

Raising public awareness on fruit diversity through the POMEXPO trade fair

Contact name

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Institution name

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Region & country

Hauts-de-France region



Summary

The POMEXPO trade fair is an event devoted to the fruits of Hauts-de-France region. 9 000 visitors come together in the presence of professionals, associations, producers, and local authorities. Fruit exhibit stands are set up by the Regional Centre of Genetic Resources associated with the ENRx. Exhibitions, fruit tastings, advice and conferences on fruits and sustainable diet are part of the event's agenda.



Fruit exhibit at the POMEXPO trade fair. Photo by Olivier Delvaux

Background of the project

Fruit diversity is not well understood by the general public, which tends to consume standardised fruits with a high carbon footprint. Nevertheless, the Hauts-de-France region benefits from an exceptional fruit heritage: over 750 apple and 350 pear varieties are cultivated in this area and preserved in a protective regional orchard managed and maintained by the Regional Centre of Genetic Resources. The POMEXPO trade fair contributes to extending the knowledge of the vast fruit heritage, focusing on local and regional varieties.

The fruit heritage of our region is in decline with the disappearance of local orchards and wood exploitation in the countryside of the rural areas. Little by little, consumers have forgotten the varieties and flavours of the fruits that were common in the past. This project seeks to bring back to the population the taste and quality of the older fruit varieties and to encourage them to plant these varieties.

Solution and actions taken

By cultivating fruit varieties of our region and by studying their qualities (resistance to diseases, flavours, etc.), the Regional Centre of Genetic Resources seeks to respond to the evolution of consumer demand and to put back into circulation varieties that were highly appreciated in the past.

This year, the POMEXPO trade fair is offering a 24-page booklet on “cooking pears”. Pears stand at the heart of local food tradition, and each local area and little region has “its” own recipe. With this first edition of the book, the Regional Centre of Genetic Resources seeks to launch a collection of recipes linked to the fruit and vegetable heritage of the Hauts-de-France region.

Other institutions or parties involved

- Local producers;

- Associations involved in fruit heritage preservation.

Results

The regional population is increasingly becoming more conscious about fruit diversity and a re-orientation in terms of consumption and purchasing of fruit varieties is taking place.

Challenges

The biggest challenge was to research and study the pear varieties in order to faithfully re-establish their characteristics and taste qualities.

Lessons learned

In order to reach the population, it is essential to work with local associations that work to preserve the fruit heritage of Hauts-de-France.

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Website(s)

<http://www.enrx.fr>