



FIRE FLOCKS SHEPHERDS MEETING

Date: 15/10/2021

Place: Colomers (Girona province, Spain)

Assistants: Staff PCF (3) + Fire Flocks shepherds (14)

Territorial scope

It is necessary to get over the territorial bond with the Strategic Management Areas (as they are very limited) to increase the number of managed territory and participating farmers, and thus have a greater capacity for advocacy. New stakeholders need to be incorporate to strengthen the collective and have more power to gain negotiation power to deal with the public administration.

In this sense, it will be necessary to define the criteria that will allow a livestock farm to adhere to Fire Flocks. The following options are proposed:

- PPP (priority protection perimeter)
- Forest land
- Forest land: only specific habitats to be decided
- Riparian forest
- Natura 2000
- Link to the maintenance of the mosaic landscape and its values in terms of biodiversity, security, etc: It will be necessary to define how the mosaic concept is transferred to an objective criterion.
- Municipal interface strips for fire prevention

The criteria for entering Fire Flocks must be specified in the Regulations Governing Use document.

Territorial expansion

It is considered very positive to expand the project, both in Girona itself by incorporating new farmers and grazing sectors, and in the other Catalunya provinces of Barcelona, Tarragona and Lleida.

Collaborating with the Diputació de Barcelona could be interesting in working on communication and product valorization strategies.

Reasons to be in the Fire Flocks project

In general, the main reasons to be in FF are the following:

- Visibility of the livestock sector: that the brand becomes the identification / representation of the extensive livestock sector
- Access to new grazing areas
- Conviction to work for fire prevention

- Support in the processing of public aids
- Being part of a network of shepherds
- To have an interlocutor / intermediary with the public administration

Economically, the Fire Flocks project has no impact on farmers. Both before and after being in Fire Flocks, no one had or has problems selling the product. Anyway, it is said that the fire prevention argument is very powerful and it's useful to find new customers.

An increase in the price of the product would be ideal, but this could mean a drop in sales. It is not seen as a feasible action for now.

There are two different perceptions of how land management / fire prevention work should be rewarded: a) it should be paid as a service; b) more profit should be obtained through better product valuation and sells.

Not specifically mentioned, but it is also seen the potential of Fire Flocks to act as facilitator among the different actors in the sector to achieve improvements in the conditions of farmers for: access to land, management and relationship with public veterinarians, get administrative facilities for the bureaucratic management, and to become a "social community" of farmers.

Sales outlets

PCF informs that there could be the option to sell the product at the Bonpreu supermarket chain. In general, it is not seen as an interesting option for goat and lamb meat: the farmers are already selling all their product, and Bonpreu would probably pay less than current customers. In addition, there is no regularity of enough production to supply a big chain as Bonpreu regularly.

In any case, beef producers may be interested, and Baussitges farm expresses interest in sitting down with Bonpreu to talk.

Restaurants and direct sales are the elements with the most potential, in which to put the focus.

Butchers are not seen as strategic, and there is some mistrust about the labeling and the efficiency of the selling and communication work that butchers do.

The Girona Butchers' Guild has always supported the project, but this has not translated into anything tangible in terms of selling results and visibility in butchereries. It's interesting to have them aligned but it can't mean limiting opportunities to join new opportunities or initiatives.

Relationship with the public administration

The public administration needs to understand the potential of Fire Flocks. The recognition of the administration should end up materializing in:

- Payments / Grants
- Ease for grazing new areas

- Ease for administrative procedures

Communication

It is necessary to create communicative material for establishments and for grazing areas. Obviously, it is key to ensure that establishments use this material.

It's need to find new ways to reach the consumers and make them aware of the importance of herding for fire prevention. Differentiation with intensive livestock farming is very necessary.

Some ideas are proposed: The restaurants need tools to make the benefits of Fire Flocks products consumption even more visible. It is proposed to generate a series of QR codes that can be consulted in the menus, with information on the project and the farmer. Information about the landscape sector that is being grazed and on the territory protection impact could be also included.

Generate a Fire Flocks star product

Creating a star product to appeal to the general public is well-regarded. For example, burger or skewers (using the pieces with less demand and thus profiting to better sell this meat, as the case of the thighs).

However, in order to reach a common product, it would be necessary to have a manufacturer and a workshop.

Firstly and above all, the project needs to have more farmers involved, and therefore the ability to offer more quantity of product.

Identification of problems in the activity of farmers and proposed solutions

- Bureaucratic complexity and limitations of grazing management in SMAs by public veterinarian rules.

It would be necessary to recover the relationship with this sector and work together to resolve these impediments.

- Need for silvicultural treatments previous to the grazing. Logging is unprofitable and the owners do not execute it.

It is seen as an opportunity to contact the CPF (Center of the Forest Propriety) to modify the conditions of eligibility for the forestry aid (currently it has a very low score for clearing), so that they promote forestry actions when there is an associated herd grazing.

Helping to promote this treatments in the SMAs

It is proposed that the fact that a landowner hosts a herd of Fire Flocks, this would imply some kind of improvement in the score for the aid.



- Lack of land, difficulty to find it
Assisting in negotiating with landowners
- A lot of expense, complexity and ignorance in administrative procedures.
To have a support service in bureaucratic management tasks and legal issues (such as an specialized consulting)