

Foreword :

The Unesco Chair « Safeguarding and Promotion of Cultural Food Heritages », hosted by the Université François-Rabelais de Tours since June 2011, intend to promote a better knowledge of food heritages and to support the identifications and inventories project of these heritages.

The aim of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chair program is the sharing and the transfer of knowledge within perspective of the development of North/South relations. A UNESCO Chair is an international structure for scientific advancement, which involves training, research, and academic exchange activities. A Chair must generate the creation of regional hubs of excellence in addition to strengthening a dynamic of networks and partnerships

For almost ten years, François-Rabelais University has been committed to a process that aims to make food one of its hubs of excellence. In the frame of the Unesco Chair, and in partnership with an international network of universities and research organisations, it intends to boost the research in Food Studies area.

The objectives of the Unesco Chair :

- Promote and give a better knowledge of food heritages in order to contribute to their protection and promotion, according to the 2003 Unesco convention for protection of immaterial cultural heritages
- Bring into focus the importance of food cultures, at the time of issues like food security and self-sufficiency or economic, farming and touristy development
- Identify the food heritages and be part of the classification involving the owners of these heritages, either leading directly the inventory works or supporting the inventory programs led by other organizations, in order to make easier the promotion of familial and food-producing cultivations and help the introduction of agricultural policies and responsible tourism
- Introduce and/or develop, in the university and in the partner organizations, master's degree and doctorate courses on the theme of food heritages, scholarship and academic staff mobility programs, in order to introduce the issues of protection and promotion of cultural food heritages and to consider food from the angle of social studies
- Create an international network, bringing together all the regions of the world and working on the conception of research and academic training tools dedicated to food heritages

Partners

- Institutional partners:

- Institut Européen d'Histoire et des Cultures de l'Alimentation (IEHCA – European Institute of Food History and Cultures, FRANCE)
- Mission Française des Patrimoines et des Cultures Alimentaires (MFPCA – French Mission for Food Heritages and Cultures, FRANCE)

- Scientific partners:

- Federal University of Parana (BRAZIL)
- French Institute of Pondicherry (INDIA)
- American University of Beirut (LEBANON)
- Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra (MOROCCO)
- Abdou Moumouni University, Niamey (NIGER)

- Chinese University of Hong Kong (PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA)

The activities since 2011 :

1. Establishment and animation of a **network** : 2 or 3 visiting professors per year in Tours ; travels of network members to one or others university ; active participation of the network members in Pondicherry, Hong Kong and Kénitra conference. Meeting of the representatives of the food-related elements, registered to the Intangible Cultural Heritage list (Paris, may 2012).
2. **Research** :
 - a. Heritage :
 - i. [Foodways & Heritage Conference](#) (Hong Kong, jan 2013)
 - ii. Publication of Ms Sébastia and M. Zurayk presentations during the conference *Recording food heritages* (organized by the IEHCA, Tours, 2009) in the journal [Food & History n° 9.2](#).
 - b. Agricultural heritage:
 - i. *Fruits and vegetables on both sides of Mediterranean Sea, 15th-20th centuries* Conference (Kénitra, Morocco, oct 2013)
 - ii. [How do the farmers feed the world?](#) Roundtable (for the World Food Day, 16th oct 2012, Tours)
 - iii. Participation of Pr de Ferrière and Pr Houbbaida (University of Tours & University of Kénitra) to the [Rendez-vous de l'Histoire de Blois](#) (national event with hundreds of conferences, 30.000 visitors) on the farmer issue.
 - c. Food safety
 - i. Seminar *Food safety* (Tours, oct 2011).
 - ii. [Food and Health in Cross Cultural Perspective Conference](#) (with the support of the Academic Agency for the Francophonie and in partnership with NGO, Pondichéry, march 2012).
 - iii. Seminar *Food & Lack* (Tours, mars 2012).

After one year and half of activity, the research axes have evolved: they will be oriented to the inventory issue, the transmission issue and the cereals.
3. **Training**: The Unesco Chair relies on a European Master of Food History and Culture. Since 2011, 20 students have been graduated and 4 thesis have been defended.
 - a. Intervention of the visiting professors to the students of Tours University and, in the framework of the partnersip with the [Unesco Chair World Food System](#) (Montpellier SupAgro), to Montpellier SupAgro students. Tours students can also attend Montpellier seminars by videoconference.
 - b. Conference by Marc de Ferrière and Florent Quellier at the University Ibn Tofaïl (Kénitra, Morocco).