

Launch of the AFRAN-Agrifood hub in Canberra

On 30 April 2025, France and Australia created a research community on agriculture and food matters, through a seminar gathering close to 100 attendees.

Agriculture plays an important role in Australia and France in political, economic, geographical, and sociocultural terms. Although the two countries have developed very different production models (family farming geared towards processing in France, large-scale agriculture for commodity exports in Australia), they face similar challenges:

- Increasing production to feed a growing world population;
- Adapting food systems to the effects of climate change and biosecurity threats;
- Transitioning to more sustainable food systems with less impact on the environment and climate;
- Reducing food loss and waste;
- Maintaining the attractiveness and profitability of the agricultural and agri-food sector;
- Enabling fair, rules-based international trade that preserves local production and cultures.

France and Australia already cooperate on agricultural research, thanks in particular to four partnerships that INRAE has established with leading Australian organizations: the CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation), the Australian National University, the University of Melbourne, and the University of Queensland. These partnerships, which cover a wide range of topics, facilitate mobility of researchers, and develop international

laboratories on specific issues (stable isotopes, wheat adaptation to environmental changes, etc.).

However, there are opportunities to go further: reducing food loss and waste, developing technical and technological solutions, rolling out the “One Health” approach in the Pacific, and emphasizing the sociocultural role of agriculture and food.



Keynote speakers – French Ambassador



Agricultural Advisor



Président of AFRAN

To this end, the Embassy (Counsellor for agricultural affairs and Department of Scientific Collaboration) and the Franco-Australian Research Association (AFRAN), which has 1,200 members, organised a one-day seminar held at the French Residence on April 30. Attended by nearly 100 people, including 70 in person, it featured speeches by the Ambassador, the CEO and Chair of INRAe, and the President of AFRAN, as well as posters, and was structured around three panels:

- Main challenges for sciences in agri-food: Australian & French perspectives;
- Research and innovation for post-farmgate challenges: food waste and negotiations between actors in the chain;
- One Health: Agricultural sciences in our changing world; with a presentation of the PREZODE initiative.

These panels highlighted many points, the main ones being the need to structure research in a cross-disciplinary manner to avoid silo approaches; continue research and innovation (particularly genetic) to develop capacity of production; work on skills development to ensure the availability of workforce; demonstrate the economic benefits of the “One Health”

approach, particularly in the Pacific, highlighting the knowledge of indigenous communities; develop tools to compensate farmers for agroecosystem services; and maintain a balance between technological solutions and agroecological practices.



Video speech by the CEO and Chair of INRAE

International cooperation was seen by all participants as an essential lever for scientific and technical progress.



Signing of the renewal of the INRAE-CSIRO

agreements

The seminar was also an opportunity to strengthen the network by launching the agri-food research community within AFRAN, which now facilitates the mobilisation of researchers in these sectors. This community is coordinated by Dr. Jean-François HOCQUETTE (INRAe) on the French side and Dr. Andy SHEPPARD (CSIRO) on the Australian side. Finally, during the seminar, INRAe signed several partnerships:

- *With CSIRO: renewal of the MoU on cooperation and the Joint Linkage Call (a program facilitating mobility of researchers between the two organisations);*
- *With the University of Queensland: launch of an international associated laboratory on wheat adaptation to environmental changes.*

All information on the seminar and the AFRAN agrifood community is available at this link: [Agricultural and Food Sciences | AFRAN](#)

Photos: credits French Embassy.

Photo caption at the top of this article : Discussion on the “One Health” approach

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France Tour of the world's Ovinpiades

France hosted the 3rd World Cup for Young Shepherds from Saturday 25 May to Saturday 1 June 2024, and everyone discovered the emblematic Bergerie Nationale to find out who would be on the podium as the world's top 3 young shepherds.

After a 10-year absence, France is relaunching the world Ovinpiades. Some fifteen foreign delegations took part in the 3rd « World Cup for Young Shepherds ». Around thirty young people aged between 18 and 26, either in agricultural training or already working, competed in a travelling format for the title of World's Best Young Shepherd from 25 May to 1 June 2024.

After being welcomed in Paris, all the competitors boarded a bus for Limousin, Aveyron, Auvergne, Burgundy and the Bergerie Nationale de Rambouillet to discover the diversity of French sheep farming. They were reacquainted with the legendary Ovinpiades nationales events, as well as some new ones such as quad shearing and mobile fencing.

A French competition that has gone global

In France, over the next few years, more than 1 in 2 ewe farmers will be retiring.

It is against this backdrop of the need to revitalise the industry that INTERBEV Ovins and the sheep industry as a whole have been organising the Ovinpiades des Jeunes Bergers since 2005, the European Championships are held annually and, after

an absence of 10 years, the Ovinpiades Mondiales are making a comeback in France.

The 1st Young Shepherd World Cup was organised in 2011 by New Zealand (in Oamaru). The following year, sheep professionals decided to found the International Association to create a dynamic network for agricultural training, encourage exchanges between young people and the installation of future ewe breeders.

The 2nd World Cup was organised by France in 2014 at the Sommet de l'élevage in Auvergne.

The European Championship is organised every year during the national final of the Ovinpiades at the Salon International de l'Agriculture.

From the 4 corners of the world, inspiring vocations and exchanging ideas

During this competition, the profession of ewe breeder will reveal its assets to attract vocations. In fact, like France, other countries are facing the same difficulties in renewing their ewe breeders.

By organising the World Cup for Young Shepherds, the Association Internationale des Ovinpiades aims to encourage exchanges around the theme of training. Other initiatives are offered to young people, such as « helping hand » grants for individual training courses in sheep production or study trips to sheep-farming countries in the European Union: the United Kingdom, Ireland, Eastern Europe, Italy, Spain, etc.

These courses and trips have a number of objectives and benefits: to arouse young people's interest in sheep farming, to discover and appreciate the practices of sheep industry professionals in other countries, across all sectors, to find out how sheep farming is taught in neighbouring European countries, to build up a European 'address book' for the sheep

industry, etc.

Nearly 500 young people have already benefited from these funds in the past. By relaunching the Ovinpiades Mondiales, France also wanted to relaunch this exchange scheme.

14 countries enjoy a week of competition and more

France invited nations with strong sheep-farming traditions from around the world. Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Benin, Canada, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Ireland, Peru, Spain, Togo and the United Kingdom answered the call!

During the last week of May 2024, 14 countries were represented by 29 candidates. The delegations were made up of 2 young people – boys and girls – aged between 18 and 26 (in agricultural training or working for less than a year) and a companion, and they competed for the title of World's Best Young Shepherd.

The DGER's Europe and International networks worked hard to identify, organise and/or support delegations from Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo), the Americas (Argentina, Chile, Peru, Quebec) and Europe (Armenia, Belgium, Spain, Ireland, United Kingdom).

In addition, some delegations arrived a week before the event and visited agricultural establishments (Benin, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo), while others stayed a week after the event (Argentina, Peru).

France was represented by Iris and Benoît, the best young shepherds 2024 selected on 24 February 2024 at the national final of the Ovinpiades at the Salon International de l'Agriculture in Paris.

5 departments crossed, 6 events...

In order to showcase the diversity of ewe farming, it was decided to organise a travelling competition combining trials,

visits and exchanges.

The Ovinpiades des Jeunes Bergers is an invitation to discover the sheep-farming profession from the inside, through hands-on experience. The global competition continues the tradition of the legendary events of the national finals, but spices up the experience by adding 2 new emblematic events: shearing and quad fencing.

And the winners are...



- Benoît, representing France, in first place,
- Gaby, representing Australia in second place,
- Iris, representing France in third place.

For the [full list of winners](#), find out more about [how each event is graded](#).

Opportunities for agricultural education

Beyond the competition itself, this event is an opportunity to highlight the commitment of agricultural education to promoting the sheep industry, to emphasise the priority given

to the professional integration of apprentices trained in agricultural education and to contribute to the renewal of generations in the agricultural sector. Above all, the scale of this competition highlights the European and international dimension in the training of future farmers, as well as the openness of French agricultural establishments, which is reflected in the fact that they welcome foreign apprentices.

The Europe and International networks of agricultural education have worked hard alongside the organisers of the Ovinpiades to bring in their partners and help boost the presence of foreign delegations from Europe, Africa and South America.

On this last point, this event is an opportunity to strengthen or build partnerships or actions implemented by agricultural education and training institutions.

Pastoralism: between training and professionalism

The West Africa network invited 3 teams – from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo – to take part in the Ovinpiades mondiales organised by Inn'ovin. Each team was accompanied by a representative of the Fédérations nationales des communes pastorales (FNCP), providing a link between training and the profession.

Specific preparation for the Ovinpiades was organised in each of the 3 countries, on the one hand in situ with the accompanying persons, with sheep farmers and sheep centres, and on the other hand remotely with French agricultural high schools in 3 different regions renowned for their sheep production (PACA, Occitanie, Normandie) with the sharing of advice, documents, photos and videos, and in liaison with the local sheep profession.

From the FSPI project to the Ovinpiades

The Peruvian delegation was made up of representatives from two institutions identified as part of a FSPI project on

sustainable food, to be implemented between 2022 and 2023. During this project, 3 Peruvian institutions were identified and put in contact with 3 French institutions.

Training with the 2024 runner-up!

The Chilean delegation came from a school in southern Patagonia (Coyaique), a new partner in the Chile network identified at the last Franco-Chilean agricultural education forum organised in 2022. This was an opportunity for the school to bring learners to France for the first time and to give concrete expression to the budding partnership. The Chilean delegation arrived ahead of the Ovinpiades and were welcomed by the Nevers EPL and the Fontaines EPL, where they met the 2024 vice-champion for a training session.

Opportunities to develop partnerships

The Argentinian delegation came from the province of Santa Cruz (in Patagonia) and was the result of a joint project with Argentina's National Institute of Technical Education (INET). The aim was to identify provinces with links to Argentina's leading vocational training body (INET), with which partnerships could be set up between establishments in these provinces and French agricultural establishments. After the Ovinpiades, they were welcomed by the Lycée agricole Jean Errecart, the EPL de Pau and the EPL de Castelnaudary to find out more about the sheep industry, those involved in training and the professional sector.

Europe side

The Andalusian shepherds' school (Escuela de pastores de Andalucía) in Granada was selected from around ten Iberian establishments to take part in this competition, because of its dynamism, responsiveness and willingness to develop cooperative ventures. The candidates were met by the Spain/Portugal network coordinator in the mountain pastures of the Sierra Nevada in December 2023. The mobility and

partnership projects envisaged with the school management will then be worked on for the benefit of the young Spanish and French students.

The next meeting of the Ovinpiades will be European, live from the SIA 2025, and we hope that the international format will not have a 10-year truce before once again confronting the pastoral cultures of each country with a tradition of sheep farming.

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Bergerie Nationale de Rambouillet



Épreuve de la Tonte













Épreuve de pose de clôture



Candidats Argentins



Candidats Canadiens



Candidats Péruviens



Candidat Arménien



Candidats Béninois



Candidats Ivoiriens



Candidats Togolais



Candidats Australiens



Candidats Belges



Candidats Français



Candidats Italiens



Candidats Espagnols



Candidats du Royaume-Uni



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Ovinpiades mondiales 2024

Tour de Francia de las Ovinpiadas mundiales

Francia acogió la 3ª Copa del Mundo de Jóvenes Pastores del sábado 25 de mayo al sábado 1 de junio de 2024, y todo el mundo descubrió la emblemática Bergerie Nationale para saber quién subiría al podio de los 3 mejores jóvenes pastores del mundo.

Tras diez años de ausencia, Francia relanza las Ovinpiadas Mundiales. Una quincena de delegaciones extranjeras participaron en la 3ª « Copa del Mundo de Jóvenes Pastores ». Una treintena de jóvenes de entre 18 y 26 años, en formación agrícola o ya en activo, compitieron en formato itinerante por el título de Mejor Joven Pastor del Mundo del 25 de mayo al 1 de junio de 2024. Tras ser recibidos en París, todos los concursantes se embarcaron en un autobús con destino a Limousin, Aveyron, Auvernia, Borgoña y la Bergerie Nationale de Rambouillet para descubrir la diversidad de la ganadería ovina francesa. Se reencontraron con las legendarias Ovinpiades nacionales, así como con algunas nuevas, como el esquileo en quad y la esgrima móvil.

Un concurso francés que se ha hecho mundial

En Francia, en los próximos años, más de uno de cada dos ganaderos de ovejas se jubilará. En este contexto de necesidad de revitalización del sector, INTERBEV Ovins y el sector ovino en su conjunto organizan desde 2005 las Ovinpiades des Jeunes Bergers, los Campeonatos de Europa se celebran anualmente y, tras 10 años de ausencia, las Ovinpiades Mondiales vuelven a Francia. La 1ª Copa del Mundo de Jóvenes Pastores fue organizada en 2011 por Nueva Zelanda (en Oamaru). Al año siguiente, los profesionales del ovino decidieron fundar la

Asociación Internacional para crear una red dinámica de formación agrícola, favorecer los intercambios entre jóvenes y la instalación de futuros criadores de ovejas. La 2ª Copa del Mundo fue organizada por Francia en 2014 en el Sommet de l'élevage en Auvernia. El Campeonato de Europa se organiza cada año durante la final nacional de las Ovinpiadas en el Salón Internacional de la Agricultura.

De los 4 rincones del mundo, inspirar vocaciones e intercambiar ideas

Durante este concurso, la profesión de criador de ovejas revelará sus bazas para atraer vocaciones. De hecho, al igual que Francia, otros países se enfrentan a las mismas dificultades para renovar a sus criadores de ovejas. Con la organización de la Copa del Mundo de Jóvenes Pastores, la Association Internationale des Ovinpiades pretende fomentar los intercambios en torno al tema de la formación. Se ofrecen otras iniciativas a los jóvenes, como becas « mano amiga » para cursos individuales de formación en producción ovina o viajes de estudios a países productores de ovino de la Unión Europea: Reino Unido, Irlanda, Europa del Este, Italia, España, etc. Estos cursos y viajes tienen varios objetivos y ventajas: despertar el interés de los jóvenes por la ganadería ovina, descubrir y apreciar las prácticas de los profesionales del sector ovino en otros países, en todos los sectores, conocer cómo se enseña la ganadería ovina en los países europeos vecinos, constituir una « agenda » europea del sector ovino, etc. Cerca de 500 jóvenes ya se han beneficiado de estos fondos en el pasado. Con el relanzamiento de las Ovinpiades Mondiales, Francia también ha querido relanzar este dispositivo de intercambios.

14 países disfrutan de una semana de competición y mucho más



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ciones de todo el mundo con una fuerte tradición ganadera ovina. Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bélgica, Benín, Canadá, Chile, Costa de Marfil, Irlanda, Perú, España, Togo y el Reino Unido respondieron a la llamada. Durante la última semana de mayo de 2024, 14 países estuvieron representados por 29 candidatos. Las delegaciones estaban compuestas por 2 jóvenes – chicos y chicas – de entre 18 y 26 años (en formación agrícola o trabajando desde hace menos de un año) y un acompañante, y competían por el título de Mejor Joven Pastor del Mundo. Las redes Europa e Internacional de la DGER trabajaron duro para identificar, organizar y/o apoyar a las delegaciones de África (Benín, Costa de Marfil, Togo), América (Argentina, Chile, Perú, Quebec) y Europa (Armenia, Bélgica, España, Irlanda, Reino Unido). Además, algunas delegaciones llegaron una semana antes del evento y visitaron establecimientos agrícolas (Benín, Chile, Costa de Marfil y Togo), mientras que otras permanecieron una semana después del evento (Argentina, Perú). Francia estuvo representada por Iris y Benoît, los mejores jóvenes pastores 2024 seleccionados el 24 de febrero de 2024 en la final nacional de las Ovinpiadas en el Salón Internacional de la Agricultura de París.

5 departamentos cruzados, 6 eventos...

Para dar a conocer la diversidad de la ganadería ovina, se decidió organizar un concurso itinerante que combinara pruebas, visitas e intercambios. Las Ovinpiades des Jeunes Bergers son una invitación a descubrir la profesión de ganadero ovino desde dentro, a través de la experiencia práctica. El concurso mundial mantiene la tradición de las pruebas legendarias de las finales nacionales, pero adereza la experiencia añadiendo 2 nuevas pruebas emblemáticas: el esquileo y la esgrima en quad.

And the winners are...



- Benoît, representando a Francia, en primer lugar,
- Gaby, representando a Australia, en segundo lugar,
- Iris, representando a Francia, en tercer lugar.

Para conocer la lista completa de ganadores y más información sobre la puntuación de cada prueba, haga clic [aquí](#).

Oportunidades para la enseñanza agrícola

Más allá del concurso en sí, este evento es una oportunidad para mostrar el compromiso de la enseñanza agrícola francesa

con la promoción del sector ovino, destacar la prioridad concedida a la inserción profesional de los estudiantes formados en la enseñanza agrícola y contribuir a la renovación de las generaciones en el sector agrícola. Sobre todo, la envergadura de este concurso pone de relieve la dimensión europea e internacional de la formación de los futuros agricultores, así como la apertura de los establecimientos agrícolas franceses, que se refleja en el hecho de que acogen a aprendices extranjeros. Las redes europea e internacional de enseñanza agrícola han trabajado intensamente junto a los organizadores de las Ovinpiades para atraer a sus socios y contribuir a potenciar la presencia de delegaciones extranjeras procedentes de Europa, África y Sudamérica. Sobre este último punto, este evento es una oportunidad para reforzar o construir asociaciones o acciones puestas en marcha por los establecimientos de educación y formación agrícola.

Pastoralismo: entre formación y profesionalidad

La red de África Occidental invitó a 3 equipos – de Benín, Costa de Marfil y Togo – a participar en las Ovinpiades mundiales organizadas por Inn’ovin. Cada equipo estuvo acompañado por un representante de las *Fédérations nationales des communes pastorales* (FNCP), que sirvió de enlace entre la formación y la profesión. La preparación específica de las Ovinpiades se organizó en cada uno de los 3 países, por una parte in situ con los guías, con los ganaderos y los centros ovinos, y por otra parte a distancia con los liceos agrícolas franceses de 3 regiones diferentes famosas por su producción ovina (PACA, Occitanie, Normandie) con el intercambio de consejos, documentos, fotos y vídeos, y en contacto con la profesión ovina local.

Del proyecto FSPI a las Ovinpiades

La delegación peruana estaba formada por representantes de dos establecimientos identificados en el marco de un proyecto FSPI sobre alimentación sostenible, que se llevará a cabo entre 2022 y 2023. En el marco de este proyecto, se identificaron 3

establecimientos peruanos y se pusieron en contacto con 3 establecimientos franceses.

¡Formación con el subcampeón de 2024!

La delegación chilena procedía de una escuela del sur de la Patagonia (Coyaique), nuevo socio de la red chilena identificado en el último foro franco-chileno de educación agrícola organizado en 2022. Esta fue la ocasión para la escuela de traer por primera vez alumnos a Francia y de concretar la asociación en ciernes. La delegación chilena llegó antes de las Ovinpiadas y fue recibida por la EPL de Nevers y la EPL de Fontaines, donde se reunió con el vicecampeón 2024 para una sesión de formación.

Oportunidades para desarrollar asociaciones

La delegación argentina, procedente de la provincia de Santa Cruz (Patagonia), es el resultado de un proyecto conjunto con el Instituto Nacional de Enseñanza Técnica (INET) de Argentina, cuyo objetivo es identificar las provincias que tienen vínculos con el principal organismo de formación profesional de Argentina (INET), con el fin de establecer asociaciones entre los establecimientos de estas provincias y los establecimientos agrícolas franceses. Tras las Ovinpiadas, fueron recibidos por el Liceo Agrícola Jean Errecart, la EPL de Pau y la EPL de Castelnaudary para conocer mejor el sector ovino, los agentes de la formación y el sector profesional.

Para Europa

La Escuela de pastores de Andalucía, en Granada, fue seleccionada entre una decena de establecimientos ibéricos para participar en este concurso, por su dinamismo, capacidad de reacción y voluntad de desarrollar empresas cooperativas. Los candidatos fueron recibidos por el coordinador de la red España/Portugal en los pastos de montaña de Sierra Nevada en diciembre de 2023. A continuación, se trabajará en los proyectos de movilidad y asociación previstos con la dirección

de la escuela en beneficio de los jóvenes estudiantes españoles y franceses. El próximo encuentro de las Ovinpiadas será europeo, en directo desde el SIA 2025, y esperamos que el formato internacional no tenga una tregua de 10 años antes de volver a confrontar las culturas pastorales de cada país con tradición ovina. *Contactos: Paul Ménard y Vincent Vanberkel, coordinadores de los concursos juveniles internacionales de educación agrícola (+ solicitar los datos de contacto de los coordinadores de la red en los países correspondientes), paul.menard@educagri.fr y vincent.vanberkel@educagri.fr.*



Bergerie Nationale de Rambouillet



Épreuve de la Tonte













Épreuve de pose de clôture



Candidats Argentins



Candidats Canadiens



Candidats Péruviens



Candidat Arménien



Candidats Béninois



Candidats Ivoiriens



Candidats Togolais



Candidats Australiens



Candidats Belges



Candidats Français



Candidats Italiens



Candidats Espagnols



Candidats du Royaume-Uni



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Ovinpiades mondiales 2024

French farmers and researchers' groups talk to Australians

On September 13, 2023, the French Embassy, through its Counsellor on Agricultural Affairs, organized a hybrid event aimed at promoting to Australian counterparts the approaches of farmers' groups in France, as drivers for achieving sustainability targets: reducing the use of inputs, improving soil health, taking better account of animal welfare, improving resilience through value adding.



Vincent Hebrail, Counsellor (agriculture) Australia/New Zealand, based at the French Embassy in Australia

The event, held both at the Residence of France and virtually, was opened by the French and EU Ambassadors to Australia.

After a presentation by the French Ministry of Agriculture on the DEPHY, 30 000 and GIEE farm networks, four farmers' groups took the floor to testify successively on their projects and results :

- Reducing phytosanitary products in vineyards (Pays de la Loire)
- Conservation agriculture in mixed crop-livestock farming in an oceanic climate (Normandy)
- Improving animal welfare and farmer well-being (Brittany)
- Adding value to milk through agroecological practices and the creation of a collective cheese dairy processing unit (Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes)

They presented their practices with a passion and professionalism that were highly convincing to the Australian audience, which included representatives from the federal government, the State of Victoria, research, the farming industry and the agency against cruelty to animals.

INRAe then gave an overview of the state of research on the subject, highlighting indicators (including the treatment frequency index), data collection and the scientific and statistical methodologies supporting the analysis of such approaches. This was of particular interest to Australian counterparts, who wished similar work were going on in Australia.

Finally, before a question-and-answer session, the organization Agrifutures Australia took the floor to describe the Australian agricultural sector's sustainability approach, and in particular its goal of net emissions neutrality by 2030.



Jean-Pierre Thebault, Ambassador of France to Australia



Gabriel Visentin, ambassador of European Union to Australia

While a cocktail party closed the event at the Residence of France, allowing for less formal exchanges, questions from participants, both online and in attendance, focused on key points. These included the feasibility of European Green Deal objectives, in relation to Common Agricultural Policy subsidies; digital technologies (Optidose in viticulture) used by French farmers; and the state of development of organic farming in France.

All in all, the event highlighted the French agroecological approach, supported by a high-level, collaborative research effort, as well as the French conviction in the necessity and achievability of the sustainability objectives set by France and the EU.

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