



FRANCE

INNOVATIONS IN AGROECOLOGY

L'ATELIER PAYSAN: A NETWORK FOR FARMER-DRIVEN TECHNOLOGIES AND PRACTICES

Small-scale agroecological and organic farming systems require appropriate machinery and technologies, and a change of paradigm in the way they are conceived, produced, sold and patented. The mainstream agricultural model has led to machines that are getting increasingly bigger and more expensive and complicated, and thus inaccessible for many farmers who must choose between autonomy and over-investment, resilience and dependency.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INNOVATION

L'Atelier Paysan is a French-speaking collective of small-scale farmers who gathered together in 2014 as a cooperative to work on appropriate technologies for agroecology, such as farming and processing tools, and farm buildings. It is a collective toolbox of farmer-driven technologies and practices, based on farmers as innovators, and the principle that technological practices need to be made with, by and for farmers: innovation is in the process, more than in its product.

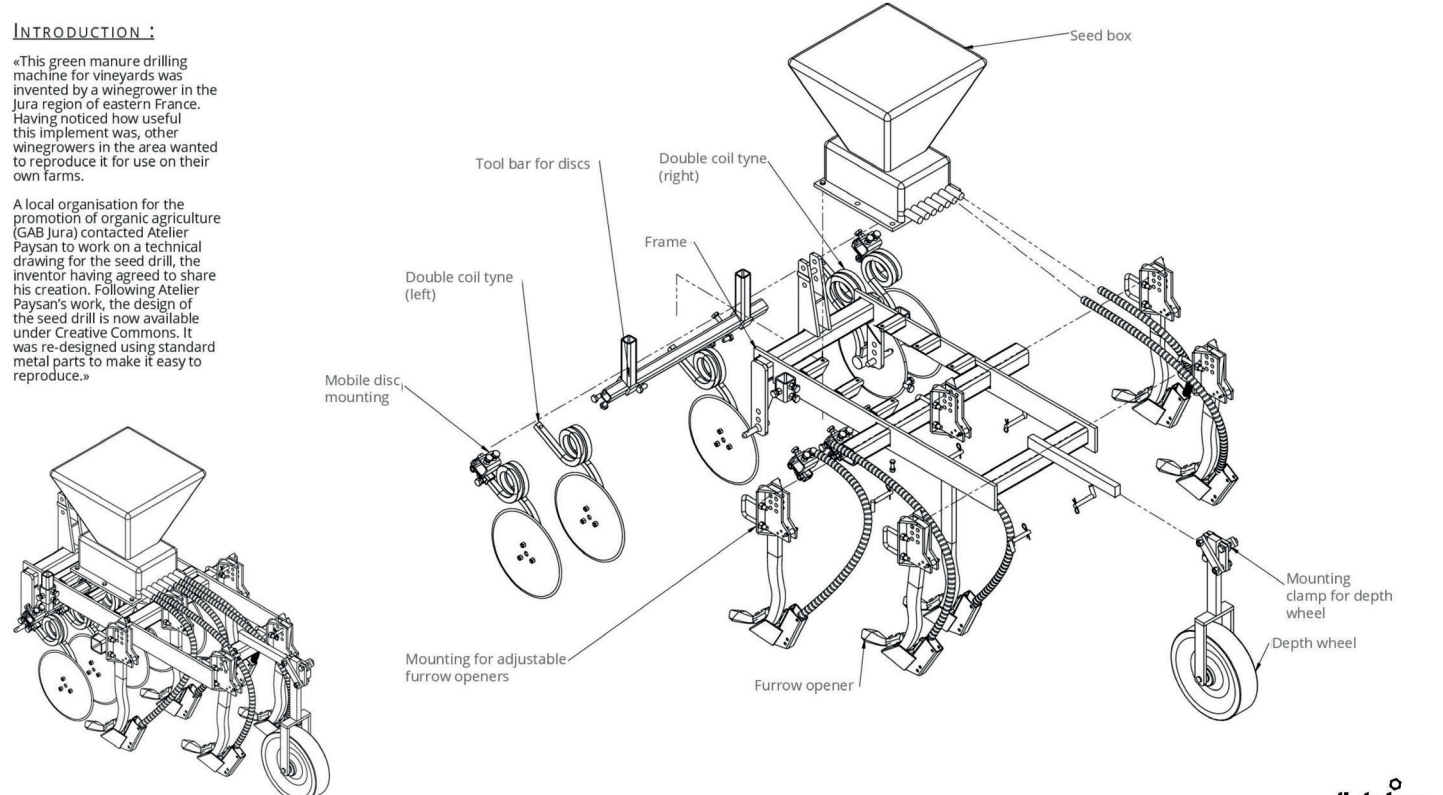
L'Atelier Paysan is innovative on several levels: the organization offers a framework upon which farmers access appropriate technologies, the participatory processes to co-conceive tools with farmers, and the tools (and buildings) themselves.

Collective farmer-led designs GREEN MANURE SEED DRILL FOR VINEYARDS

INTRODUCTION :

«This green manure drilling machine for vineyards was invented by a winemaker in the Jura region of eastern France. Having noticed how useful this implement was, other winemakers in the area wanted to reproduce it for use on their own farms.

A local organisation for the promotion of organic agriculture (CJA) Jura contacted Atelier Paysan to work on a technical drawing for the seed drill, the inventor having agreed to share his creation. Following Atelier Paysan's work, the design of the seed drill is now available under Creative Commons. It was re-designed using standard metal parts to make it easy to reproduce.»



Find this tool on our website:
<http://latelierpaysan.org>

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paysan

DESIGN AND SHARING OF THE INNOVATION

We do it by:

1. accompanying farmers' collectives for designing tools or buildings they need;
2. identifying and documenting on-farm innovations in France and neighbouring countries (800 factsheets, videos);
3. spreading open source (CC-BY-NC-SA) technical drawings and tutorials (52 tools / buildings); and
4. leading on-farm workshops to empower farmers with the skills they need for self-building and (re)appropriating their tools (such as metal work).

BENEFIT FOR FAMILY FARMERS AND FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

At farmer level, we see open source tools designed for agroecology as landraces, with the same benefits: freely exchangeable in respect of the rights of use defined by the collectives that make them live; diverse by nature allowing them to evolve and adapt; reproducible by the farmer; and selected and multiplied with methods the final grower can manage. Building tools also means knowing how to adapt and fix them, making machinery less expensive. It simply means more technical and financial autonomy, for empowered and skilled farmers in agroecological systems.

SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

At agricultural and food system level, there cannot be food sovereignty without technological sovereignty. These collective processes also have a strong impact locally, supporting small-scale models more focused on labour than on capital, and building strong socio-technical networks of farmers, related to consumers and the local economy.



LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This cooperative was founded in France, in answer to farmers' needs for appropriate technologies in the French context. There is a need to imagine forms for other countries, and to translate all contents for appropriation.