

1. SUSTAINABLE CROP AND LIVESTOCK INTEGRATION (INTEGRATED CROP-LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS)

CORRESPONDING MODULE 4

Introduction

The renaissance of the draught horse in France

The awareness of global warming and the excesses of intensive agriculture have changed people's minds and the feeling of returning to nature is felt. This is where the draught horse comes into its own as an ecologically clean traction "tool".

The agricultural horse is mainly found in three agricultural sectors:

- ✓ -Skidding
- ✓ -Viticulture
- ✓ -Market gardening

Some associations are now working to demonstrate that for certain cultivation conditions (sloping plots, vineyards, small areas, etc.) the use of animal traction is as profitable as the use of tractors. Moreover, the use of horses avoids soil compaction and protects the soil by limiting erosion.

Some natural areas on the outskirts of urban areas (e.g. the Bois de Vincennes) are particularly popular, especially for horse riding. Horse guards as well as documentation on the rules of good conduct can be developed by the management organisations of these areas. There are also more unexpected programmes such as eco-pastoralism on horseback, the development of a breed combining biodiversity and coastal maintenance, or maintenance and educational activities in areas classified as Natura 2000.

In France, the Percheron, the Comtois, the Cob Breton and the Ardennais are now used to pull leisure carriages, such as trailers. Caravan rides pulled by a draught horse offer breeders an additional source of income and allow the public - especially families - to rediscover the richness and beauty of rural areas.

This type of holiday at "horse's pace" is an opportunity for city dwellers to slow down, to meet up around natural activities and to rediscover simplicity.

Extract from the article: The renaissance of the draught horse in France

Source : <https://www.france-ecotours.com/fr/blog/chevaux-de-trait-en-france.html>

Description

In 2006, the **MELARIC** estate: a contraction of the first names of the owners Mélanie CUNIN and Aymeric HILLAIR on a 4 hectare vineyard.

Describing the **MELARIC** farm means, first and foremost, describing the two owners:

AYMERIC HILLAIRE - A conduit for knowledge

Passionate about water and fish since childhood, he discovered, at the age of 22, the world of vine and wine, at the school of agronomy, a strong passion that has driven him for 20 years.

In parallel to the **MELARIC** estate that he created in 2006, he is animated by the transmission of his knowledge, experiences and feelings.

His transmissions have been translated into the running of tasting courses but also and above all into the reception and accompaniment of trainees in reconversion. Beautiful encounters were born, regularly leading to the creation of a small wine estate.

Today, through the vegetable garden and orchard, but also through the new presence of animals on the estate (sheep, horses, chickens...), he is keen to seek a more intense and global connection with the living world: Plants, Man and Animals

MÉLANIE CUNIN - An expert in viticulture

Attracted by the world of plants and animals, she studied agronomy in Montpellier and specialised in viticulture-oenology.

A globetrotter for four years, she settled in the Saumur region, convinced that the softness of the Anjou region would be reflected in the balance of her wines.

Passionate about wine and sharing know-how, she became a journalist for a wine magazine for four years. Her experience of writing and transmission led her to teaching.

She then became a viticulture-oenology trainer for 7 years for adults undergoing professional retraining. This experience highlighted her desire to develop agricultural projects, life projects, projects that contribute to the emergence of a sustainable agricultural landscape.

- 1/ More environmentally friendly management
- 2/ The diversity of animals to adopt
- 3/ Simplified maintenance of hard-to-reach areas
- 4/ A technique adapted to sensitive natural areas
- 5/ The opportunity to communicate
- 6/ Eco-pastoralism, a proven method





Advantages and challenges

The couple made the following changes to successfully integrate the animals into their operation:

- Resize spaces to make efficient use of animals,
- Plant trees to provide shade and resting places for animals,
- Place hedges around the vineyards because the birds living there eat the insect pests,
- Let the sheep eat the weeds, turn the soil and fertilise the soil,
- Harvesting with their horses.

All our efforts are paying off as we remain consistent with our way of producing wine and our philosophy. Our organic wines encourage us to always do better.



Main data

Created in 2001
5 ha of vineyards,
2 horses,
1 flock of sheep.

Further Information

[https://
www.domainemelar
ic.com/](https://www.domainemelanic.com/)
[contact@vins-
melanic.com](mailto:contact@vins-melanic.com)