



CAEN NORMANDY METROPOLIS



ENCOURAGING LOCAL AGRICULTURAL SECTORS FOR A HEALTHY, ACCESSIBLE FOOD SUPPLY

The Caen territory lies between land and sea, at the intersection of an agglomeration with a high level of services and land that is almost exclusively devoted to farming. The grain plateau coexists with cattle and horse farms while traditional market gardening activities tend to occupy the area behind the coastline. The historical and natural heritage takes the form of a network of towns and villages structured around the Orne river. Today, these geographical features allow a diversification of agricultural sectors with the close involvement of farmers, public authorities and associations in food issues.

The Caen Normandy Metropolis *Projet alimentaire territorial* (PAT) ("territorial food project", a French initiative to reinforce local agriculture) has highlighted the territory's response to the population's requirements in terms of good quality locally produced food. In a region traditionally devoted to field crops, the issue of relocation for sectors for health criteria partly concerns fruit, vegetables and pulses, in accordance with the national health and nutrition programme. The territory's agriculture is an important part of the people of Caen's identity. It structures the economy, the landscape, the lifestyle, the gastronomy and the quality of natural resources (water, air, soil, biodiversity). For this reason, there was substantial participation by organizations in the territory in a shared diagnosis carried out in 2018 and in the development of a local food strategy.

Local authorities are now involved in the structuring of new economic sectors, that are very promising in terms of local jobs and immediate benefits for inhabitants. 9% of farms in Calvados, mostly producing vegetables and rearing livestock, already sell their produce in short supply chains. This growing trend towards a local supply is supported by the Calvados Chamber of Agriculture which organizes networks (for example, *Bienvenue à la Ferme*, or Welcome to the Farm), events and technical support, in response to increasing demand.

KEY FIGURES FOR THE TERRITORY

- Population: 360,000 inhabitants
- 12.3% below the poverty threshold (19% in Caen, 7% in the outer suburbs)
- Area of 1,500 km²
- Agriculture occupies 72% of the territory
- 1,520 farms
- Gross production €120 million
- 9,200 jobs (agriculture and food-processing)
- 7,000 ha of vegetables
- 12% of the population cultivates a vegetable garden (10% of total consumption in the territory)
- Fruit and vegetables represent 15% of households' food budgets, and meat 27%
- 100 open-air markets

The Caen Normandy Metropolis PAT was adopted by the French Ministry of Agriculture at the national level on 26 February 2019 for its second phase of implementation. In this framework, an atlas of initiatives is being prepared with specific measures dedicated to the fight against food insecurity.

Access of all populations to a good quality food supply through the territorial food project

The mobilization of associations and producers in the PAT, in particular in the "Fostering Food Accessibility for All" (March 2018) and "Combating Food Waste" (April 2018) workshops enabled the rejection of specific actions in social priority districts. The associations who work with disadvantaged populations unanimously affirmed that the access of all populations to a healthy food supply is best achieved by facilities and shared spaces in public areas and apartment buildings, without targeting a specific population, and by encouraging exchanges between different food cultures, and combining cultural events with food-growing events. A project for a sustainable food centre on a former industrial plot on the Caen peninsula is the culmination of this strategic direction: the City of Caen has created an "Urbact" network ("Integrated Urban development approach") - entitled RU:RBAN (Urban Agriculture for resilient cities) - a management model for urban gardens developed in Rome, which shares its experience, approved as "Good Practices" by the European Union, in the management of family gardens.



*Jardin partagé de l'Amitié ("Shared garden of friendship"),
Saint-Jean Eudes district in Caen*



*The Caen territory encourages direct meetings between producers
and consumers through numerous markets.*

An atlas of initiatives to distribute information and raise awareness



Organic salads in the southern Caen agglomeration

The PAT has enabled discussion of the numerous tools that enable local accessibility to a good quality food supply in the towns around Caen: an employment integration project by the Atipic market gardening company created 13 jobs on a seven hectare plot in the Caen La Mer urban community, within the framework of the *territoire zéro chômeur* ("zero-unemployment territory") initiative. The IRTS (*Institut régional des travailleurs sociaux* or Regional Institute of Social Workers), integrates the food supply as a vector of health and social integration into its training. The *Bande de Sauvages* ("Band of Savages") association has set up its community restaurant *Sauvages sur un Plateau* which has a pay-what-you-like policy, and operates initiatives such as "gleaning" surplus crops, employment integration, and the preserving of surplus food. There and elsewhere, cooking workshops raise awareness of seasonal foods, on the basis of locally available fruit and vegetables. Social accessibility to food also involves large-scale catering operations and this has motivated Caen La Mer to organize sustainable food training days in order to encourage, through training the cooks, the use of local, fresh products in canteens, and the possibility of balancing meat-free menus. The territory also works with *Les Jardins d'Arlette*, an employment integration association which sells its organic vegetables locally and which has launched an aquaponics trial with a view to facilitating the supply of fish to those who are only able to buy fish rarely. In conclusion to this atlas, it appears that the innovations that are most suited to social demand and which are the most successful, are those offered in the framework of partnerships between local authorities, producers and local associations.