

News



LETTER #6 - DEC.19

The Let's Food Cities Project encourages city-to-city cooperation to foster the transition towards nutritious and sustainable food for all

Step #6 - Sfax, Tunisia

18 OCT. - 6 DIC. 19



{ In cooperation with
Grenoble
since 1998 }

► **TUNISIA**
Area : 163 610 km²
Population : 11.5 million
(2017)
Presidential regime

► **SFAX**
2nd city in the country
Sfax Metropolis : 515 725 inhabitants
Main productions : olive, almonds, fish

→ Objectives of the mission

Food related topics are essential today to foster the ecological transition of cities while maintaining the quality of life of their inhabitants. Therefore, the objectives of each mission are ambitious and multiple:



- #1 Assess the food system from production to consumption through distribution, processing, but also waste management and food governance in the light of the requirements of sustainable development : protected ecosystem and biodiversity, fair economy and access for all to a healthy diet (*Diagnosis and film*)
- #2 Propose adapted solutions to local issues, getting inspired by successful French initiatives (*Solutions Booklet*)
- #3 Mobilize the actors of the territory around sustainable food and create the necessary meeting opportunity for the emergence of new projects. (*Workshop of co-building solutions, restitution event, market of positive initiatives*).
- #4 Engage policymakers through the signing of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (*Restitution event with local authorities*)

Sfax // Grenoble

Created in 1974, the twinning between the cities of Sfax and Grenoble is one of the oldest for Grenoble. It initially helped to set up cultural and sporting exchanges for young people between the two cities. A twinning protocol was signed between the Cities of Grenoble and Sfax in 1998. With the help of their respective twinning committees, in Grenoble and Sfax, projects started to be setting up with civil society and the University of Sfax . The main projects include: training of the staff of three NGOs for children's mental handicap; the creation of an Institute of Trades and Techniques; exchanges of students from the Urban Planning Institute, the UPMF and the University of Sfax linked to urban planning and solidarity tourism development workshops; teacher and student exchanges between Grenoble business schools: GEM and IDRAC with the Sfax Business School; exchanges between the two faculties of medicine; set up of an innovative demonstrator plan at the Sfax Technopolis within the Grenoble economic cluster TENERDIS: INNOSFAX; cultural exchanges always very diverse; "citizenship" workshops.



► Meetings with the actors of the food system of Sfax



The Mayor of Sfax

Mounir Elloumi is the first Mayor of Sfax elected in a democratic and transparent way within the framework of the political transition of Tunisia started in 2011. Until then the mayors were nominated by the central government. Tunisian local authorities have only few prerogatives, which represents a major obstacle to the implementation of a territorial food policy (not in charge of schools, health, very little on waste, etc.). But they are still able to set up certain projects such as collective composters, shared gardens. The Mayor of Sfax M. Elloumi said he was interested in thinking about it and the city is already participating in many international conferences for the exchange of experiences such as the 6th UCLG Congress which was held in Durban from 11 to 15 November 2019.



Mounir Elloumi,
Mayor of Sfax elected in 2018

State officials in the governorate of Sfax



We also met the Regional Commissariat for Agricultural Development in charge of the deployment of agricultural policy in each of the 24 governorates: orientation in the choice of crops, subsidies to producers and fishermen, still low support for organic farming, and services dedicated to statistics. Recently, the commissariats began to associate with the Tunisian Permaculture Association in order to strengthen the role of permaculture in the territories by training extension agents.

Universities



We worked at Sfax with different universities in order to benefit from the expertise of researchers, to present the project to students and to engage them in volunteering work.

We thus interviewed Ali Benasr, geographer, and Souhail Besbes, teacher at the Institute of Biotechnology of Sfax and presented the project to his students. Strong academic relations exist between the Institute of Urban Planning of Grenoble and the University of Human Sciences of Sfax. This year, around 30 students from Grenoble worked with Sfax students on 3 themes: sport, children in the city and the railway station. We attended the presentation of the results of their study.



In Sfax, peri-urban agricultural production has sharply decreased due to an uncontrolled urban expansion. However, just a few kilometers from the medina there are the famous "jnens" or nourishing gardens which bring together orange, fig, vine and palm trees. Formerly the Sfaxians who owned a villa came to spend the summer there and build up reserves for the whole year. In the south of the city, a few gardeners continue to produce peppers, fennels and squash using pesticides because they cannot afford the labor force is necessary to grow pesticides-free. There are very few cooperatives or cooperation because of the lack of trust between farmers.

We also visited some dairy and intensive chicken farms: all products are sold through middlemen. Producers must comply with the prices set by the wholesalers, because they cannot choose and control the marketing of their products. 10 kilometers from the medina, there is the "boura": almond fields, and then from kilometer 15 olive trees as far as the eye can see ...



Civil society

Civil society in Sfax is well developed: associations, social entrepreneurs, student clubs, etc. Sfax is particularly recognized for its dynamism and the ability of its inhabitants to develop innovative projects. There is, however, an evolution in terms of emerging initiatives. The new generation of Sfaxians wants to develop projects which aim to restore the quality of life in the city and preserve their territory. Among these projects, there is « Graine d'Espoir » (« Seed of Hope ») association, which aims at making urban agriculture a tool for integration and reconciliation between urban and rural areas. We also met the small company « Miss Confitures » which revalues unsold fruit from local merchants to create jams without pesticides or preservatives. There are also older associations such as ACG Générations, Sfax Mezyena or Jeunes Science Kerkennah, that have been working for the past few years on the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage in order to allow fishermen and farmers to make a decent living while preserving traditional techniques, respectful of ecosystems.

The local food system of Sfax



Rural-urban migration and expansion of the city of Sfax, impacting the food belt formed by the « jnens »

Groundwater tables overused to 150%

92% of agriculture dedicated to fruit trees, production of olive oil mainly exported

Sustainability issues

A city that is expanding on agricultural land: The urbanization rate in the city of Sfax was + 8.1% per year over the period 1987-2001.

An urban nutritional transition which leads to new public health issues: the first purchasing criteria remains the price in Sfax as in all of Tunisia.

Polluting and energy-consuming food industries in the heart of the city: chicken farming, oil mills, canneries, etc.

Industrial practices that encourage monocultures and trawling threatening resources and the local economy based on old varieties and traditional fisheries.

Significant production of waste and lack of recovery of household organic waste.

The decentralization process is long. Decisions, as well as prerogatives and funding, remain very centralized today. However, civil society (private actors, associations and universities) is very present in the Sfax region and must today be supported and accompanied to develop the solutions of tomorrow.

Recommendations

Ensure the health of Sfaxians by increasing the supply of healthy food without chemicals as well as public sports spaces.

Support small producers and fishermen by giving value to their products and encouraging them and sell directly to consumers.

Encourage the food industry to develop clean processes, to better recover waste and to source locally quality products.

Raise awareness among Sfaxians about waste sorting and organize organic waste recovery processes of individuals and professionals.



Solutions booklet

► Develop social entrepreneurship with Sfax students

We organized with Mohamed El Wachem, an Biotechnology Student and LFC Volunteer, a day dedicated to Sfax students. The objective was to challenge them on the issues of sustainable food for their city and test their ability to invent the social enterprises of tomorrow.

5 speakers first provided insight and expertise :

- Fawzi Chokri, Regional director of the Agricultural Land Agency
- Ali Bennasr, Geografer at the Faculty of Letters and Social Sciences of Sfax
- Afef Mkaouar, Coach in nutrition
- Daouda Niang, co-founder of LAFRICS - Association on social entrepreneurship
- Aicha Frikha, founder of « Miss Confitures »

The 30 students then created 5 teams to invent new projects, 2 projects were selected :

- **Health App** : an online shopping platform to allow Tunisians to access organic and healthy products more easily.
- **Good SeaFood** : the recovery of unused parts of seafood and fish in crackers and animal feed to reduce waste.

The winners came to present their project to local stakeholders during our multistakeholder workshop. This day was particularly inspiring and showed the motivation of young Tunisians to move the lines for the sustainable development of their territory through the creation of new projects.

>>> Watch the video here

Mohammed continues today his voluntary work for the Let's Food association and plans to organize this kind of events in different cities of Tunisia in order to then organize a national competition.



Workshop with local stakeholders ◀

During a month, we met around fifty actors from the Sfax territory: producers, processors, institutions, associations, food industries, universities. They were then invited to a workshop to share and exchange on the first results of the food system assessment and to be able to present some initiatives from Grenoble that could inspire the territory of Sfax.

► The « Alternative Market »

All of our missions end with the screening of the film we are making: on this occasion we are organizing a market for initiatives in order to promote local actors who are committed to the cause. At Sfax, we worked throughout the mission with Agnes and Omer, the founders of the local NGO Graine d'Espoir. We decided to co-organize this final event and to propose an "alternative market" in order to bring local and organic producers closer to Sfax consumers. Local associations were also present. This market whose goal is above all to raise awareness is the second edition, and many more are to come!

Bravo and thank you to Graine d'espoir for their help and their work :)



► Local producers

Among the local producers, the Rigoula Farm was there at the market, offering organic products! There were also a producer of organic olive oil, dairy products and gluten-free dishes.

The Alternative Market

El Marchi Hkeya Okhra

2e Edition

30 novembre 2019
10h -17h, Sfax, Sondok Haddéne

Alimentation, agriculture,
pêche et environnement

Venez découvrir les associations
et producteurs locaux de Sfax !
Diffusion du film sur l'alimentation
durable à Sfax !



>>> Watch the video here !

► Film screenings
showing the Food
System of Sfax

At the occasion of this event, in addition to the promotion of a dozen local producers, we also had the opportunity to show the film on the Sfax food system and to discuss with the general public on existing issues and solutions. More than 70 spectators came for this first screening!



>>> Watch the film here!

**>>> Look at the photos of the
mission here!**

Good News

A few inspiring initiatives

Social entrepreneurship as a tool to develop sustainable food in Sfax !

Miss Confitures



Revalueing unsold fruit for organic jams

Aicha Frikha
Fondatrice de l'entreprise sociale Miss Confitures
مؤسسة شركة Miss Confitures





>>> [Go to the video!](#)

Jnen Sfax



Ecotourism to diversify rural incomes

Safwan & Mohamed Mahdoumi
Co-gérants
Écotourisme « Jnen Sfax »
نادج "جيسيبل" لفرانش ريفيه




>>> [Go to the video!](#)

Jenne Science Kerkennah

Preserving traditional fishing techniques on the Kerkennah Islands

Sami Karoui
Secrétaire de l'association Jeunes Science Kerkennah
الكاتب العام لجمعية الشباب والعلم فرقنة




>>> [Go to the video!](#)

Graine d'Espoir

Encouraging urban agriculture

Agnès Dangreith & Omer Drira
Co fondateurs
Association Graine d'Espoir




>>> [Go to the video!](#)

Recipe #1 !

COUSCOUS WITH FENNEL

Ingredients

For couscous :

- semolina
- fennel tops

For the sauce :

- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- harissa
- paprika or chili powder
- salt, pepper
- 3 tbsp olive oil

Steps:

- Boil the water at the bottom of your couscous pot
- Sort the fennel to keep only the small branches
- Cut them finely and place them at the bottom of the steam basket
- Prepare your semolina (a little oil and wet with water) and pour it over the fennel
- Cook for 30 minutes, remove the couscous with a large spoon so that it does not mix with the fennel, stir and cook again
- For the sauce : cut 3 or 4 cloves of garlic very finely and sauté lightly in the oil
- Add the harissa and the tomato and cook for a few minutes, add the sweet paprika and salt, add water little by little
- Once the sauce is ready, pour the couscous and fennel in a dish, mix by hand, add the sauce



Recipe #2 !

MAKROUDH

Ingredients

For 8 persons :

- 1,5 kg of average semolina
- 350 g of margarine
- 1 small bag of saffron for the color (or turmeric)
- 500 g ripe dates
- 100 gon crushed almonds
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3 or 4 crushed cloves
- 500 g sugar for syrup
- 2 large tablespoons of honey
- a few drops of lemon juice
- 2 L of oil for frying
- Geljlan of your choice

Steps :

- Knead the semolina with the melted margarine, the safran and a little bit of water to obtain a homogeneous grainy dough
- Mix the pitted dates with cinnamon, cloves and almonds
- Heat this stuffing in a bain-marie to soften it
- Knead to homogenize
- Spread semolina dough on parchment paper 1 cm thick, place the stuffing on one half of the dough and using parchment paper cover with the other half.
- Crush everything with a roller to weld well
- Cut regular parallelepipeds, immerse them in a bath of boiling oil and remove when it is golden, drain.
- Make a syrup with sugar, honey, lemon and a little water, dip the cake one by one then in the Geljlan.



Let's Food is growing !

► New volunteer !

We are delighted to welcome Irene Albarel for the coming months !

« Intrepid traveler and photographer during my hours of exploration, I graduated at the Institute of Political Sciences of Grenoble. My work focused on urban agriculture and the integration of agricultural alternative in the CAP. I have a strong interest in issues of sustainable food and agriculture, as well as all topics related to environmental protection.»



► New talks and trainings in universities in France

Back in France following our mission in Tunisia, we went back to the universities to integrate the sustainable food challenges within some university programs: Master on Management of territories and local development at AgroParisTech (Clermont-Ferrand), Master ECODEVA (Economy of agricultural development, the environment and food) at Montpellier SupAgro, and at Bordeaux Sciences Agro for Master "Agriculture, Proximity and Territories Here and Abroad".

► In the territories we studied : new screenings of our movies - all the movies are available on Youtube !

In Valparaiso, Guanajuato, Saigon or Sfax, the screening of the movies continues thanks to our volunteers. The movies allow to start a debate or a conference on food issues at the regional scale and to raise awareness among experts and the general public about these themes. It is also an opportunity to showcase local initiatives!

GUANAJUATO

VALPARAISO

SAIGON

TEHRAN

FEZ

SFAX

Thanks to our partners !

Welcome to the new ones !



— URBAN FOOD FUTURES —



Chaire UNESCO
Alimentations
du monde

ADEME



Agence de l'Environnement
et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie



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