Press Release

Sodiaal welcomes its Young Farmers to Auvergne to better prepare for the future

Around a hundred young farmers took up Sodiaal Union’s invitation and met in Auvergne at the end of June. The Young Farmers (YF) came from all the dairy regions covered by the cooperative to learn more about their company, its organisation, one of its factories and to spend some valuable time with their elected and operational managers.

The second edition of the Sodiaal Union Young Farmers' event took place in Clermont Ferrand (Puy de Dôme) and the surrounding area. Damien Lacombe, Deputy Chairman of Sodiaal Union, reminds us of their objective: "The 2012 launch of the Sodiaal YF days in Guingamp (Côtes d’Armor) was a key event in our cooperative's life and the Sodiaal Coop Spirit we want to develop". After visiting the Compagnie des Fromages and RichesMonts factory in Brioude (Haute Loire), which specialises in raclette production, they gathered at the foot of the Puy de Dôme lava dome to talk about the challenges that will be faced in the coming years.

"The scheduled end of quotas on 31 March 2015 will mean significant changes for young farmers setting up in dairy production. For a long time, young farmers have been turning to their Direction Départementale des Territoires (Departmental Directorate of Territories) to obtain their quota allocation. Now, it will be the cooperative's role to provide answers as well as clarity to these young people involved in the milk industry. We must provide prospects both in terms of volumes and the enhancement* of our target markets", continues Damien Lacombe.

So that it can provide specific answers, the cooperative has launched a large discussion forum to establish the rules it will apply from 1 April 2015; its aim is to finalise all of these rules by June 2014. This forum, which has been run internally for a year, has already reasserted the cooperative's principle of mutuality and territorial unity. Wherever they are sited, a young person must be able to benefit from the same conditions to expand their dairy unit. For Sodiaal, this generational renewal is essential to the sustainability of its activities. It is with this in mind that the cooperative lends its support to young people wanting to set themselves up by offering them €1,000 to build their registered capital.
The Sodiaal Union YF event is also a rare opportunity for the young people to meet each other and get to know the managers of the cooperatives (elected and operational). On this occasion, Sodiaal Union's Chair François Iches and Managing Director Frédéric Rostand were in attendance to answer their questions on Sodiaal's development track and the future of the dairy world. Frédéric Rostand took the opportunity to remind everyone of the merits of Sodiaal's acquisition of the Entremont companies, which bring a very wide range of activities and products to the Group, and whose cheese production helps make Sodiaal less dependent on milk consumption.

François Iches also announced Sodiaal's ambition to play a leading role in the future dairy world. This is the idea behind the "Sodiaal 2020" project launched at the start of summer. It is an ambitious project that relies on solid foundations like the internationalisation of its activities with a strong focus on value-adding markets.

"Everyone can discover the richness and diversity of our large cooperative in this 'Sodiaal Coop Spirit' we wish to cultivate. Seeing future generations taking an interest and subsequently getting involved in our large cooperative's development course is encouraging, because it is you who will be the future of Sodiaal", concluded François Iches at the end of the two-day event.

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