



SINER-GI project

Montpellier Plenary meeting

6 – 7 September 2006

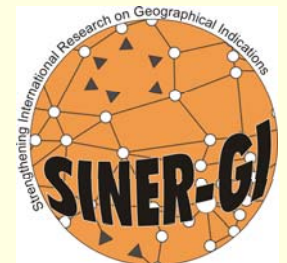
Case presentations

Beaufort

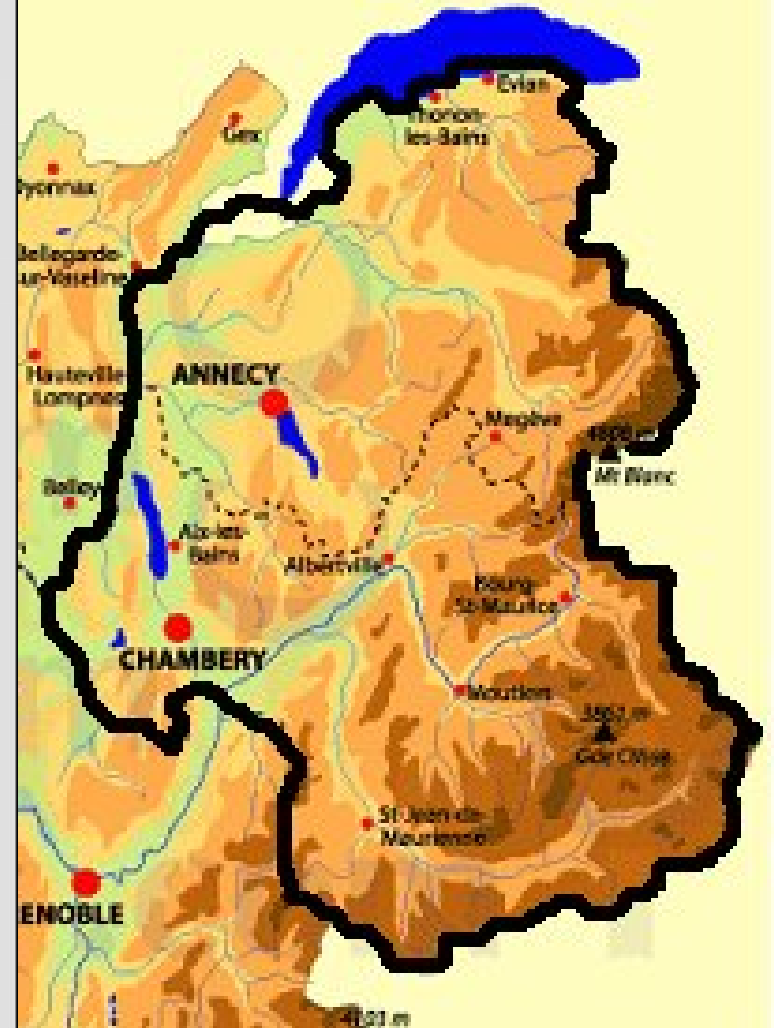
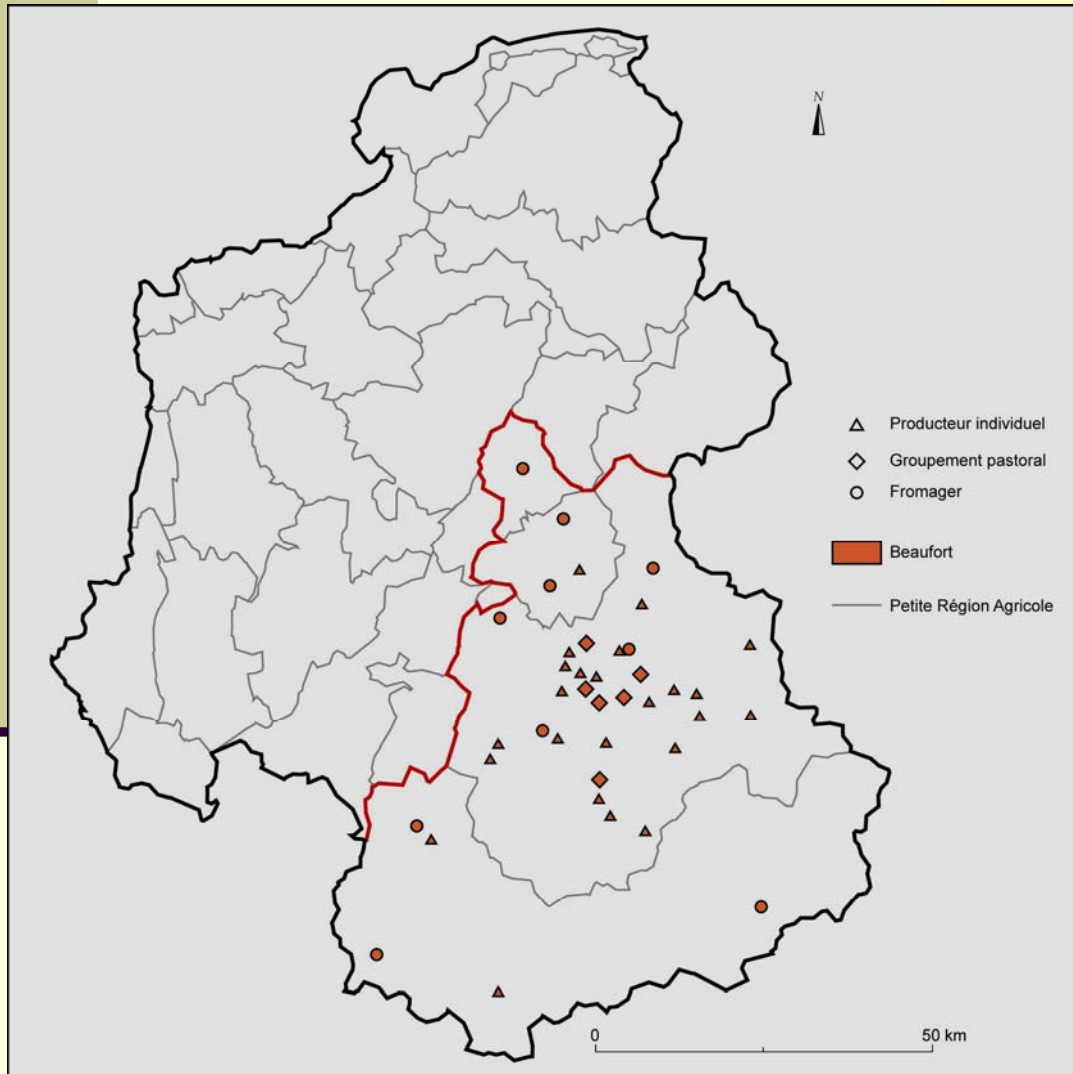
Julien Frayssignes – ENSA Toulouse

1. General informations

- Cooked pressed cheese made with cow's milk.
- Produced in *Beaufortain*, *Tarentaise* and *Maurienne* valleys (Savoie, Alps).
- Regulated by decree of 4th of April 1968.
- 4412 tons produced in 2005 (+ 49 % since 1991).



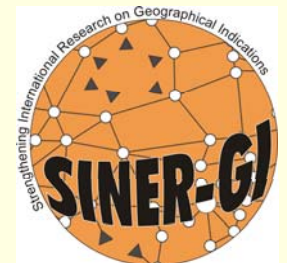
Area of production



Production of Beaufort

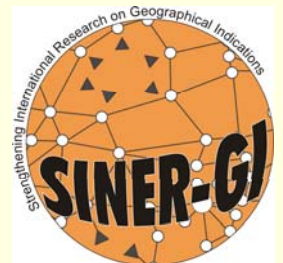
Type of product	Production (2005, in tons)
Emmental	246 000
Comté (PDO)	51 000
Beaufort (PDO)	4 000
Other	11 000
Total cooked pressed cheese	312 000

CNIEL, 2005



2. A specific history

- A productive system based on collective pastures born in the Middle Age
- 1950 : development of hydroelectrics dams and winter tourism → strong rural exodus
- Beaufort supply chain : a development strategy counter to French agriculture (high quality, high prices)
- A strong technological effort in order to control the product (partnership with INRA and local institutions)
- A product saved from disappearance, an activity maintained in a mountain region



A rigorous code of practice

- Raw milk
 - Tarine and Abondance breeds only
 - 5 000 kilos per year per cow in lactation
 - Ensilage prohibited, additional feeding limited
 - 5 months maturing
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- Term "**summer**" applied to the milk productions from June to October, including milk from the mountain pastures.
 - Term "**chalet d'alpage**" applied to summer productions, produced according to traditional methods, in mountain chalets above an altitude of 1500 metres, using the milk production from a single herd of cows in chalets.



3. Socio-economic analysis

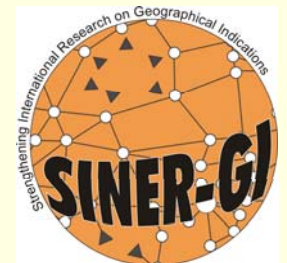
- 650 milk producers
- 7 cooperatives (75 % of production) and 2 private firms
- 29 individual dairymen and 6 pastoral groups

- 85 % of Beaufort sold to regional and national wholesalers, who work with supermarkets.
- 15 % of Beaufort sold locally in cooperative shops.



3. Socio-economic analysis (2)

- Average production per farms : 100 000 litres (France : 198 000)
- Some cooperatives have less than 10 producers
- The best paid milk in France (550 euros for 1 000 litres)
- An upmarket product (« Prince of Gruyères »)
- About 1 000 jobs depending on Beaufort operation and cheese dairies.



Main stakes

- Decrease of consumption due to high prices
- Stocks of cheese in caves (diversification ? sale of milk ?)
- Arrival of Lactalis group in the supply chain :
disruption of the organisation ?
- Relationships with supermarket
- Intensification of the links with tourism
(local sale, relationships with ski resorts...)



4. Conclusion : the price of quality

- A good example of a rigorous code of practice
- A success story in terms of added value and rural development (preservation of activity)

- A trajectory that contains weaknesses :
 - high costs of production in a difficult context (price of milk decreasing)
 - Small size of firms : strong restructuring

« *One path of (fragile) success, but not the only one* »

