

## **NEWS UPDATE FROM NUFFIELD FRANCE**

**By David King, International Liaison, Nuffield France**

**On behalf of newly elected French Chairman Victor Leforestier**

### **AGM, 2017**

Nuffield France held its AGM in Paris on 16 November 2017. Outgoing President Benoit Presles reported on progress over the past year, and there was a lot of feedback from members on how to move forward. There have been contact with a number of potential investors throughout 2017, allowing the association to grow its budget from 54,000€ in 2017 to 68,000€ in 2018 with the ambition to reach 90,000-100,000€ by 2020.

Recent recognition by the French Government of Nuffield France as “an association of general interest” will enable companies which donate to the association to obtain tax relief of 70 percent – a great stimulus for future investors.

In addition to its three regular sponsors, Crédit Agricole, France Génétique Élevage, and Bio 3G, six other investors have come on board in 2017.



**Photo: Nuffield France Scholars attending the AGM**

Nuffield France is recruiting a bilingual, part time person for the daily management of the association, to find resources, to represent the President at certain events and to communicate especially through social media. This person would be shared with UNIAGRO, the association of French agronomists.

A new Bureau was elected at the AGM, including:

1. President: Victor Leforestier
2. Treasurer: Vincent Chouanard
3. International Relations: David King

4. Relations with Partners: Frédéric Thibault
5. Internal and External Communications: Laure Figueureu-Bidaud



**Photo: Scholar Benoit Presles receiving a medal from the President of the Chambers of Agriculture upon his retirement**

Four commissions were set up to obtain ideas from members and make proposals on:

1. Approaches to partners
2. Accompanying scholars, mentoring, reporting
3. Communications and events (new presentation of Nuffield France and its network, events to meet each other)
4. International relations

### **2018 Scholars Selected**

Twelve applications were received. The jury interviewed five candidates and three were selected to receive scholarships. The three successful candidates were:

#### **Vincent GALLARD**



An agronomist specialising in animal husbandry and the dairy sector, whose passion for farming and for dairy products started on his family's mixed crop and livestock farm. He works as a milk advisor in a cheese plant. He hopes to simplify and reduce the risk of dairy farmers wishing to start or develop a direct sales activity. His topic is 'Inventory of manufacturing processes adapted to a mobile dairy facility'. He says today, starting an activity of direct selling of dairy products requires a significant investment in equipment that is not used very much. Milk processing would be carried out as a mobile service delivery, without taking away from producers their marketing functions which is a real vector of economic and social development

of the profession. The study will assess the suitability for rapid processing of various dairy and cheese products. Meetings with producers throughout the world who are involved in direct sales will help to build and evaluate the economic feasibility of this model of innovation.

### **Julien HÉRAULT**



Julien is manager of advisory services in farm equipment and specialises in training and consulting. He provides services to farmers, agricultural contractors, concessionaires and builders. The focus of his work is on managing the costs of mechanization, improving the quality of the work of the machines and increasing overall performance. For the last ten years, he has also been farming a 50-hectare cereal enterprise which serves in part as a testing ground for carrying out multi-year trials and machine comparisons.

His topic is 'Reducing the costs of mechanisation: how to reach an optimum level of investment in agricultural equipment?' To better manage the costs of mechanisation, he will try to develop a tool or process to better estimate the minimum level of capital required without compromising the performance of the farm machinery.

### **Guillaume MILARD**



Guillaume is an agricultural graduate from the LaSalle Institute of Beauvais (2010). He has been interested in direct seeding for about 15 years, and then in direct seeding into a cover crop (soil conservation agriculture). He has been following this practice since he started farming in 2011. This year he took over as head of the arable side of the family farm, where cereal crops have been direct sown for 12 years. His Nuffield topic is: 'Towards the certification of conservation agriculture?' He would like to strengthen the technical arguments to successfully promote this new form of agriculture through a comparative study of the carbon footprint and the nutritional quality of the grain produced under conservation agriculture.

Faced with an ever more open and competitive market, farmers need to differentiate their products and communicate about them. "Our production systems are innovative because they regenerate soil life by increasing carbon sequestration. I therefore wish to work on two technical aspects as future bases of communication and perhaps certification: the carbon footprint and the nutritional quality of grains produced by comparing the traditional tillage system with the conservation agriculture system".

### **Presentation of Scholar Reports**

For the second consecutive year, the AGM was followed by presentations of the scholar reports of the previous year. This is an opportunity to open Nuffield France to other interested organisations, companies, government departments, and the media.

The presentations by the 2016 scholars, and the debate that followed with an audience of 60 people were excellent. They included:

- Maxime Monard spoke about optimising the use of effluent from livestock operations on the farm and in its environment;
- Laure Figueureu-Bidaut's presentation was about increasing the sustainability of the family farm through diversification into small fruit production (raspberries);
- Sylvian Haurat focused on the development of new technologies in dairy farming (calving detectors, continuous milk analysers, ruminal thermometers)



**Photo: New Chairman of Nuffield France Victor Leforestier**

### **Partnership with the Pierre Sarrazin Foundation for Innovation in Agriculture**

Nuffield France and the Pierre Sarrazin Foundation share the same values of creativity, and sharing knowledge and so it was natural that they should come together at the annual awards ceremony for innovations of Pierre Sarrazin on 29 November 2017 to present the Nuffield Scholars for 2018 and host a joint conference on “Thinking out of the box to liberate energy and creativity”. Much attention is being given to innovation as existing systems of agriculture and food production appear very fragile in the face of new challenges such as climate change and the need to reduce farm inputs.

We had the pleasure of welcoming Jim Geltch, CEO of Nuffield International to Paris for this event.