

**2010 IPA CONGRESS**  
**REPORT OF THE FRENCH DELEGATION**

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The French production has to deal with two challenges during the next years: the increasing tension on the international market due to offer excess, and changes in the European policy of agricultural support.

With the economic crisis the French sales tended to drop a little, especially on export markets. A beginning of recovery appeared in 2010, but it is still insufficient to absorb the tonnages the trees were bearing this year. We decided to act collectively by devaluing fruits smaller than 80 by 500 grams, which involved the destruction of the largest part of them before drying. So, together with the effects of voluntary non-harvest of poor quality fruits, that decision involved the production to decrease from 55 000 to 40 000 tons, a quantity which is compatible with our current commercial potentialities.

Our industry decided to react in front of its challenges. With strong backing from growers and packers and political support from the government, we are about to carry out a reflation of which effects will be seen in the next years. We are not intending to multiply volumes because the market doesn't need much more in the next years, but to produce in a better way. Better preserving the environment, increasing the quality level even more, seeking more competitive production costs by rationalizing our equipments, better satisfying customers who are constantly more demanding, while reducing our need for government financial support.

About the inter-professional communication policy, we recently ordered a survey which led us to decide, after a period when health benefits had become a too exclusive leitmotiv, to give back some room to the values of pleasure to which our customer segments are sensitive. Prunes do good but they're particularly good. We are also working on complementarities between the generic promotional activities of our inter-profession and the branded promotion made by packing companies; this work has become essential because of the evolution of the packing structures which was involved by the concentration of the distribution sector.

For at least 800 years the production of prunes has formed part, under the protected denomination "Agen Prunes", of the cultural heritage of France to which populations and political directors are strongly attached. France estimates that it has vocation to supply its domestic market and some proximity markets in the European Union and in North Africa. We are intending to do everything necessary to give a new future to our production.