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A LONG TERM SURVEY OF CULTURAL PRACTICES

ABSTRACT

Sugar beet technical management is variable according to years, regions and sometimes even within the farms themselves. The knowledge of these practices is fundamental for analyzing the temporal and geographical heterogeneousness of the agricultural practices, for researching the efficiency of the implementation of these practices and finding their controlling factors and their evolution.

A survey has therefore been led by ITB since 1997 with 500 farmers each year. All technical aspects are concerned in the annual questionnaire, from the previous harvest, till the storage of the beets. Some open questions are added to have a better understanding of the conditions of practices. Around 2500 farms are investigated, with a good return rate of 20 percent.

The results of the survey are synthesized in a written report. Beyond the analysis of the annual events and their repercussion on the cultural conduct, more ambitious studies can be produced on diverse subjects, as well as raw data to feed models or research. Lately, in order to answer a changeable context, where the practices must be more and more justified, the questions asked in the survey have been increased and improved upon.

The data processing is being automated to answer questions more easily and to produce the most possible different outcomes of this important and long term dataset.