

# **Annex 7**

**Reports WP 4  
France**

**DOLPHINS – WP4 REPORTS**  
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**THEME 1: RESEARCH METHODS**

Many studies have been conducted on quality products in general and OLPs in particular. Our previous papers (literature review and discussion report) focused in large part on methodology. We remind here main conclusions:

**1- Three types of investigations:**

- ?? Economy: theory of signal (Marette, 2000 ; Trognon, 1999), theory of convention (Sylvander, 1995), shopping basket (Mollard), consumption technology in new economy (Requier-desjardins, 2000)... ;
- ?? Sociology: anthropology (Faure, 2000), linguistic and semiology (Alessandrin, Brunetière, 1999), consumption models (Lambert, 87)... ;
- ?? Marketing and Pluridisciplinary: behaviour (Secodip), preferences (Siriex, 2000), cognitive dissonance (Gallen, 2000)...

**2- Two main questions of research:**

?? A better understanding on attachment of consumers-citizens to OLPs: beliefs and practices.  
OLP belongs to a traditional agriculture and food system with its own rules, prohibitions and prescriptions... In a new relational Marketing point of view, it seems useful to deep the knowledge of OLP consumers behaviour and values, not only transactions (scanner panels, sales data) but also relations paying particular attention to factual experience and practices: way and location of encounter, culinary usage, consumption practices (conviviality, sociability, festivity), filiation, socio-cultural imaginary... Pluridisciplinary and systemic analysis of consumption values, considering the consumer not only as a buyer but also as a user of regional product, seem to suit really to this situation.

?? Determine new evolution ways of OLPs in term of territorial and environmental effects integration.  
In other words, the question is: how to get modernity in the tradition? On this point, the difficulty of investigation is twice. First, french consumers expectations are not well defined (on environment for example). Secondly, it's a complex problematic which has more implications than the only consumption sphere (market), but also society and citizenship.  
It concerns other fields in a logic of innovation: definition and test of new types of advertising, purchasing location..., taking into account closeness between consumers and OLP.

**3- Kind of research: pluridisciplinary and prospectives (marketing, social and human sciences)**

In this context, **it's necessary to define and to apply a combination of tools (pluridisciplinary) or new ones** that allow to understand complexity of representations and their links with behaviour, considering the consumer not only as a buyer but also as a user of regional product.

We'd like to insist on qualitative methods. Not only because it's our speciality, but also because it's seems particularly important when the subject is not well stabilised in public opinion (like environment): participants use their own words and references. This is the only way to point out main elements of an attitude and to better understand and explain reasons of an apparent ambiguous attitude.

Appropriate data collection methods: more qualitative with a systemic point of view (semiology, anthropology, sociology):

- ?? Representations (opinion, attitude, motivations, expectations): image and linguistic analysis, focus groups, sensorial analysis;
- ?? Usage behaviour: observation of practices (itinerary method) with in-depth interviews;
- ?? Purchasing behaviour: scanner panel, sail data.

As far as possible, we recommend to use multivariate and cluster analysis in order to synthesise qualitative data in an operational view.

Problematic	Kind of research	Methods : data collection and analysis
Understanding relation between consumers and OLP	Values, beliefs and attitude (declaration)	- semiological analysis of advertising <sup>1</sup> (products category, region...) - focus group - sensorial evaluation (descriptive and hedonic)
	Practices : purchase, culinary, consumption (observation)	Itinerary method <sup>2</sup>
	Consumption behaviour (measure)	Scanner panel Sail data
Prospectives: new evolution way	Diagnostic, new ideas	semiological analysis of advertising (same theme in other fields)
	Communication, education : appropriation and effects of new informations and experiences	focus groups with expert and naïve consumers citizens <sup>3</sup>
	New evolution way	scenario on the base of expert opinions : professionals and initiated consumers

## THEME 4: COMMUNICATION

### 1- General approach

What follows is the concern of:

- a generic approach of quality which concerns a few part of OLP specificity;
- cognitive information which concerns a rational consumer, relational consumer expectations, shared values between producers and consumers (real-life, experience, meeting) aren't treated.

European consumers ask for safe food. But moreover, they want an answer about their needs when they eat something. They want something good and healthy. They wish they could do their choice inside a varied offer. Meal must be produced with worry of respecting animal well being and environment. They want to be clearly and correctly informed on composition, nutritive value, conservation possibilities, origin, and in some case production ways about proposed offer.

In France, hardly one person out of two estimates approximately sufficient data she has about food (CREDOC). But more precisely, three out of four person estimate that they are not sufficiently informed on food transformation process, near seven out of ten about culture conditions or way to breed animals and 64% about food safety. And one out of two person think that they have a sufficient information about food conservation and nutritional quality. Labelled products, which have enjoyed a real work of communication (communication, pedagogic effort, and independent organism...) and which credibility isn't called into question, are nowadays better recognised than the others.

But linguistic studies and behaviour observations show that if a consumer asks and receives a lot of information about one subject, it's not sure that he integrates them in his images (information suitability) and a fortiori in his behaviour (cognitive dissonance (Gallen C.), conception (Giordan))...

1. Methodology in : *Travaux de linguistique n°5-6*, Université d'Angers, avril 1994, Anne-Marie Houdebine et Valérie Brunetière.

2. Methodology in : Desjeux Dominique, "La méthode des itinéraires. Une approche qualitative pour comprendre la dimension matérielle, sociale et culturelle de la consommation", in *Actes de la 5ème journée de Recherche en marketing de Bourgogne : Distribution, Achat, Consommation*, pp 174-181, 2000.

3. Sylvander Bertil, "Les tendances de consommation en produits issus de l'agriculture biologique : vulnérabilité et fidélisation. Une approche par le marketing d'apprentissage", in *Actes de la 5ème journée de Recherche en marketing de Bourgogne : Distribution, Achat, Consommation*, pp 145-152, 2000.

Moreover, information varies about quality and quantity in function of products. Information seems to be sufficient about "simple" products as wines, drinks, biscuits, yoghurts or packed cheeses. But generally, brands weight is dominating for these products. And when we talk about elaborate or non transformed products (Fruits and vegetables, meat (unpacked), fish, there are some gaps on etiquette. A particular case concerns meat, cooked pork meats and fish. Consumer think they're not well informed more on unpacked products or fresh product.

It's necessary to give a maximum of information that can be easily read at different moments and levels. The origin of production on etiquette means a place, a "terroir" and refers to the concept of nature ("naturalité") of the product but these elements are not clearly indicated. And consumers can take the time to read these elements at their home. It's important for consumers to integrate product's complexity.

Concerning the way to inform, etiquette seems to be a good one. It can be possible to have a two levelled reading. In large characters, we can have limit date of conservation (DLC in French) and origin of product. Because consumers haven't enough time to read when they do their purchases and they're submitted to different and unexpected things. And in small characters, we can have others informations which can be read after purchases: processing, breeding, producers or processors know-how, specific qualities of the product, food conservation and all which is specific to the product as regards its origin. We can also imagine some points of reference that call up consumers memory or the sociocultural imagination...

In the place where consumers make their purchases, it's important to have more information about origin of product too. It can be materialised by informative notice board in department or informative terminal with sheets presenting products and their origin.

Television is also a good way to inform. French think that it's a good way to be reassured because it permits not to go beside essential information. And moreover, they think that Consumers Associations (52%) or an institute as INC (Institut National de la Consommation) (36%) are most credible than firms (5%) or government (4%). Because they think they are more objectives.

## **2- Specific approach for OLP**

Classical communication tools of marketing which precede (\$1) suit well to sectional development logic but less for collective territorial logic (OLP).

**Collective communications analysis of advertising type** make by advertising institutions for OLP (Volailles fermières IGP, 1999 ; Produits de qualité de la vallée du Rhône, 1997 ; Veau fermier élevé sous la mère, 1999 ; Signes de qualité et Environnement, 2001 ; Fromages des Alpes du Nord, 2000 ) show **existence of a gap** between :

- a collective communication based on backward-looking and pretty bizarre ("folkloristes") values;
- technique reality of productions and producers point of view about their own system.

Then, it's the general problem of information asymmetry or we can say a gap of coherence about OLP.

For instance, the main axe about the communication of "calf breeds under his mother" in Red Label (PGI) is natural food of the calf at the udder of his mother (Value of Nature) whereas quality product is determined by getting a white meat, that implicate physical threats for animal like confinement.

This inconsistency can be traduced by a consumer's gap of trust in term of honesty (Signes de qualité et Environnement, 2001). Then, it's necessary for these collective institutions to put in line their technology (set of techniques and practices) with their communication. This problem come from a gap of medium use for communication and from a gap of specific competencies. Often, OLPs promotion organisms ask for promotion agencies without previous definition of their values and knowledge about deep expectations of their customers. Then, publicists put models more often simplistic and stereotyped.

Otherwise, original **communication initiatives are observable for OLP**. They are based on the part of relational and experience exchanged between farmer and consumer-citizen. In France, different studies (OGM, Environment) show that for quality product and OLP in particular, consumer trusts in producers competence (french rural tradition), more than processors or distributors. Specifics initiatives which know a kind of success come from producers (farm visits, cooperatives visits...) and they are in relation with tourism (wines roads, guest room). Production and sell places are also communication and mediation places; an important part is all put on. Then, consumer isn't only a simple information receptor but becomes a kind of actor in an exchange personalised relation traducing by specificities in term of language, conviviality, symbolic, knowledge... Producers and consumers build up together a system of values and share them next (Concept of "patrimonialisation", cf. Theme 5).

It seems necessary for us to study, to define and to develop more these forms of communication that will permit renewal of relations between Agriculture et Society.

## THEME 5: OLP OFFER: IDENTITY, SYMBOLS, BENEFITS

OLPs cover a socio-cultural imaginary particularly rich: the part of symbolic and intangible is essential (Cf. Préférences du panel scannerisé: Sirieix, 2000). These notions are based on society deep collective values and integrate also individual experience of each user.

That symbolic richness made joy of many anthropologists. In that case, OLPs aren't only food products: cultural and heritage aspects are important. Since its apparition, notion of heritage limited in the past at something monumental (castle...) broadened to take in count perishables, ephemeral and highly handled things like "terroir" products (Bérard, Marchenay, 1995). As elements of heritage, **OLP are characterised by a specific link with a place** ("terroir", country, space) **and the time** (historic origin, traditions, biological cycles and seasons...). Myths and rituals transmitted by oral way take a particular importance in organisation and exploitation of a sensible world; the living (Claude LEVI-STRAUSS, *La pensée sauvage*, 1962).

The image of OLP is often build up and driven by tourists (Cf. Theme 4: Communication §2: circuits, farm visits) who become "terroir" and heritage actors. The image is linked with tangible characteristics of the product which can be verified after product user purchase (freshness, particular taste...) but also with a set of other things more intangibles (environment, landscape...). Some gestures, objects, words, taste lose their original signification and become real symbols. It's the same for old objects hung up at wall farm that make happy visitor: diplomas, postal cards, fabrication instruments...

For instance, preservation of horns for local cows and attachment at bells in the case of "Beaufort" cheese shows well this idea. Bells lost their first function (They were used to find cows in the fog at milking hour) but now, they participate at folk of mountain, at this OLP image and reputation.

Another example is for "Abondance" cheese: smoke emitted in room by wood fire used to warm up again milk, give a smoked taste at the cheese (Faure, 2000). It's the smoked taste which will be considered by some typical lovers of this cheese even if gas or electricity took nowadays the place of chimney fire.

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## THEME 2 : MARKETING RECOMMENDATIONS (COMMUNICATION, LABELLING/BRANDING, DISTRIBUTION)

*Preliminary :*

- ?? First, we should bear in mind that French consumer's competence has been elevated thanks to a public and voluntarism policy about QOS (Quality Officials Signs<sup>4</sup>) set up from 1960. So, the two notions of Origin and Quality may not be exactly superposed, e.g. the system of food Quality Officials Signs is not only linked to Origin aspects.
- ?? Secondly, the situation is totally different regarding the product category (fresh products or not), the indication of origin (PDO/PGI), the retail channel (Supermarket / direct marketing, within the production area / outside). In the same logic, I think we could distinguish Wine from the others products.

### **1- Diagnostic : the problematic of trust in OLP**

1-1 The factors of trust in OLP are twice:

In a recent research (not yet published), we identified two main factors of confidence in OLP (in the case of fresh products):

1 **Control system:** French *Quality Officials Signs* (institutional brand) give guaranty to the consumer thanks to a control system: especially Label Rouge (associated with PGI) and at a lower level AOC (e.g. PDO) and AB (Organic Agriculture). But on the other

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4. AOC, Label Rouge, Certificat de Conformité Produit, Agriculture Biologique.

hand, controls draw products (in terms of general image) to an industrial world: that means for French consumers mass production and profit logic.

↳ **Short distribution channels:** to have trust in products quality, consumer preferences go to direct contact with producer, handcraft or retail merchant (considered as an expert in quality). Confidence is based on shared values between partners, "little" producers and "little" consumers. It is particularly the case of farm products with a PDO or PGI labels and organic products. On the opposite, products sold in Supermarket are depreciated : these are seen as a gesture without tie.

1-2 In the same logic, obstacles to confidence are also twice:

↳ **Opacity, lack of honesty and information:**

This criticism of opacity concerns PDO/PGI products and particularly those with the official brand *Label Rouge*. On that base, collective communications analysis of advertising type make by advertising institutions for OLP shows existence of a gap between :

- a collective communication based on backward-looking and pretty bizarre ("folkloristes") values ;
- technique reality of productions and producers point of view about their own system.

Then, it is the general problem of information asymmetry or we can say a gap of coherence about OLP.

*For instance, the main axe about the communication of "calf breeds under its mother" in Red Label (PGI) is natural food of the calf at the udder of its mother (Value of Nature) whereas quality product is determined by getting a white meat, that implicate physical threats for animal like confinement.*

↳ **Opposition between Quality and Capitalistic distribution channels**

Most of French consumers think that Quality research and Profit research are incompatible. For instance, in the case of organic products, profit research and mass production would lead to a lack of control credibility.

## 2- Consumer expectations and Recommendations

2-1 Cognitives expectations : more visibility and consistency

↳ **Communication:**

OLP should define a communication within a pedagogic processing on the following issues:

- Quality and Environmental promises for consumers: schedule of rules content, which characteristics;
- Control policy: On what apply controls, who is in charge of controls.

Then, it is also necessary for these collective institutions to put in line their technology (set of techniques and practices) with their communication. This problem comes from a gap of medium use for communication and from a gap of specific competencies. Often, OLPs promotion organisms ask for promotion agencies without previous definition of their values and knowledge about deep expectations of their customers. Then, publicists put models more often simplistic and stereotyped.

*Limits of cognitive actions : linguistic studies and behaviour observations show that if a consumer asks and receives a lot of information about one subject, it is not sure that he integrates them in his images (information suitability) and a fortiori in his behaviour -cognitive dissonance (Gallen C.).*

↳ **Labelling/branding:**

These cognitive aspects are in relation with the schedule of requirements and the system of control. So, it concerns the role of institutional and collective brands (PDO/PGI) more than privacy ones.

2-2 Relational expectations : increase the tie between OLP producers and consumers, create tie with citizens

Only a set of actions could communicate engagement and voluntarism.

↳ **Communication:**

?? **The principle is to reintroduce producer in the middle of the system, as a mediator between nature-environment, product and consumer:** he cares about nature and product.

In our previous paper, we have already underlined the fact that French consumer trusts in producers competence (because of the French rural tradition), more than processors or distributors.



?? **And develop the exchanges between farmers and consumer-citizens:**

Following this logic, production and selling point are also communication and mediation places. Then, consumer is not only a simple information receptor but becomes a kind of actor in an exchange personalised relation traducing by specificities in terms of language, conviviality, symbolic, knowledge... Producers and consumers build up together a system of values and share them next (Concept of "patrimonialisation").

*Original communication initiatives are already observable for OLP. They are based on the part of relational and experience exchanged between farmer and consumer-citizen. Specifics initiatives which know a kind of success come from producers (farm visits, cooperatives visits...) and they are in relation with tourism (wines roads, guest room).*

?? **OLPs Communication should cover a socio-cultural imaginary particularly rich:** the part of symbolic and intangible is essential.

*These notions are based on society deep collective values and integrate also individual experience of each user. OLPs are not only food products: cultural and heritage aspects are important. As elements of heritage, **OLP are characterised by a specific link with a place** ("terroir", country...) **and the time** (historic origin, traditions, biologic cycles and seasons...). The image of OLP is often build up and driven by tourists who become "terroir" and heritage actors. The image is linked to tangible characteristics of the product which can be verified after product user purchase (freshness, particular taste...) but also to a set of other things more intangibles (environment, landscape...).*

?? **But OLP should not be fixed in the tradition and the past** (what we call the French paradox of Label Rouge). **They should get modernity in the tradition.**

#### ↳ Labelling/branding:

On the contrary to 2.1, these relational aspects are in relation with symbols and beliefs. So, it is the role of the privacy brands (PDO/PGI) to create ties with their customers and to define a range of products in function of consumer's behaviour, expectations and values.

We should distinguish here different situations:

- Product is sold within the area: to inhabitants or tourist...;
- Product is sold outside the area (within the country or not, within Europe or not): to connoisseurs or not...

#### ↳ Distribution:

Propositions are :

- **Increase all the direct contact with public** (for the OLP which are sold in supermarket): supermarket sell promotion with producers, public events (meeting), open day;
- **Develop as much as possible purchase location perceived as shorter by consumer** (direct marketing).

## THEME 4 : RESEARCH AGENDA

### 1- Hypotheses/Objectives :

#### 1-1 Hypotheses

#### ?? **Relational Marketing more than Transactional**

There are two opposite ways to consider the product assessment by consumer:

- holistic approach: in the case of affective purchase, cultural goods for instance, consumer provides a global assessment of the product (experiential model);
- analytic evaluation: in the case of high implication purchase consumer makes a rational reasoning to assess product before purchasing it (multi-attribute model).

We consider here that OLP belongs, as a common goods (patrimony goods), more to the emotional and cultural sphere than to the rational one. Preference to measurable cues (quantitative approach) is a fundamental characteristic of transactional Marketing and seems to contradict to the symbolic dimensions of food products and especially OLP.

So, the central hypothesis and derived methodology must be :

consumer global assessment  $\approx$  categorization process according to individual experiences, education, preferences, socio-cultural issues and environment... (heurism of choice)  $\approx$  analysis of representations through qualitative more than quantitative techniques (ethnomarketing).

*We would like to insist on qualitative methods that seem particularly relevant when the subject is not well established in public opinion (like environment): participants use their own words and references. This is the only way to point out main elements of an attitude and to better understand and explain reasons of an apparent ambiguous attitude.*

### ?? **Hypothetico-Inductive approach more than Hypothetico-deductive**

In the same logic, we would like to catch your attention on the limits of using a general framework, like the Total Quality Model (Grünert et al.) to analyse, understand and predict OLP consumer behaviour. First, in such model consumer (buyer) is considered as a rational person responding to various influences of stimuli (marketing and environmental). Secondly, we can lose the diversity and the richness of initial information on consumer as far as we should absolutely put collected data into the model.

That is the reason why our preference goes to a combination of a hypothetical approach to collect the data and inductive methods to analyse them. Multidimensional techniques, like factor and cluster analysis take here of course an important place.

1-2 Main objectives :

### ?? **Better understand ties between consumers-citizens and OLPs: beliefs and practices:**

- In a relational Marketing point of view
- Multidisciplinary approach and systemic analysis of consumption values, considering the consumer not only as a buyer but also as a user of regional product

It seems necessary to better understand the differences in consumption patterns within Europe and define factors of success within area of origin (vs. outside), within country of origin (vs. outside) within Europe (vs. outside).

When defining the methodology, we must pay a particular attention to the choice of products we want to study, the situations (purchasing and consumption) and the sample of consumers citizens we want to observe.

### ?? **Determine new evolution ways of OLPs in term of territorial and environmental effects integration** (to renew the relation between agriculture and society):

In other words, the question is: how to get modernity in the tradition? It seems to be a relevant topic if we want to develop the market within European countries and outside Europe.

*On this point, for instance in France, the difficulty of investigation is double. First, French consumers expectations are not well defined (on environment for example). Secondly, it is a complex set of problems which has more implications than the only consumption sphere (market), but also society and citizenship. It concerns other fields in a logic of innovation: definition and test of new types of advertising, purchasing location..., taking into account closeness between consumers and OLP.*

## **2- Outline of the methods : multidisciplinary approach and prospectives (marketing, social and human sciences)**

In this context, **we suggest to apply a combination of tools or new ones** that allow to understand complexity of representations and their links with behaviour, considering the consumer not only as a buyer but also as a user of regional product.

Topics	Kind of research	Methods : data collection and analysis
<b>Understanding relation between consumers and OLP (qualitative methods)</b>	Values, beliefs and attitude (declaration)	- Semiological analysis of advertising <sup>5</sup> (products category, region...) - Focus group - Laddering interviews
	Practices : purchase, culinary, consumption (observation)	Itinerary method <sup>6</sup> (observations and in depth interviews)
Understanding relation between consumers and OLP (quantitative methods)	Consumption behaviour (measure)	Scanner panel Sail data
	Consumer representations : purchase behaviour, attitudes...	National surveys on 1000 consumers for different European countries
<b>Prospectives: new evolution way</b>	Diagnostic, new ideas	Semiological analysis of advertising (same theme in other fields)
	Communication, education : appropriation and effects of new information and experiences	Focus groups with expert and naïve consumers citizens <sup>7</sup>
	New evolution way	Scenario on the base of expert opinions: professionals and initiated consumers

5. Methodology in : *Travaux de linguistique n°5-6*, Université d'Angers, avril 1994, Anne-Marie Houdebine et Valérie Brunetière.

6. Methodology in : Desjeux Dominique, "La méthode des itinéraires. Une approche qualitative pour comprendre la dimension matérielle, sociale et culturelle de la consommation", in *Actes de la 5ème journée de Recherche en marketing de Bourgogne : Distribution, Achat, Consommation*, pp 174-181, 2000.

7. Sylvander Bertil, "Les tendances de consommation en produits issus de l'agriculture biologique : vulnérabilité et fidélisation. Une approche par le marketing d'apprentissage", in *Actes de la 5ème journée de Recherche en marketing de Bourgogne : Distribution, Achat, Consommation*, pp 145-152, 2000.