

Final Seminar

Small ruminant local breeds and sustainable regional development: The challenges in the Mediterranean area Experiences from the DOMESTIC project

Case study of Corsica, France

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1. Natural Environment

- 8722 km²
- 2 mountainous systems separated by the “*sillon de Corte*”

- hercinian Corsica situated in the western and southern part of the island
- Alpin Corsica situated in the north-eastern part of the island
 - +sedimentary from tertiary and quaternary periods areas are situated in St Florent and Bonifaccio area and in the eastern plain area (Faye, 2010).

- Climate under both the marine and mountainous influence. Contrary to other Mediterranean area, precipitations are quite important and regular (except during the summer dry period) (Faye, 2010).



Map of Corsica (source http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/G%C3%A9ographie_de_la_Corse)



Socio-economics

- The INSEE data for 2004 reported that the economic activity in the island is mainly the tertiary sector (77,7%) for only 3,1% for agricultural and agro-food industry and 4,3% for other industries.
- As in other Mediterranean island, tourism activity is very developed (source INSEE).



Agriculture

- The mountain area are valorized through extensive agriculture (mainly livestock farming, chesnut and olive farming) (Faye, 2010).
- In the plain area the agriculture is more intensive with vineyard, citrus and other fruits farming, cereals and forage together with sheep farming.



The sheep production

- Sheep breeding has an historical importance in the farming systems and the pastoral history in Corsica
- Sheep are bred for milking purpose
- Cheese processing tradition with 5 types of cheeses + the Brocciu, made from whey, with a PDO from 1983 (on its simple AO form and completed in 1998 as PDO) . About 500 tons Brocciu/year (source ODG)
- Corsica is one of the 3 french areas where ewes are bred for milking purposes (with the Roquefort area and the Atlantic Pyrénées area)



The corsican sheep breed

A few figures (From Carayol-Costa, 2011)

- About 85000 ewes in Corsica (corsican breed)
- About 9 to 10 million liters of milk /year (7 to 8 for milk industry)
- About 400 farmers with less than 60 breeders in the official selection scheme

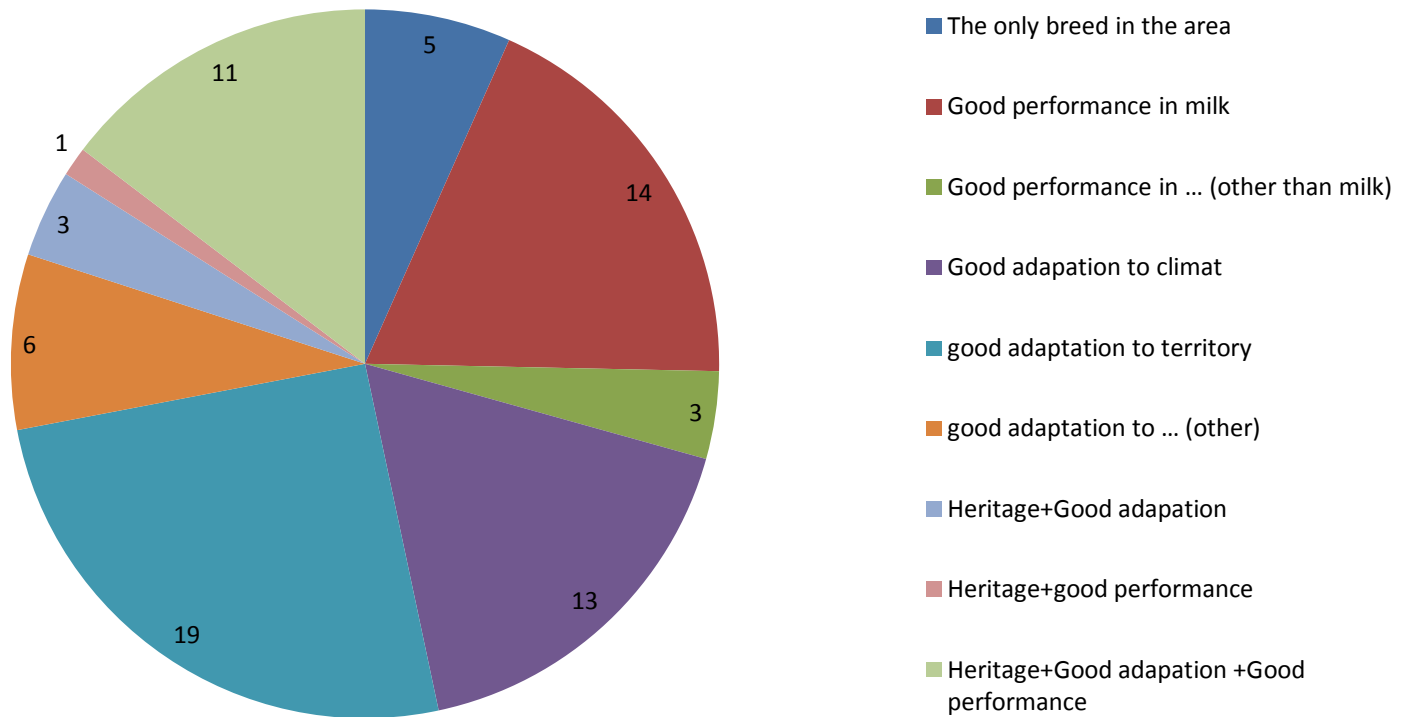


The survey

- Questionnaire -> 30 farmers (by A.Viollet)
- Sampling to cover a diversity (breeders in the selection scheme or not, farmers from of 4 farming systems identified in a previous study (Paoli et al., 2014), mountain and plain area)



Results from the survey



Numbers of time reasons for choosing the Corsican breed were chosen in the questionnaire



Results from the survey

Management system-Feeding-Transhumance

- All the farmers consider their system as agropastoral system
- For sheep feeding the systems are quite variables
- Nine breeders use rangeland all year long (on site most of the year and in high mountain during summer) and five part of the year
- Depending on the farm, it can be associated with natural grassland, cereals and / or sowed grassland (for instance with ray grass, cocksfoot, lucerne), hay, prepared feeding for milking ewes etc.
- The other farmers use natural grassland also associated with a diversity of complements.
- Only one farmer mentions no use of rangeland or natural grassland except for one lot during summer in high mountain pastures.
- Nearly all the complementation is bought by the farmers, except hay that is produced on site for 15 farmers. Corn, barley and oats are also mentioned as produced on site for sheep complementation by one farmer.



Results from the survey

Labour

- Only six farmers mention the use of external workers on the farm.
- The season with most work is autumn for ten farmers, winter two for farmers, spring for six farmers, autumn-winter-spring for ten farmers, and winter-spring-summer for two farmers.
- Twenty three farmers consider the milking activity as the most time consuming and three farmers consider the cheese processing as the most time consuming activity, whereas six farmers consider the milking activity as the second most time consuming and nine farmers consider the cheese processing as the second most time consuming activity.



Results from the survey

Breeding-Reproduction

- For reproduction artificial insemination is used complementary to natural mating only in seven cases, the origin of the semen is always the official collective organization for selection called *Organisme de Sélection* or OS.
- Lambings are grouped except for one farmer.
- The majority of lambing are early lambings between august and november and the second period (late lambing) go from january to march.



Results from the survey

Health management

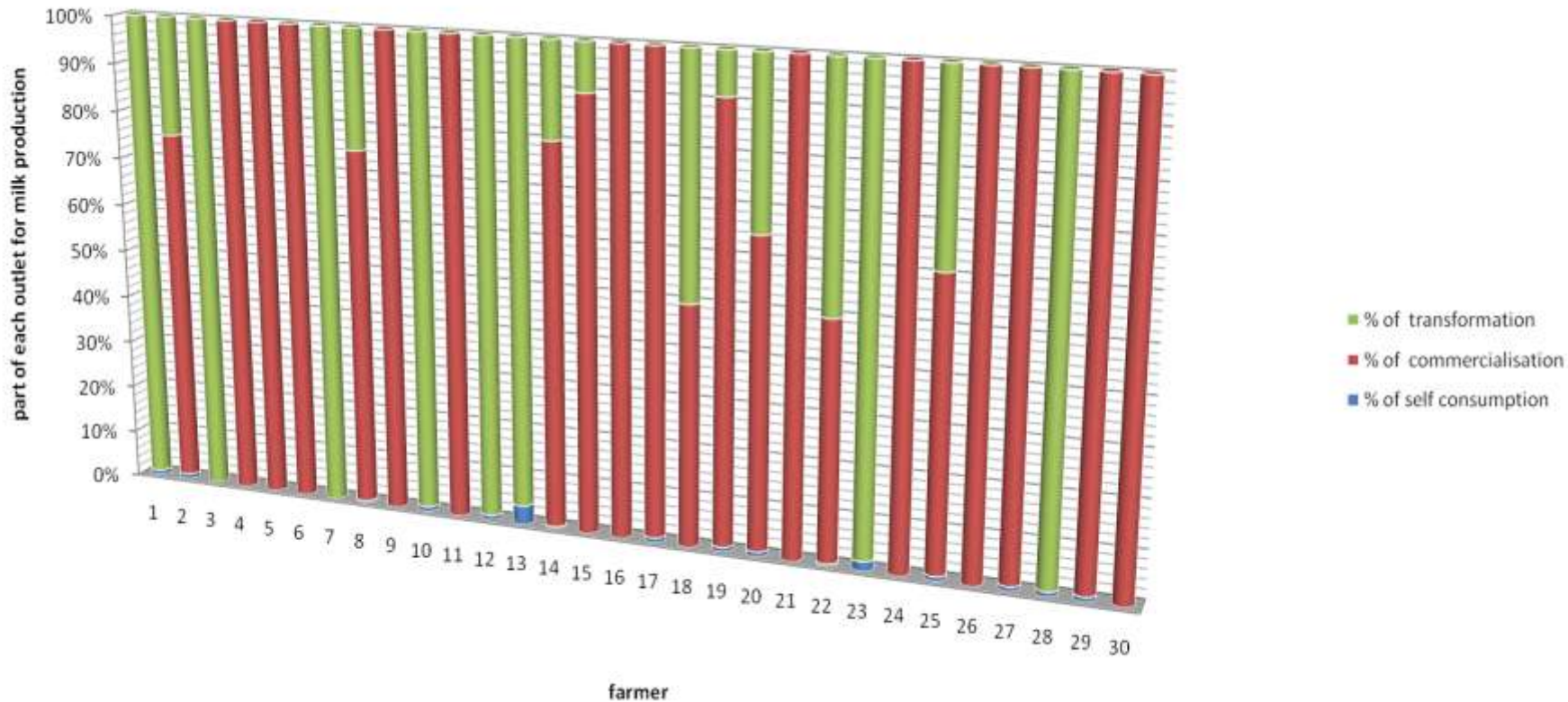
The main health problems mentioned are mastitis (by 29 farmers) and foot rot (by 9 farmers).

-> However it is important to note that after the survey the island has been concerned by a sanitary crisis due to Blue Tongue Virus



Results from the survey

Valorization of products

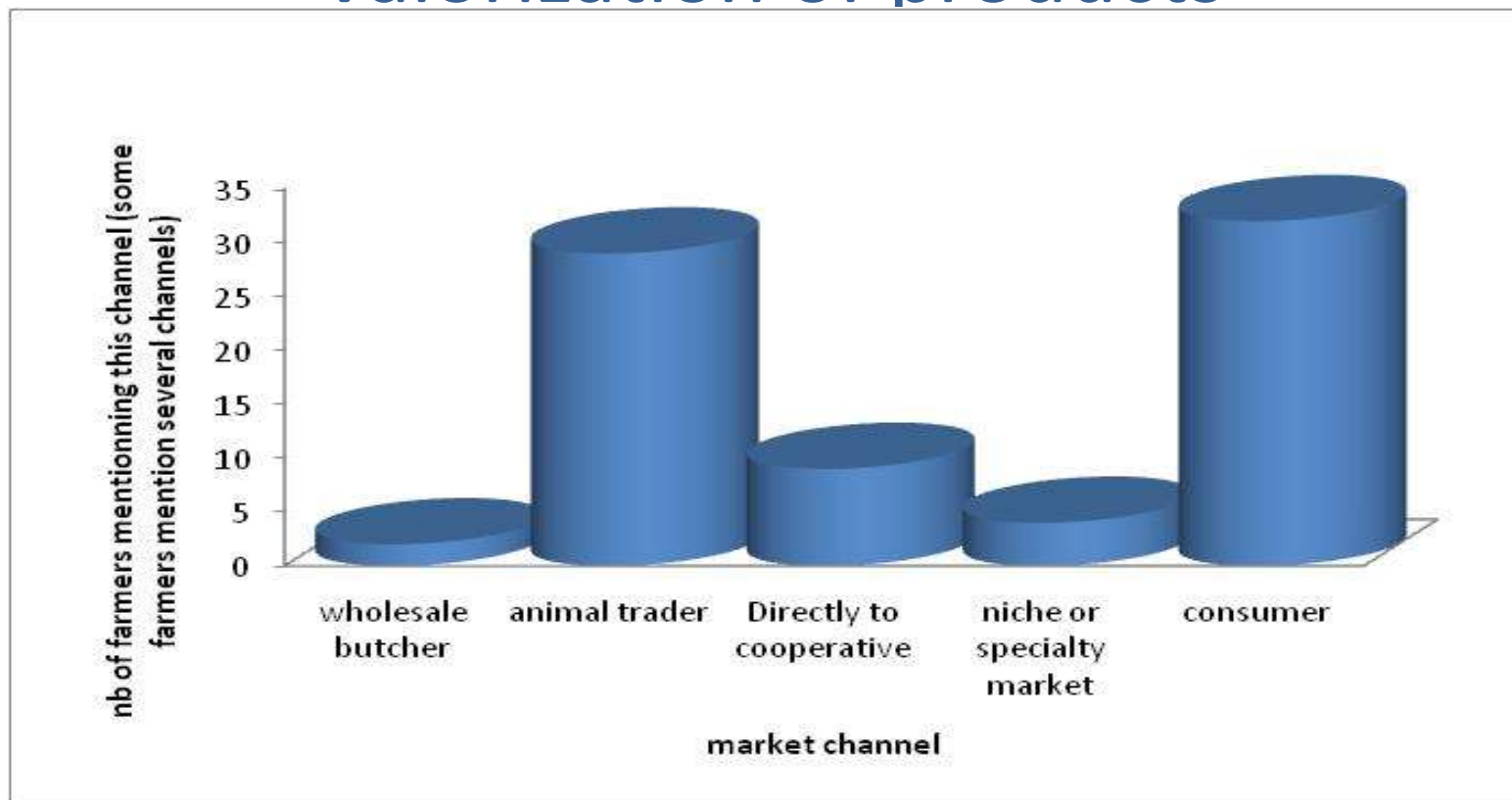


Destination of the milk production



Results from the survey

Valorization of products



Market channels for meat

