Livestock farming systems and the French society: key controversies
E.D. Delanoue
Institut de l’Elevage, ifip Institut du Porc, Itavi, 149 Rue de Bercy, 75595 Paris, France; elsadelanoue@idele.fr

For several years, French livestock farming has been frequently questioned by society. Those questions concern its environmental impact, sanitary risks or animal treatment and ask, more generally, livestock farming’s place among a society that is more and more concerned about its alimentation. To understand this phenomenon, analyse representations on livestock farming that coexist within the society and enlighten agricultural actors on those social evolutions at work, the project ACCEPt, funded by the CASDAR and led by the French Pork and Pig Institute (IFIP), has been carried out between 2014 and 2018. With the aim of identifying the subjects of controversy about breeding in France, all animal productions considered, and to describe the diversity of actors and arguments, both qualitative and quantitative studies were conducted: around seventy interviews were conducted, in France and five other UE countries, with the main stakeholders (livestock farming professionals, farmers, companies, journalists, NGOs, consumers) and more than 2007 French citizens were questioned on a online survey. The analysis of discourses led to classify the debates on the French livestock farming in four major areas: environmental impact, animal welfare, risks to human health and socioeconomic model of livestock farming. It reflects expectations for different types of system: some want a gradual disappearance of intensive farming systems for the benefit of under official quality signs or implementing alternative practices; others want the development of intensive farming to produce more and become more competitive; and between them many want a gradual improvement in the intensive system, with stronger environmental and animal welfare requirements. We consider that we face a global controversy on livestock farming: indeed, beyond specific controversies on practices, debates regarding the very legitimacy of livestock farming or the consumption of animal products gather all the different topics, and are linked with larger society problematics (consumption habits, growth models, globalization, etc.). This feature may complicate the resolution of the controversy and make it hazardous and longer.