



Declaration of Rennes For Territorial Food Systems June 2015

Food systems in the world are numerous and heterogeneous. For the last several decades, however, we have seen the hegemonic rise of an agro-industrial model of mass production and consumption that is specialized, concentrated, globalized and based on credit, structured by very large industrial and commercial companies. This model, despite having efficiently contributed to the decrease in the price of food items and to the improvement of their sanitary quality and accessibility, generates nevertheless a certain number of negative externalities. These latter must incite us to innovate and build a new type of food system that is based on alternative solutions better suited to meet the standards of sustainable development. The scientific community, NGOs, and international organizations have therefore brought to light the concept of “territorial food systems” (Systèmes alimentaires territorialisés - SAT).

The objectives of SATs are to value products in the local sector, to favor family agricultural enterprises as well as networks of small and medium agri-food businesses and alternative channels of commercialization that permit a fairer distribution of value added. They equally seek to create new models of production that respect the health of consumers and responsibly manage natural resources, just as they limit the impact on the environment and reduce losses and waste all along the food chain. The originality of SATs thus principally resides in their configuration and their equity-minded participative governance. (Source: Académie d'Agriculture de France).

Congregating upon the invitation of the Regional Council of Bretagne in Rennes on July 4th, 2014, the Association of Regions of France (ARF), in line with the agricultural and food policies of its members, has taken this opportunity to promote “territorial food systems” (SATs). This decision follows from the prolongation of the Regions United/FOGAR’s Declaration in favor of SATs (Medellín, October 23, 2012), the UN General Assembly’s decision to make 2014 the year of family farming (New York, December 22, 2011), the European Commission’s and European Parliament’s colloquia (Brussels, November 29, 2013 and March 18, 2014, respectively) organized in the context of the year of family farming, and from the ministerial Declaration of support to family farming (Paris, February 25, 2014).

Upon the completion of this colloquium, ARF:

- Commits itself to promoting SATs by means of agricultural and food policies dedicated to the development of their territories, supporting local economic development, sustainable management of natural resources, and the promotion of rural and agricultural employment. It underlines the importance of supporting productive and viable family farming operations, which generate employment, preserve the environment, and are responsive to the expectations of consumers desirous of having a healthy and high quality nutrition that is sourced as much as possible from our regional territories.
- Asks its members to make a greater contribution to the consolidation of farming operations, as well as to the establishment of farmers who respond to these consumer expectations. Leaning on existing policies regarding land and structures, members may help farmers promote agricultural practices that are aimed to reaping economic, social, and environmental benefits.

ARF has conducted an analysis of agricultural and food policies of the Region of France. This analysis has highlighted the characteristics and measures of these policies which enable the fast development of SATs.

- Wishes a strong interaction between regional and national agricultural policies as they are outlined in the future “Loi d’avenir” to promote the development of our territories. This development should be founded on the support of family farming practices with economic, social, and economic benefits, and the development of SATs.
- Congratulates the decision to entrust the management of the second pillar of PAC, the European agricultural fund for the development of rural areas (FEADER), to the regions for the period 2014-2020. In collaboration with producers’ organizations and other key players in agricultural development, the regions of France will strengthen the synergies between their regional policies and the new opportunities resulting from FEADER in view of promoting SATs.
- Wishes that the decentralized cooperation between the regions will find a place of importance within national policies of cooperation as defined by the future “Loi d’orientation et de programmation”. ARF also wishes that national and decentralized cooperations will recognize support to family farming operations and SATs as a priority for developing countries and their food security.
- Wishes that the national government work toward the revision of the European Union’s commercial policies with the countries of the ACP, as well as toward the renegotiation of the Economic Partnership Agreements which are asymmetrical and could harm family farming operations in these countries.
- Demands that SATs be preserved in the framework of the transatlantic free trade agreements that are currently being discussed by the European Union and the United States.
- Finally, it demands from international organizations, principal among which are the United Nations and the international development banks, to take into consideration the potential for cooperation among the world’s regions, and especially the decentralized cooperation between the regions of countries in the global North and South. ARF asks these organizations to take a territorial approach in pursuit of economic, social, and environmental development; to this end, they should give priority in their policies and projects to family farming and SATs. The populations of the world have particular need for a diversity of agricultures, especially family agricultures small or big, to properly nourish humanity, sustainably manage the world’s natural and biodiversity resources in a context of changing climate, and to provide adequate income for the large tier of human labor invested in agriculture in family farming operations.

Annex to the Declaration of Rennes

Priorities and Measures Enabling Regional Policies to Promote “Territorial Food Systems” (SATs)

The Regional Council of Bretagne proposed to the ARF and to the other regions of France to reflect during this year of 2014, the international year of family farming, on the conditions that will potentially promote and reinforce SATs, in contraposition to the “Globalized Food System”. A survey was conducted among the regions of France. From this survey, we have drawn the following conclusions regarding the conditions that could enable regional policies to support the development and spread of SATs.

The regions of France have a central role to play in the interlocking of the territories: close to intra-regional contexts and to local actors, they act within the national and European settings. They also cooperate with the regions of other continents.

1 - The reinforcement of regional agricultural and food systems depends on actions which are part of a regional strategy (Regional Plan for Sustainable Agriculture and Nutrition, New Agricultural Alliance, Regional Document on Agricultural Development...). These actions of “regional food governance” will enable:

The evolution of local and regional food demand:

To this end, we can:

- Create an inventory of regional food products having a specific organoleptic and/or nutritional quality
- Identify these products with labels of quality and geographical origin
- Reserve a significant part of institutional purchases to these labeled products (especially in the case of school cafeterias)
- Contribute to the organization of short chains (sales platforms or centers, local markets, collective shops or retail stores for farm products, direct sales...)
- Pursue information, communication, and consumer awareness campaigns, especially among young consumers (through fairs, pedagogical programs in collaboration with school cafeterias...)
- Tie the fight against the food insecurity of low-income consumers to the promotion of local products by organizing distribution circuits specifically dedicated to them (food banks...) or by increasing their purchasing power through a system of food stamps.

□ The accompaniment of the transformation of agricultural enterprises to preempt negative environmental impacts and promote new economic activities, value-added nodes, and jobs.

To this end, several courses of action are often identified:

- Promoting the adoption of agro-ecological practices
- Promoting the transition toward economic systems that preserve natural resources (water and land), such as organic agriculture, agro-sylvo-pastoral combinations...
- Supporting efforts to preserve biodiversity and grow local varieties
- Supporting the operations of young agriculturalists by encouraging them to orient themselves toward high-quality products (both in nutritional and environmental terms) and locally specific products (products of “terroir”)
- Encouraging entrepreneurship and nonagricultural activities within the farm to generate additional revenues (“territorial” agri-food and agri-tourism enterprises), especially in the context of a social economy (ESS).

□ Contractual relationships and the signing of conventions with infra-regional territories (urban areas, groups of communes) and their governments to help them develop their own SAT or integrate the regional food systems.

To this end, we propose:

- Reinforcing the infra-regional territories’ governance over food
- Organizing spaces and events for exchange between these territories

□ Support to innovative actors (persons, companies, associations, producers’ organizations...) and innovative local efforts toward a responsible nutrition, that is efforts that facilitate the production of foodstuffs without negative social (including health), cultural, and/or environmental externalities.

To this end, several sets of actions are presented:

- Organize calls for proposals and/or contests aimed at local players working toward a responsible and sustainable nutrition.
- Spread information regarding innovative initiatives (platforms, points of observation...), and encourage works of capitalization
- Bring key players together (organizing exchanges, creating networks...)
- Support innovations, experimentation, research and action (administrative simplification of the “single window” kind, Grouping of Economic and Social Interests (GIEE), High-Performing Ecological Agriculture, nurseries, indicative funds...).

2 - In addition to their own means, regional policies can take advantage of the tools and means of national and European policies (for example FEADER, which is now under the management of the regions). The combined benefit of these different policies, tools, and measures is a means of integrating SATs in the territories and economic spaces, both national and European. Tying the agricultural and food system to the territories is not propounded with the aim of closing economic spaces. It is done, rather, with the objective of privileging proximity for economic, ecological, social, and cultural reasons. To this end, regional policies must create

synergies with the tools and funds of national agriculture policy and communal agriculture policy, especially with those of the second pillar.

3 - The regions of France can and do also develop, through their policies, relationships of exchange and cooperation with the regions of other continents.

- With the regions of the countries of the global South, the regions of France shall develop a decentralized cooperation. The defense and support of family farming practices is in line with the necessary transformations we have previously mentioned. The Regions United/FOGAR has highlighted the ability of SATs to enhance food security and has decided to make this its priority. Family agriculture and SATs appear in many efforts of decentralized cooperation.
- With all the regions of the world, the regions of France shall make efforts to establish economic exchanges of regional products and know-how with the aim of promoting sustainable and responsible development.