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NEW KINDS OF MARKETING FOR LOCAL FARM PRODUCTS

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Through production and marketing of local products arise the problem of employment. As agriculture is one of the main activity in our area, we decide to talk about “new” kind of marketing for local farm products.

Short distribution circuit selling

Brittany is one of the first agricultural regions in France. The average size of a farm is 35ha and farmers make up 10% of the working population. The number of farmers is continuously decreasing : - 47% between 1988 and 2000. This decrease is not linked to a lack of vocation but to an inappropriateness of the agricultural policy for low scale sustainable plans. In Brittany, farmers have, for a long time, been organized through cooperatives but these organisations have moved towards an integrated scheme where the farmer is no longer in control of his own situation.

To recover this control, some farmers have diversified their farm activities :

- direct selling : 6,7% of the farms
- processing : 1,7%
- catering is marginal : 0,2%.

We do not have specific statistics for “le Kreiz Breizh”. But we can present different types of organization for direct selling existing in our area (Most of them happen to be members of our cultural villages association) :

- Collective selling point (the farmers themselves run the shop) : “Folavoine” organic bread, eggs, meats, chicken, vegetables three afternoon a week.
- Association market : “Le Petit marché de Bon Repos” every Sunday.
- Association for advertising farm selling : “Kreiz Breizh Terre Paysanne”.
- Producer associations for processing and marketing : “Bretagne Viande Bio”(meat), Aval Douar Beo (potatoes), “Groupement des Agriculteurs Biologiques”(organic products).
- Traditional markets : Every Tuesday in Rostrenen.

Like Daniel, cider producer and chicken and cow farmer admit it, the price of this independence is the time you spend.

Same assessment for Liline and Roger, dairy products producers, who estimate that processing and direct selling account for 15% of total production, 30% of salary but 50% of time spent on the farm.

Direct selling as a better development in suburban areas. For example, sales in a collective selling point near Rennes (capital of Brittany) account for 90% of the farmers' turnover when it

account for less than one third in Central Brittany.

Looking for a new consumer pool has led to an interest in school and business canteens and restaurants in health and old people centres.

There are two routes :

- individually a meat producer can canvass the canteens in order to sell all his products directly to them.
- Collectively : The European project RAFAEL in Brittany is known as APPETIT and consists of association of producers and local development bodies. The aim is to produce and sell good quality food locally and APPETIT provide a channel to facilitate this.

Ancient knowledge

In central Brittany various associations have regrouped to create project PANIER with the aim to look out ancient knowledge and practices with on view to create and maintain employment in the rural areas. On 23-24 September they organised the first festival of “Ancient knowledge” with the central theme of basket weaving. If until the eighties, baskets making has been largely industrial, now there is an evolution towards arts and crafts by artisans selling direct. There are 17 in Brittany.

Another example is the new value given to fabrication of linen. Little by little they want to develop museum to exhibit the skills of linen production and to places where people can participate. Recently a business start up that use linen for interior design. Alongside the aim is to create activities around this guide line.

Direct selling and these type of job will only develop and perpetuate thanks to an evolution of the mode of consumption. Awareness campaign have to be done. If people give priority to local products rather than to cheapest products, they will act for vital villages (and save their own job).