

I. — INTRODUCTIVE PAPER

**Main characteristics of French pig production
Main results of the pig survey made in December 1981**

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The survey made by the S.C.E.E.S in December 1981 on a sample of 18.000 pig holdings shows the significant change in French pig production over the decade 1971-1981. There has been a concentration of the production, i.e. 258.500 farms instead of 653.500 for a similar number of pigs (11.421, 100) ; 71 p. 100 of the pigs in farms with more than 200 pigs, while the percentage was 28 p. 100 in 1971 ; 46 p 100 of the pigs are now raised in Brittany versus 29 p. 100 in 1971. The production has mainly been developed in medium sized farms, 20 to 50 ha (50 p. 100 of the livestock). Farms with both breeding sows and fattening pigs have now the same importance as pure sow holders or pure fatteners. The number of pigs in farms run by 45 to 60-year old farmers, who have initiated modernization has increased but also the number of pigs kept by younger less than 35-year old farmers (20 p. 100 of the total against 14 p. 100 in 1971). The number of farmers belonging to « producers associations » has increased only slightly to 26.100, but they now possess 67 p. 100 of the pigs versus 27 p. 100 in 1971. Only few farmers belonged to « G.A.E.C » in 1971, while now these associations possess 12 p. 100 of the pigs. The 1970 plan for the rationalization of production has accelerated the modernization of piggeries : 66 p. 100 of the square footage has been built or renovated between 1967 and 1981. In 10 years, the average working time per pig and per day has decreased by 50 p. 100, thanks to gains in productivity and to the increase in the average size of holdings. Use of crossbred female pigs, reduction of the suckling period, feeding methods, technical and economic management have improved the efficiency of the production.