



# High school education: a challenge to reduce gap between livestock production and citizen concerns

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# High-school students are the citizens of tomorrow

## Introduction:

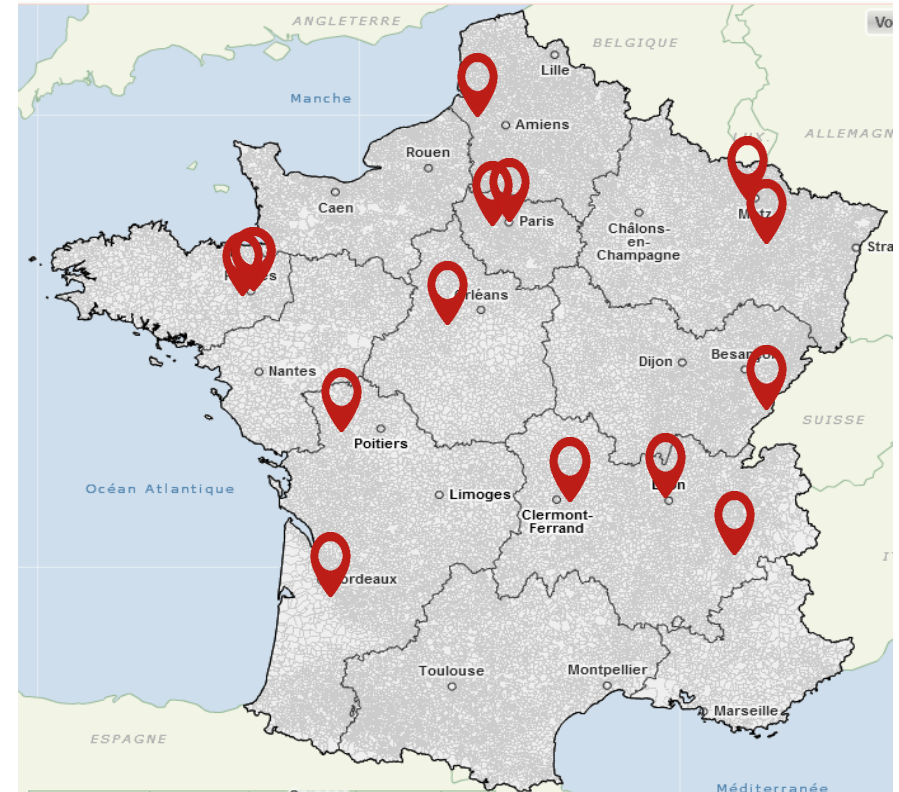
- Many citizens **know very little** about livestock production and food processing
- **The books** used in school are **not adapted** to treat the topic (Chouteau *et al*, 2018)
- High-school students are the **citizens of tomorrow**, they are in school and indicative of the society of tomorrow

## Objective of this study:

- Find informations on **feelings** and **knowledge** of young people and their teachers about livestock production

# The livestock production as taught in high-school : two studies

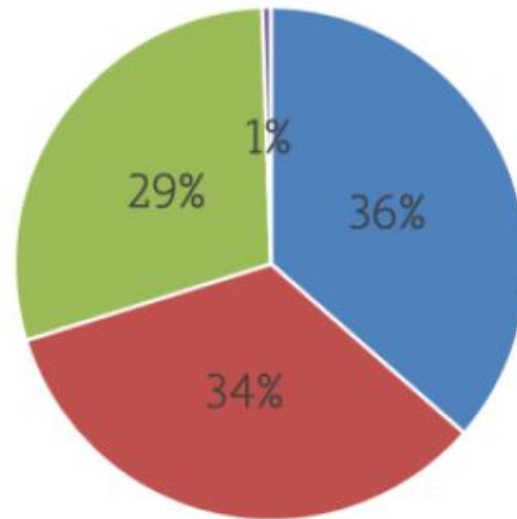
- **1087 high school students surveyed**
  - Close survey, during class time
  - Questions about :
    - Knowledge
    - What they learn in school
    - Animal product consumption
    - What they think about livestock production
- **28 teachers met (biology and geography)**
  - Semidirective interview
    - Knowledge
    - What they teach in school
    - What they need (educational resources)



# French high-school students do not know really well how livestock production works

- Livestock production and agriculture in general are anecdotal topics in the french high school training program

**Did you talked about agriculture in class ? (n=1087)**



Yes, but we did not mentionned livestock production (36%)

Yes, and we talked about livestock production (34%)

No

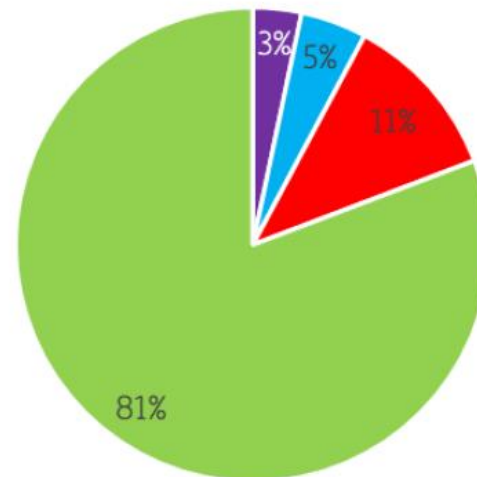
Did not answer

- They know very little about livestock production (result of a quizz in the survey)
  - *What does a ewe need to make milk ?* 50% : a lamb, 30% : no idea, 12% : nothing she will produce on her own, 9% : we need to inject hormones

# A well admitted food supply role

- Most of the students underline the **important role** of livestock production in order to **supply food**. For them it is also essentiel in France for employment and economy

**Do we need to  
keep animal farms  
in France ?  
(n=1087)**



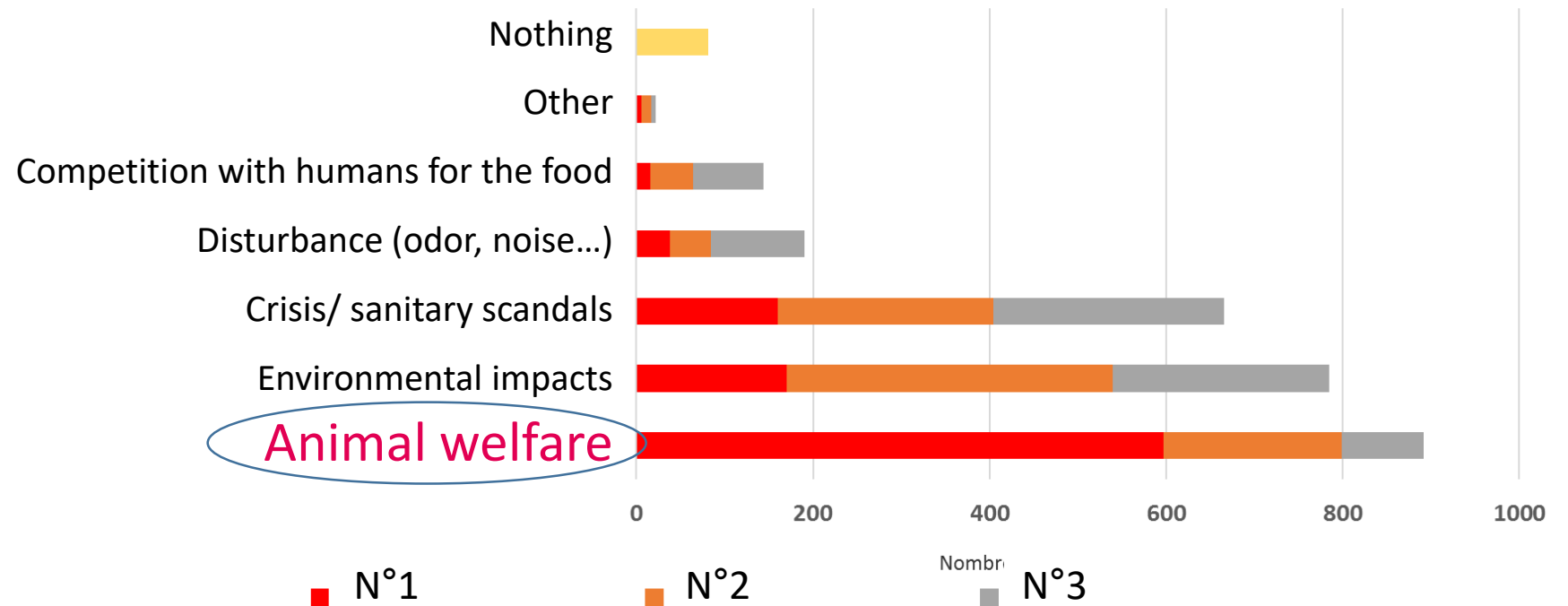
Did not answer  
Do not know  
No (11%)  
Yes (81%)

- But most of the students, even if they want to keep animal farms in France, are also concerned by two main topics they want to see improved

# Animal welfare, first concern of the high school students

- For 63% of the students, the livestock production is not respectful of animal welfare (mostly poultry, pigs and meat cattles)

## Students concerns about livestock production (n=1087)

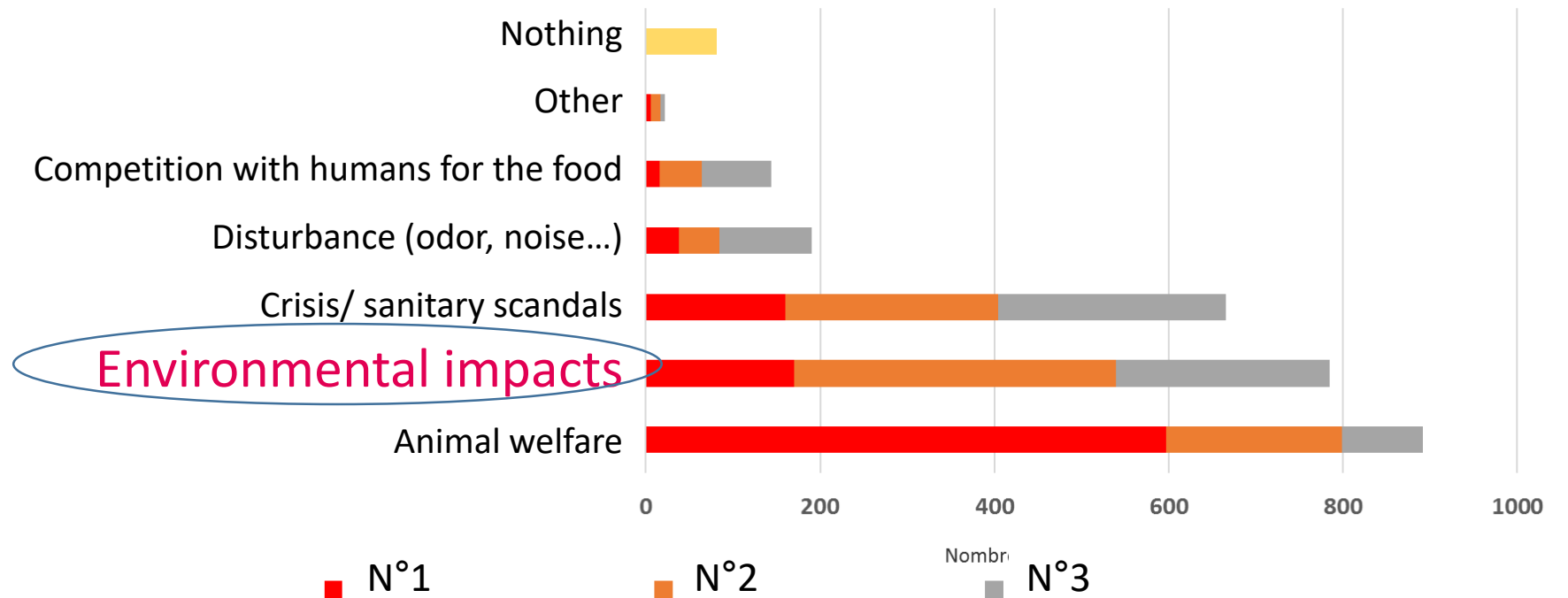


- Animal welfare is not included in the training program in High school

# Environmental impacts, second concern of the high school students

- For 54% of the students, the livestock production is not respectful of the environment (mostly global warming, water and air quality)

## Students concerns about livestock production (n=1087)

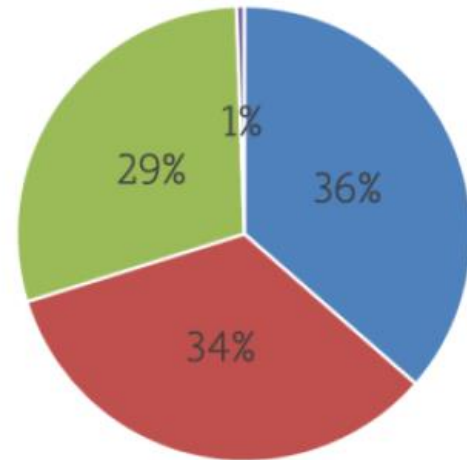


- Many of them told that livestock production can have positive and negative effects at the same time (on biodiversity and landscape for example)

# French high-school students do not know really well how livestock production works

- **Reminder** : Livestock production and agriculture in general are anecdotal topics in the french high school training program

Did you talked about agriculture in class ? (n=1087)



Yes, but we did not mentionned livestock production

Yes, and we talked about livestock production

No

Did not answer

- Knowledge on livestock comes from media (89%), family or neighbourhood (57 %), **school (40 %)**, web (40%) or social network



# Their teachers meet difficulties to talk about livestock production

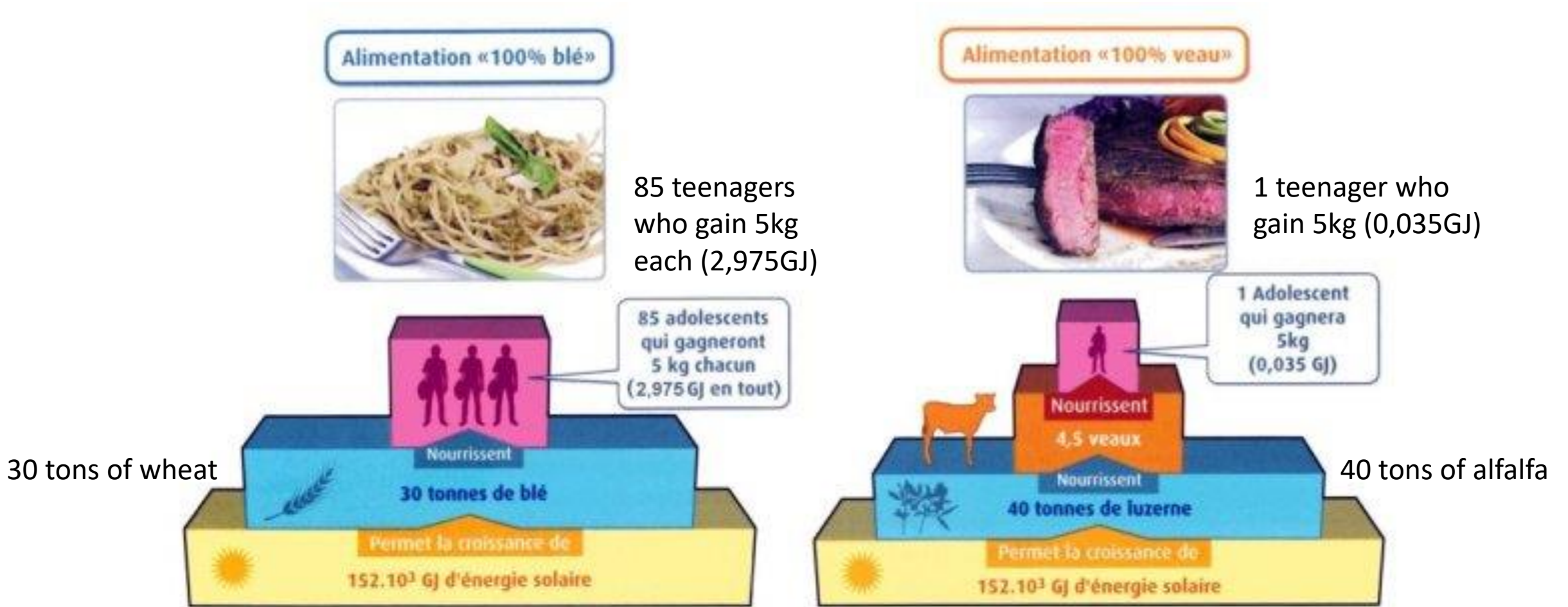
- Many of them (11/28) expressed difficulties in addressing these topics
  - **Especially for life sciences teachers** (10/15), because they have strong knowledge in biology but lack of knowledge in agronomy
  - Their students may have a **lot of questions**, and some of them already have a strong opinion (4% of the students declared to be vegetarian and 0.4% to be vegan)
- They are indeed **poorly informed themselves** about livestock and agriculture (8/28), and may have difficulty answering questions from their students.

# Most of the teachers use the schools books and find them reliable ... but !

- Most of the teachers told us that they used the school books, for many reasons (convenience, practical, reliable...)
- But a study of their content (regarding the main editors in France for biology and geography) showed a lot of problems
  - Incorrect data, with no source (especially in biology)
  - Biased « debate » activities, where agriculture is the villain most of the time
  - Caricatured presentation of the livestock production

Source : Chouteau et al, 2018

# Most of the teacher use the schools books and find them reliable ... but !



# Conclusion

- Necessity to give more information about livestock production to the future citizens
  - Decrease the gap between livestock production and citizen concerns
- Strengthen the educational resources available for the teachers
  - Create or identify existing educational resources
  - Make them available
- Does this conclusion based on French population need to be enlarged at the European level ?

# Thank you for your attention

We would like to thank all the partners who work in the working group, and Sylvain Souchet who made an amazing work with this study

You can find the result of the study here (Chouteau et al, 2018)

<https://www.gis-avenir-elevages.org/Actions-thematiques/Enseigner-l-Elevage/3-etudes-du-GIS-Avenir-Elevages-pour-mieux-comprendre-la-place-de-l-elevage-dans-l-enseignement>

And the educational ressources created here :

<https://www.ressources-elevage.fr/>