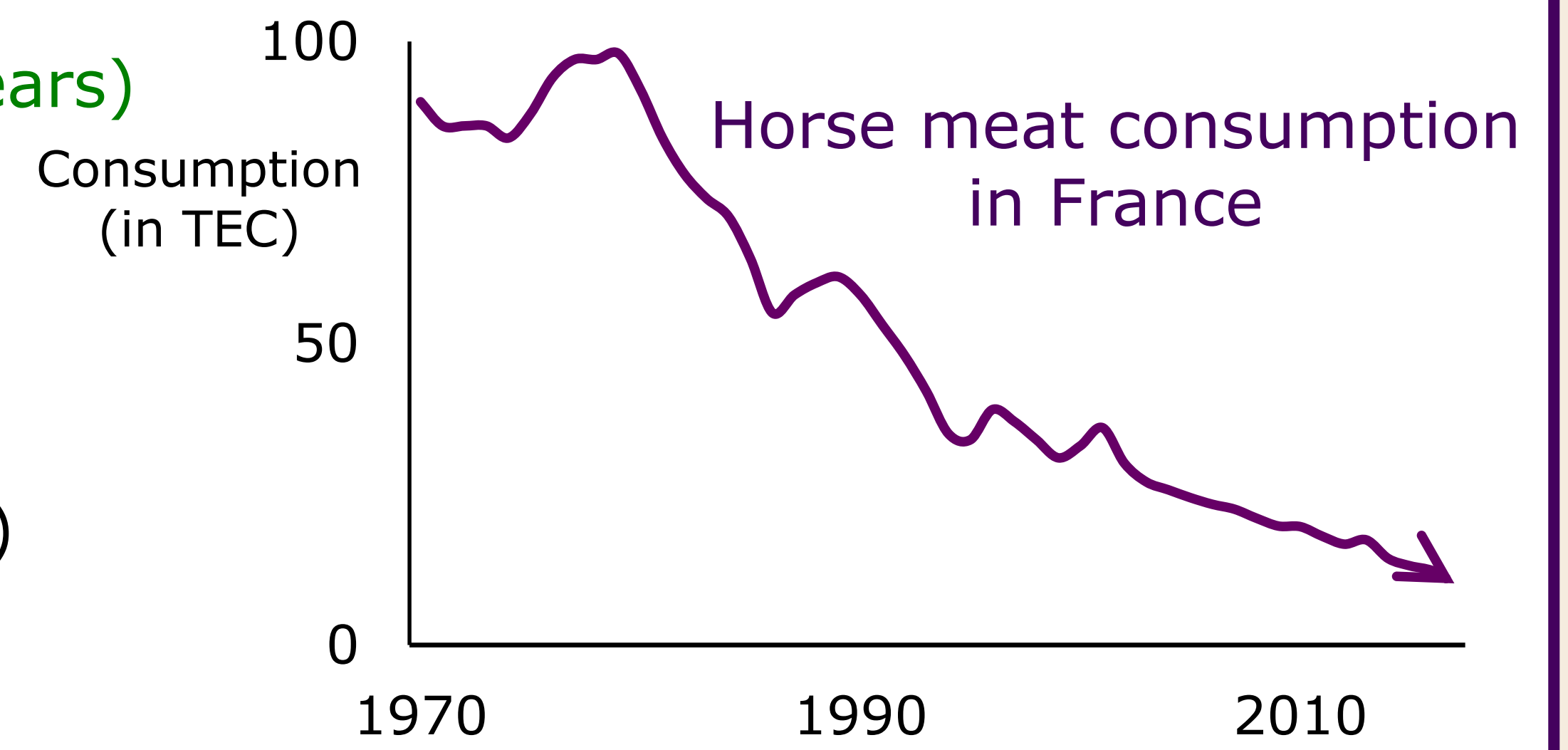
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➔ This poster explores the specific characteristics of the horse meat market in France and in particular horse meat consumption

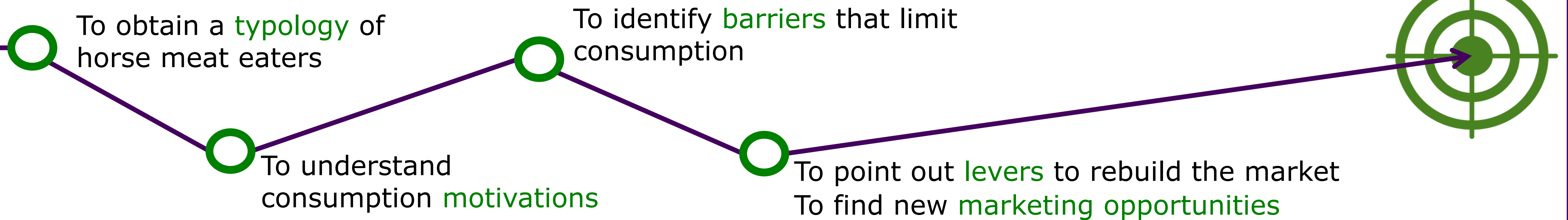
Context:

Horse meat consumption: the market is **decreasing** (-46% over the last 10 years) despite the **sustainable characteristics** of this product:

- **High nutritional qualities** (more iron, zinc, better fats) → an opportunity to reduce the total amount of consumed meat
- Environmental assets: horses emit **less methane** than bovine
- Horse meat production in France (through dedicated heavy horse breeding)
 - enables the **maintenance of mountain grassland areas**
 - enables the **maintenance of 9 endangered local breeds**
 - respects **animal well-being** (extensive breeding)



Goals:



Methodology:

Literature review

Meat consumption determinants
Human-animal relationships
History of horse meat consumption

Quantitative survey

1005 online answers
Representations of horses

Qualitative interviews

Sample of 9 French people
Horse meat status
Benefits/barriers of horse meat consumption

Highlights of literature review:

- **Horse's status:** Have evolved from working animal to **leisure** or **companion animal**; retains a **noble image** linked to its previous aristocratic position (Leteux, 2005)
- **Changes in human-animal relationships:** Increase of **moral and ethical concerns** (e.g. questions about animal welfare, breeding or slaughter); increase of **anthropomorphism** (from pets to livestock) (Guichet, 2011; Delanoue and Roguet, 2015)
- **Meat consumption acceptance:** **Psychological discomfort** with animal death leads to eaters' strategies to **deny** animal's **mind and capacities** (Bastian and al., 2012; Loughnan and al., 2014)
- **Horse meat consumption:** Historically recent, with a **difficult acceptance** (Lizet, 2010). Heavy foals bred for meat in France (**light red meat**) are 80% **exported** whereas France **imports** recommissioned horses to satisfy 80% of the national consumption (**dark red meat** from adult horses)

Highlights of quantitative survey:

- **37%** of the respondents have already consumed horse meat several times
 - **Categorization of representations:**
- | |
|--------------------------|
| Physical Attributes; 632 |
| Races; 381 |
| Leisure; 290 |
| Other; 278 |
| Animality; 269 |
| Feelings; 248 |
| Abilities; 235 |
| Relationship; 216 |
| Nothing; 109 |
| Nature; 105 |
- What do horses evoke for you? Please give the three words that spontaneously come to mind (open question)
- Physical trait; 67
 - Elite; 45
 - Meat; 32
- "Meat" is one of the last representations evoked whereas **descriptive attributes** were mostly cited. Similar numbers for "animal" terms and "mind abilities" (bringing horses closer to human) → **ambivalent status**

Highlights of qualitative interviews:

- **Horse meat status:**
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- Thought both as **part of red meat** and as **distinctive** inside this category
- Reference animals for comparisons
-
- **Benefits and barriers:**
- +

Economic, health, organoleptic, ecological aspects

-

Economic, health, organoleptic, ecological, **ethical** aspects

Conclusion and perspectives:

- These preliminary results highlight the **importance of psychological and sociocultural factors** in horse meat consumption and suggest some ideas for future research (e.g. comparison between horses and other animals, or other meats)
- Data will be collected during 2019 through a deepening of **literature review**, an **analysis of databases** on food consumption and a collection of **qualitative and quantitative data**