

Examining the results of observations conducted in Cork from January to March 2020, this talk will present the development of the farmhouse cheese sector in Ireland as an agricultural innovation. The creation of this product was impelled by a neo-rural population from Ireland and Europe seeking for an alternative way of life in the 1970's (Tommasi, 2018). The development of this sector coincides with a contemporary movement of (re)localization of the food and its production (Rieutort, 2009). Mainly consumed by a young, wealthy and urban population, the consumption of cheeses is located in specific places : wine bars and restaurants. If the consumption considerably reduced because of the bars and restaurants closure, the number of new producers rose by 5% and the average number of cheese produced in the farms went from 2 to 3 in two years. In that respect, Irish farmhouse cheeses question the way an agricultural innovation fulfills the seeking of a (re)localized and more sustainable consumption on one hand ; and on the other hand the potential spin-offs on consumption and production due to the pandemic, which would encourage or weaken the development of this sector. To what extent the pandemic redefined the economy of the sector without slowing the production ? How the development of Irish farmhouse cheeses illustrates the seeking of a sustainable and alternative way of production and consumption, exacerbated by pandemic times ? These questions will be raised amongst others during my presentation - and in my PhD starting next year. Different research hypothesis can be issued, studied and questioned during this presentation.