



Ainiza-Monjolose, 2018/10/11

Dear President, dear Member,

Within living memory, agriculture has always had a prominent role in the Basque Country. However, with the usual modest farms here, twice as small as average for French farms and the steep land that make it difficult to produce anything else but grass, many young Basques, for generations, were forced to leave the family farm to seek better life conditions, in Paris, in the Americas or elsewhere...

Yourself, your parents or your ancestors probably encountered this destiny !

If levelling the Basque Country or miraculously increasing the farms size have not been possible, the Basque Country, for almost 40 years, has somehow managed to turn those handicaps into assets. This has been made possible :

- by the choice of an agriculture that takes fully advantage of local resources, such as grass through grazing and mountain terrains, through transhumance.
- by the choice of a quality production, fully respecting the mandatory production conditions set by the specifications of PDOs (Protected Designations of Origin), Labels, Organic produce, such as Ossau-Iraty cheese, Espelette red peppers, Irouléguy wine, Kintoa pork, Itsasu cherry, Idoki produce, Herriko ogia, Herriko haragia etc.
- by increasing added value through on-farm processing, selling directly to the public and cost saving endeavours that don't impact the qualitative specifications.

The result is a territory on which 4500 farms and 6000 full-time agricultural active workforce can make a living, and on which young people who set up in farming are proportionally twice as numerous as in any other French region. Some of them come from the basque diaspora, wishing to return to the country of their ancestors.

These dynamics are an essential component of the social and cultural life, of its linguistic vitality, and of the territorial identity.

This traditional peasant farming approach, soil-bound, uses all available space and thus contributes to maintain and beautify the landscape, and to preserve biodiversity. In the end, it plays a role in keeping this country attractive for the greater benefit of the territory's economy and therefore is in everyone's interest.

This authenticity and these global dynamics led, in 2005, to the creation of **Euskal Herriko Laborantza Ganbara** with the aim to support and boost the **peasant farming that is respectful of the peasants, the consumers and nature.**



More specifically, Euskal Herriko Laborantza Ganbara (EHLG) :

- conveys, deploys and promotes agricultural policies among smallholders and peasants
- helps and facilitates the setting up of young farmers in their projects
- guides and advises peasants in creating added value on their farms and thus ensuring their viability

Through these different actions, EHLG contributes to a harmonious development of the Basque Country. The association is made up of peasants, civil society representatives (consumers association, environmental associations, actors in the local economy...)

More than 700 people as well as scores of companies and associations financially support Euskal Herriko Laborantza Ganbara. This support is vital for the financial balance of the structure. EHLG has known a continuous development since its creation, and now employs nearly 20 employees. That's why, EHLG currently needs a broader support.

You have probably kept, deep into your heart, a strong attachment to the Basque Country, perhaps those indelible and kind-hearted memories about the Basque country were passed on to you.

Support peasant agriculture in the Basque Country !

Contribute to the harmonious development of the Basque Country, the country of your origins !

You too, support Euskal Herriko Laborantza Ganbara by making a donation on our bank account (IBAN : FR76 1690 6000 2951 0165 4787 427 – SWIFT AGRIFRPP869) or with Paypal on <http://don.ehlgbai.org/en/campaigns/don-ehlg/>

Moreover, if you have the opportunity to go back to the Basque Country visiting your family or tracing your ancestors, don't hesitate to come over, we will be pleased to welcome you and explain in more detail what we do, what the Basque Country has become and what's in store for our future.

Meanwhile, we invite you to take a look at our website : <http://ehlgbai.org/en/>, and to follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/EuskalHerrikoLaborantzaGanbara/>

We warmly thank you in advance for your help, and hope to see you soon.

Francis POINEAU

Beñat MOLIMOS

Co-Presidents of Euskal Herriko Laborantza Ganbara