

innovations

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Call for papers – Special Issue

Innovations in agri-food systems

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The agricultural and agri-food sector are currently confronted with many challenges influencing all the stakeholders of the value chain (Galliano, Raynaud, 2015): consumers, citizens, firms, farmers and policymakers behaviour. This follows various societal and food crises in recent years, as well as an increasing awareness of environmental issues. This in turn involves public health issues, social issues, economic issues, international issues calling for a transformation towards agri-food systems that are ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable. This evolution takes place in a context where, on the one hand, consumers are more and more demanding in terms of quality, safety, traceability, sustainability of products (Murdoch, Marsden and Banks 2000; Trobe 2001; Dubuisson-Quellier 2009), but at the same time in terms of prices (Aschemann-Witzel and Zielke 2017); on the other hand, highly specialized farms and food firms actively seek to enhance their market competitiveness and profitability (Capitanio, Coppola and Pascucci 2009). As a consequence, the agri-food sector has to deal with often contradictory requirements and has to innovate to square that circle (Bock 2012). This raises a central question regarding the extent to which and in what ways the process of innovation itself has to change so as to reorganize and redefine the agri-food system as a whole.

While the need to change the conventional agri-food systems is becoming nearly unanimous, the modification of existing practices and the introduction of new farming systems (urban farming for example), new forms of consumption (Seyfang 2006) and distribution, are disrupting the existing productive patterns and thus are often blocked. The unlocking of socio-technical systems aiming at pesticide reduction, for example, shows the importance of the processes of coordination of actors throughout the supply chains, the role of changes in advisory practices but also in logistics or marketing (Meynard et al., 2013; Picard, Tanguy, 2016). It also suggests the need to consider innovation as an interactive system rather than a linear process. Furthermore, it is important that an approach, taking into account that these changes might have an impact on food safety, is followed in order to predict the increased likelihood of the occurrence of safety incidents, so as to be better prepared to prevent, mitigate and manage associated risks (Gaitis and Ouzounidou, 2017)

This special issue has the following objectives:

1. To identify the various agri-food system actors from production to consumption: firms, farms, new stakeholders like urban consumers, governments, and civil society organizations, involved in innovative activities and in transforming the agri-food sector;
2. To provide a full overview of the innovative activities and different types of innovations, technological, organizational, social, institutional and policy innovations, at play in the transformation of agri-food system, including the development of new agricultural and agri-food practices (low-tech or high-tech), quality certification schemes, new distribution channels, new processes and the development of a circular economy;
3. To offer a better understanding of the interactions between technological innovations and other forms of innovations in transforming the agri-food sector: how diverse type of innovations can foster positive synergies among themselves? What are the major factors fostering these synergies among innovations and leading to wider transitions?
4. To understand and identify how actors (public and private organizations, financial organizations, researchers and trainers) can respond to the major challenges posed by innovations in the agri-food system in terms of regulation and supportive norms: implementation of cooperative projects, training, funding, etc.
5. To implement measures to better understand and limit the risks and environmental impacts, to better respond to changing conditions and exploit opportunities for new ways of production and consumption, including the prevention, rapid detection and effective addressing of emerging risks for food safety and quality.

How sustainability-oriented innovations can encourage actors to rethink their organizations and develop cross-sectors collaboration and experimentation? How to sustain and finance innovations and new modes of food production and distribution? How can we develop a multidimensional approach necessary for the implementation of these types of innovations? Exploring these different issues, from market-based technological innovations to civil-society-based social innovations, aims to shed light on the current food innovation dynamics towards quality, safety and sustainability.

Papers may address several kinds of issues, such as:

- Local and sustainable modes of production and distribution (short supply chains such as Community Supported Agriculture, local farmers' markets, basket delivery systems, urban agriculture)
- Global value chains *versus* local value chains in the agri-food sector

- Agro-food supply chains and territorial development
- Agro-innovation in digital times
- Climate change, agro-innovation and food quality
- Sustainable innovation and corporate social responsibility
- Consumer food trends and food safety challenges
- Citizen's involvement and grassroots social innovations (local food networks, cooperatives, Participatory Guarantee Systems...)
- Emerging food safety threats
- Health and nutritional claims in food labelling: a puzzle game
- Food Fraud
- Food security: Contributions of a sustainable bioeconomy

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Timetable for submission and acceptance of papers:

- **1st October 2019** : Deadline for complete manuscripts through online paper submission: <http://www.editorialmanager.com/innovations/default.aspx>

Guideline for authors: http://www.cairn.info/docs/Instructions_for_authorsGB110816.pdf

- Reviewing process from november 2019 to november 2020
- **1st November 2020**: Final notification for acceptance:

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