



Dijon Research Centre



DIET
AGRICULTURE
ENVIRONMENT

INRA

Dijon Research Centre

The French National Institute for Agricultural Research, created in 1946, is a state-funded institution which focuses on three main fields of enquiry : agriculture, environment, and diet. The Institute is present throughout the country, with 21 regional research centres and over 200 research laboratories. The Dijon Research Centre employs 420 staff, including 200 researchers and engineers, working in 12 research units located over 3 geographical regions (Burgundy, Franche-Comté, Rhône-Alpes).

Research topics

The Dijon Research Centre conducts investigations into three major scientific fields, and this research is jointly run in partnership with Dijon Grand Campus : the University of Burgundy, AgroSupDijon (National College for Advanced Studies in Agriculture of Dijon) and the CNRS (French National Centre for Scientific Research). These three scientific fields reflect the three national priorities for INRA, which are shared and jointly managed with other research bodies located on the Burgundy campus.

Flavour, diet, sensory perception

This field focuses on sensorial aspects of diet and health, particularly regarding food quality, sensory perception (olfactory, gustatory, visual), and impact on consumer choice and preferences. Taste and sensorial quality have become major scientific and societal issues, and are inseparable from the image of Burgundy. The recent decision taken by INRA, CNRS, AgroSupDijon and the University of Burgundy, to jointly mobilise their forces in making Dijon the national centre for excellence in this field reflects their ambition for the city. A number of on-going projects support this ambition (such as the VITAGORA field of excellence).

Agro-ecology of cultivated fields

Basic and applied research conducted in this field aims to address certain major preoccupations of modern society : quality of the environment, greenhouse effect, quality and sustainability of farm products, new approaches to farming and preservation of biological resources. Ecological approaches to crop management are the order of the day.

Research covers genetics and ecophysiology of protein plants, soil microbial ecology, beneficial relationships between plants and micro-organisms, defense mechanisms, weed control. The research teams involved are members of the Institut Buffon which coordinates research into the bio-geosciences and the agro-environment.



Land-use and Development

This research field, which calls upon the social sciences (particularly economics and sociology) and which is one of the specificities of the Dijon research centre, focuses on the dynamics of rural areas and farming activities. On-going economic and social changes have caused rural areas to assume an increasingly diverse and multifunctional role, thus feeding the debate as to their methods and place in an urban society. This change of attitude towards the countryside has led to research into how farmers cope with this new context, and how this affects farm management. Research on these two topics provides guidance in determining public and professional policies as regards new approaches to land planning and agricultural development.

Dijon Grand Campus

In Dijon, the geographical grouping of scientific institutions on the same university campus (90% of research and university-level education) is an on-going process and unique in France. The INRA Research Centre in Dijon has taken the essential step of associating its efforts with those of the University of Burgundy, ENESAD and the CNRS, all situated on the same university campus. In 2008 all INRA researchers working in Burgundy were reassembled on this campus. Each of the three national priorities for INRA is represented in Dijon by links with these research partners in a wide range of UMRs (Joint Research Units) and by a number of key fields of enquiry : IFR for Food quality and Sensory Perception (coordinator : Yves Artur), Institut Buffon IFR (coordinator : Frank Cézilly), Maison des Sciences de l'Homme.

The INRA Centre in Dijon, ENESAD and the University of Burgundy are partners in the GIS AGRALE , one of the seven national fields of excellence devoted to higher education and agricultural research that are being developed by the Ministry of Agriculture in France (Coordinator : Marie-Jeanne Perrot-Minnot).

Socio-economic partnerships and regional involvement

INRA research findings are constantly being developed and adapted for professional use thanks to innovation networks, to the creation of subsidiaries for marketing these findings, and to project back-up provided to researchers and their partner groups. The offices of several start-up firms are located within the INRA research centre in Dijon, and various small companies work closely or under contact with our laboratories. State-of-the-art facilities ensure effective transfer to the economic sector, particularly via the Regional Centres for Innovation and Transfer of Technology. The Epoisses Experimental Farm in Bretenière (140 ha, 8000 m² of climate-controlled greenhouses and cabinets) carries out field experimentation, and provides interface with the farming community. The role of this farm is soon to be amplified by the creation of an agricultural hub (Agropole) in Bretenière.

Socio-economic partnerships in the Dijon area are also being gradually built up thanks to dynamics in other fields :

- vineyards and wine sector, with CRECEP Bourgogne (Coordination of Research into Chardonnay and Pinot) and with RVVS (Vineyard and Wine Network of Northern France);
- PDSR multi-theme research programme (Research partnerships for Regional Development) in which many partners pool their resources for regional research projects;
- active partnership role in the VITAGORA field of excellence (taste, nutrition, health) initiated by industrial companies in the agri-food sector in Burgundy and supported by local authorities. Throughout France, fields of excellence have been defined, leading to the creation of joint ventures between industrial companies and research laboratories, bearing in mind geographical proximity and regional priorities.



President of Research Centre : Jacques Caneill

Vice President : Jean-Luc Le Quéré

Director of Support Services : Sylvie Courtois

Research Units of INRA Centre in Dijon

Flavour, diet, sensory perception

- UMR FLAVIC (Flavour, Vision, Consumer Behaviour). Director : Elisabeth Guichard. UMR INRA/ENESAD/UB
- UMR Centre for Taste Sciences (CSG). Director : Benoist Schaal. UMR CNRS/INRA/UB
- Research Laboratory for Dairy Technology and Analysis (URTAL Poligny, Franche-Comté).
Director : Eric Beuvier

Agro-ecology of cultivated fields

- UMR Weed biology and control (BGA). Director : Xavier Reboud. UMR INRA/UB/ENESAD
- UMR Microbiology of Soils and Environment (MSE). Director : Philippe Lemanceau. UMR INRA/UB
- UMR Plant - Microbe - Environment (PME). Director : Vivienne Gianinazzi-Pearson. UMR INRA/UB/CNRS
- UMR Genetics and Ecophysiology of Grain Legumes (UMR-LEG). Director : Richard Thompson
- Experimental Farm and Greenhouse Unit. Director : Marie-Hélène Bernicot

Land-use and Development

- UMR CESAER (Centre for Economics and Sociology applied to farming and rural areas).
Director : Cécile Detang-Dessendre. UMR INRA/ENESAD
- LISTO-D Research Laboratory for Socio-technical and Organisational Innovation in Agriculture (Dijon).
Director : Bruno Lemery

Research Unit located in Rhône-Alpes Region :

- UMR CARRTEL (Alpine Centre for Research on Trophic Networks and Lake Ecosystems).
Director : Jean-Marcel Dorioz. UMR INRA/University of Savoie

Website : www.dijon.inra.fr

