

Asparagus: Maisadour draws up a positive outcome of the harvest and recruits new producers to develop the chain in the South-West of France

Haut-Mauco, the 20th of June 2023. The Maisadour Cooperative Group, 2nd producer of asparagus of the Landes, draws up the outcome of the white and green asparagus harvest, under the official sign of quality and certified. Despite a late start, the yields exceed the objectives set with 1540 tonnes harvested. Good results which support the cooperative in its desire to develop this attractive chain for the territory. To carry its ambitions, it calls for the recruitment of new producers.

An increasing volume of harvest and consumers are here.

From the gates of Bayonne to the Medoc, on the Sand area, the overall production area covers **300 hectares, more than 97% of which is occupied by white asparagus**. With a late and slow start compared with the previous years, the harvest that started late February, ended with the last asparagus arriving at the station early June. *“The results are more than satisfactory with an increase of 60 tonnes compared with the previous year»*, says Lucie Gemain, Agronomic Manager of Fresh Vegetables and New Crops at Maisadour. *“The production level remained high and steady throughout the month of April with a slight peak of production just before Easter. Despite the declining forecast, the dynamic strengthened in May, making it possible to catch up with the campaign’s start,”* she added. To be noted this season: the caliber of the asparagus is slightly thinner due to the drought of the Summer 2022. This specificity led to a **more pronounced sweet flavor** than usual. A point appreciated by the consumers, who continue to plebiscite this 100% local quality product. The asparagus of the Maisadour producers were sold in **GMS** and in **specialized stores** under the Priméale brand and also through the Group channels in the **store of Herm (40)** and upon order, in the **11 En Direct de Nos Producteurs stores**. *“Thanks to the precocity of the South-West area, two thirds of the production were sold late April, while other regions had not reached this stage yet,”* specifies Lucie Gemain. The cooperative was also attending, like every year, the famous asparagus festival in Pontonx-sur-l'Adour (40) where the customers were here with more than 1.6 tonnes of asparagus sold!

The producers are already working to prepare the next season. *“The current period is decisive. The sugars that accumulated in the roots this summer will allow for the development of young shoots next spring,”* she explains.

CHIFFRES-CLÉS

1500 t

D'ASPERGES RÉCOLTÉES
CHAQUE ANNÉE EN MOYENNE

300 ha

SURFACE DE PRODUCTION
D'ASPERGES DES SABLES DES
LANDES

30

PRODUCTEURS ADHÉRENTS
DU GROUPE COOPÉRATIF
MAÏSADOUR

More than 500 indirect jobs

For the cooperative, the asparagus is an attractive chain for the territory. It gathers three dozen producers, including 10 young farmers and more than 300 seasonal pickers. In average, one picker is needed for one hectare of production. *“The recruitment objectives have all been reached this year, thanks to the employee loyalty year after year,”* she added. In charge of washing, sorting and packaging the asparagus, up to 250 employees are also employed at the IFS (International Featured Standard) certified Maisadour station in Herm.

In 15 years, the volumes processed by Maisadour have been multiplied by 4 in particular thanks to the implementation of technical innovations. The cooperative continues to develop this production which is certified **“Asparagus of the Sands of the Landes” PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) or Global Cap only**. *“We are focusing on growing this local chain in a sustainable way by developing new hectares for white and green asparagus and by recruiting new producers,”* explains Lucie Gemain, for whom there are many benefits to this crop: a production that perfectly adapts to the specificities of the territory (sandy soils, proximity to the ocean, mild climate, etc.); and exceptional and sought-after product; a profitable activity. Starting from today, the cooperative calls its members and future members to join it, alongside the procurers who work on transmitting this technical know-how in a spirit of sharing and mutual aid. **VEGA* Maisadour**, plant activity of the Group, offers a support for the farmer from the upstream to the downstream, from the choice of the varieties, including advice for the harvest to the collect. *“This technical culture values the work with margins on direct costs ranging from €5,000 to €10,000/ha for a turnover between €15,000 and €30,000/ha. A diversification of high value-added activity that ensures a steady income for the farmers in the South-West of France,”* she concludes.



“In the continuity of my father, I chose to grow the asparagus in our family farm in the Landes. The asparagus became for us a second source of income. Today, I have 7 hectares of asparagus, 50% for white and 50% for green. We were the first, with Maisadour, to start to grow green asparagus. And we do not regret it!”

Arthur Zamanski, asparagus producer in Solferino (40)

ABOUT THE MAÏSADOUR COOPERATIVE GROUP

Since 1936 Maisadour has been a committed Cooperative from the South-West of France, with a CSR Committed label, placing Man and the Living at the center of its concerns, for a sustainable agriculture, food and society. Maisadour develops chains of excellence that meet the expectations of consumers to promote, in France and in 50 countries, the productions of its farmers. *“At Maisadour, we are working together for the success of our members and are developing the future of our territories”*. The Group, structure around the Agricultural Activities, Seed and Food Business Lines, markets gourmet product under the brands Maison Delpyrat and Comtesse du Barry and Red Label poultry under the brands St-Sever and Marie Hot. www.maisadour.com

Key information

Governance: Daniel Peyraube, President / Christophe Bonno Executive Director

Turnover for fiscal year 2021-2022: €1.145 billion/ 5,000 member farmers and 4,300 employees

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