

Recent projects and research on Wild Cherry and Ash in France

Among target species for cost E42 action, research efforts in France recently have been focused on Wild Cherry and Fraxinus.

Wild Cherry :

- 1) In past years, 24 clonal tests, evaluating 250 clones for more than 6 years, were analysed. Evaluated traits were : growth, susceptibility to anthracnosis and branch and stem form. Three clones were definitively admitted on national register in tested category. More over, seven promising other clones have been temporary proposed in tested category.
- 2) A seed orchard, composed of 35 clones selected on clonal value, has been planted on 0.5 ha in French Brittany in order to provide seed for all France.
- 3) Present diversity and matting system are being analysed into 3 groups of material : 6 forest wild populations, an experimental seed orchard and a collection of clones. This ongoing study will help to understand how the diversity is organised for Wild Cherry in France. The finality is to built a strategy for both rationally organise commercial plantations of improved forest reproductive material and preserve genetic resources.

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Ash :

Microsatellite and morphological markers were used to identify several hybrid zones between 2 autochthonous Ash species in France : *Fraxinus excelsior* and *Fraxinus angustifolia*. Spatial distribution is highly linked to environmental factors suggesting that climate acts as a limiting factor of natural hybridisation. Floral phenology has an impact on gene flows, that are asymmetric. Early flowering hybrids are more frequent, show a higher male and female reproductive success, producing more flowers and seed. Hybrids could also have a better selective value which could increase their colonising potential.

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