

## FRANCE

# Implementing Local Development Strategies

### Location

Asses, Verdon, Vaïre and Var

### Programming period

2007-2013

### Axis

Axis 4 – LEADER

### Measure

M413 – Quality of life / diversification

### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 194 500  
EAFRD 107 429 (55%)

### Project duration

2010-2011

### Project promoter

Pays A3V

### Contact

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### Website

[paysgourmand.com](http://paysgourmand.com)

A French region developed its own brand that capitalises on its culinary tradition, as well as the diversity and quality of its local produce.

## Summary

The main economic activities in the territory of Asses, Verdon, Vaïre, Var (Pays A3V) in the south of France are agriculture and tourism. This *territoire de projets* has a strong culinary tradition that wasn't being exploited, according to a survey carried out by the Local Action Group covering the area. It found that very few restaurants in the area were using local produce, despite the quality and diversity of products on offer.



LEADER support was used to establish a local brand, the 'Pays Gourmand' label, which aimed to recognise the restaurateurs of the territory that offer local products in their restaurants. The development of the label included a series of animation activities to establish cooperation between restaurateurs and producers of the territory, such as the organisation of meetings and training for professionals. A key aspect of the project was also promotional and information activities including the development of a dedicated website, brochures, catalogues and the organisation of events aimed at consumers (residents and tourists).

## Results

The project was so successful that two subsequent cooperation projects with additional LEADER funding extended the use of the label into the nearby territories of Serre-Ponçon, Ubaye, Durance (Pays Sud) (2013-2014) and Dignois (Pays Dignois) (2014-2015).

In 2013, the Pays A3V and Pays SUD decided to pool their experiences in order to further expand and enrich the brand.

At the beginning of 2016, 59 restaurants were distinguished with the label 'Pays Gourmand' (22 in the Countries A3V, 19 in Pays SUD and 18 in Pays Dignois) and 60 local product suppliers.

The initiative has proven to be sustainable. Since the end of the project funding the three territories have extended the approach through actions aimed at all those in catering trade in the territories, including school canteens.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Engaging more territories gave much greater visibility to the label and boosted development for the territories.
- ❑ Quality labels can infuse motivation for producers and restaurateurs to work closely together.
- ❑ It is beneficial to allow each territory to develop autonomously within the common quality charter.

### Context

Rural areas commonly need support to exploit their distinct advantages and create new possibilities for economic and territorial development. This is also the case of the territories Asses, Verdon, Vaïre, Var (known as 'Pays A3V'), Serre-Ponçon, Ubaye, Durance (Pays Sud) and Dignois (Pays Dignois) in the south of France. Their economies rely heavily on agriculture and tourism, and they have a strong culinary identity. Nevertheless, a survey carried out by the Local Action Group covering the Pays A3V showed that the absence of a quality standard for restaurants of the territory. It also revealed that very few restaurants were using local products despite the fact that local agriculture is diverse and offers a variety of high-quality products.

### Objectives

The overall objective of the project was to improve the image of local food by meeting higher customer expectations such as the possibility to discover local products and receive a good ratio of quality to price.

Other project aims were to:

- Support local restaurants to improve the quality of their services;
- Develop and promote local food culture through the promotion of knowledge held by restaurateurs, producers and artisans in the catering trade; and
- Create new opportunities for local producers by encouraging partnerships between producers and restaurateurs to develop agriculture and handicrafts.



### Activities

The Pays Gourmand initiative started in 2010 when the Local Action Group for the Pays A3V conducted research on the recipes used in local restaurants. This found that very few restaurants in the area were using local produce, despite the quality and diversity of products on offer. To improve the quality and reputation of local restaurants and stimulate the use of local produce, the project developed a 'Quality Charter'. This defined the conditions for achieving a new 'Pays Gourmand' label, for which a logo was designed. The label helped distinguish the restaurants and cafés in the territory that offer local products in their restaurants.

The development of the label was assisted by activities to create connections between restaurateurs and producers in the territory. In order to promote cooperation and also support restaurateurs to raise the quality standards of their services, a series of meetings and training courses for professionals were organised. The project also supported promotional activities to raise awareness of the brand in the market. These included the preparation and distribution of brochures, the launch of a dedicated website in two languages and the organisation of events dedicated to local food.



*“People who come here on holiday do not want the same as they could eat anywhere else. So we try to offer them local products... adapted to the season.”*

Bruno Roussey - Pays Gourmand restaurant 'Le Mot de la Faim', Embrun, France

#### Additional sources of information

[http://paysgourmand.com/images/charte\\_pays\\_gourmand/QUALITYCHARTERPAYSGOURMAND.pdf](http://paysgourmand.com/images/charte_pays_gourmand/QUALITYCHARTERPAYSGOURMAND.pdf)

[http://www.reseaurural.fr/files/contenus/9240/le\\_label\\_pays\\_gourmand.pdf](http://www.reseaurural.fr/files/contenus/9240/le_label_pays_gourmand.pdf)

<https://youtu.be/XFPdYdpmfvI>