The new optional Quality term for Mountain products at EU level: a great opportunity for mountain people

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What is Euromontana?

• European **multisectoral** association for cooperation and development of mountain areas (since 1996)

• Around 75 members from 20 countries

• Comprising:
  - regional and local authorities
  - regional development agencies
  - chambers of commerce and industry
  - agriculture organisations
  - environmental organisations
  - research organisations
  - Training institutes...

Diversity of members = strength ➔ increased interest from institutions
Agriculture is of vital importance for Euromontana members

- **France:**
  APCA, SUACI Alpes du Nord, SUAMME, ACAP, CRA PACA, CNIEL, Association Porc Montagne, ISARA

- **Portugal:**
  Association des JA (AJAP), ADVID (wine producers)

- **Italy:**
  CIA, Sudtiroler Bauernbund, ERSAF

- **Romania:**
  FAMD Dorna (federation of mountains farmers in Vatra Dornei); AGROMRO (professional training); MUNTE (national federation of mountain sheepers)

- **Spain:**
  HAZI

- **Switzerland:**
  Office fédéral pour l’agriculture
15 years of work on mountain foods: From research to European legislation

1999-2000
- First working group
- DG AGRI study
- European Mountain Convention Trento on Quality

2002-2004
- FP5 project “European Mountain quality food products”
- Mountain foods are specific
- Strong territorial impact

2005
- European Charter for mountain Quality Food products
- European Parliament
- 69 signatories from 12 countries

2007-2010
- FP6 EuroMARC
- Consumers interested in a mountain sign
- Need to strengthen the offer

2009-2012
- EU Policy debate
- Impact assessment
- IPTS study (ISARA-EM-UHI)

2012-2013
- Regulation CE 1151/2012, article 31: an optional quality term “mountain product”

2014-2015
- Delegated act 665/2014
- European Mountain Convention on Mountain products
  (New CAP – Mountains of Opportunities Project)

What’s next
- Assessing potential for this new term in different contexts on the ground
- Raising awareness
- Supporting development

2015-2017
- What’s next
The New Optional Quality term for Mountain Products

• Art.31 Regulation 1151/2012: definition of an optional quality term “Mountain products”:
  – both the raw materials and the feedstuffs for farm animals come essentially from mountain areas
  – in the case of processed products, the processing also takes place in mountain areas

• Mountains defined with altitude, difficult climatic conditions, slopes
Precised in the Delegated Act 665/2014

• **Products of animal origin:**
  – 2/3 life in mountain areas
  – at least ¼ life in transhumance grazing on pastures in mountain areas

• **Feedstufs:**
  – % of annual animal diet (expressed as a % of dry matter) produced in mountain areas should be 50% for all animals but 60% for ruminants, 25% for pigs
• Derogations for processing outside mountain areas:
  – 30 km distance for milk and milk products (in facilities existing before 3 January 2013), slaughtering animal, pressing olive oil

• Distance of this derogation can be reduced or suppressed by Member States
A positive signal to the producers and consumers

- **For producers:**
  - Recognition and promotion of the specific characteristics of mountain food products
  - Specific rules allowing transhumant animals to benefit from the scheme
  - No cost or long administrative procedure to benefit from the quality scheme

- **For consumers:**
  - Positive image (purity/quality of natural resources) linked to “mountain products” can’t be used by non-mountain products
  - Assurance that a mountain product comes from mountain areas
But challenges remain important

- **Member States should:**
  - Adopt restrictions to the derogation
    - High risk for the credibility of the scheme if a cheese is produced far away from mountain area
  - Adapt the legislation at national level
    - without forgetting the control of the quality term
    - Most countries (except France) are still in the reflexion phase
  - Integrate specific measures to accompany producers in the Rural Development Programmes
But challenges remain important

- Mountain/farmers networks and associations should
  - Base their work on the new existing legislation
    - Avoiding duplicata that would weaken the scheme
  - Communicate to producers:
    - Explain the EU quality scheme and its opportunities
    - Share good practices
  - Analyse the concrete implementation of the optional quality scheme at national, regional and local levels
New Cap – Mountains of opportunities

• Communication campaign 2014-2015
• European Mountain Convention « Quality from the mountains – prosperity for people and territories » (mountain products) in October 2014
• Thematic factsheets linking mountain products with:
  – Innovation / Marketing / Socio-economic impacts / Environment / Territorial approaches / Quality Tools
• Country factsheets on:
  – Spain / France / Italy / Slovenia / Romania / Portugal
But challenges remain important

• Farmers should:
  – Seize this new opportunity to add value to their products
  – Respect the production /transforming conditions
    • Challenge in particular for pigs alimentation (mountain cereals are scarce and usually not available on the market)
  – Do marketing /communication about the mountain dimension of their products
Thank you for your attention!

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