



Vacancy Announcement

Post-doctoral position

Paris, 24 months

Bugs against Pests

The production of insects as an innovation

About [RiTME](#)

RiTME (Risques, Travail, Marchés, Etat), is a research unit of the French National Institute for Agronomical Research (INRA) focusing on the ways in which collective risks are socially constructed and processed, particularly in the areas of sanitation and foodstuffs, and on how ethical and environmental considerations (or considerations referred to as such) are taken on board in commercial spheres as new expressions of political power. The unit looks at how the private norms which have been developed in sectors with strong regulatory traditions function alongside the public regulations which have prevailed over the last half-century. The objective is to understand the forms proper to each mode of regulation and the nature of their coexistence (substitution, competition, syncretism) in both routine situations and during a crisis.

Background

Since the end of the 1990s, the development of biological control is to be noticed in various agricultural sectors: fruits and vegetables, vines, cereals, etc. This mode of production requires to use insects, designed as beneficial insects or natural enemies, to pollinate and to control pests. Though these insects can be grown within farmers' organisations, they are most of the times bought to beneficial insects suppliers. At the European scale, this market is shared by a small number of companies, which play three major roles in the development of biological control: 1) in collaboration with public and private research institutions, they participate in research and development processes and in the identification of efficient insects; 2) they supply farmers, specifying both the quality and the price of insects as a result; 3) they often offer advice services to farmers, therefore contributing to the extension of biological control. Companies producing and supplying beneficial insects are therefore major actors of the success of alternative or complementary strategies to pesticides. However they are not well known and their role seems to be under-estimated, so this post-doctoral research aims at gaining knowledge about these companies and their activities.

Position advertised

From a sociological point of view, this object may be studied according to three complementary points of view. The post-doctoral research will focus on one or several of these aspects according to the applicant's interests:

- Adopting a sociology of science perspective, the research would highlight the role of these

companies in agricultural applied entomology research and innovation. How do these companies work to discover and select insects? What are their relationships to public research institutes? What are their strategies as far as intellectual properties and patents are concerned?

- Adopting an economic sociology perspective, the research would analyse the emergence and the structuration of a market for the production and supply of insects to agriculture. The strategies of the companies, their logics of differentiation and their interactions within associations such as the IBMA (International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association) may be studied. The organisation of the production of insects, the logistics and the terms of commercialization of the different companies may be compared in order to establish a panorama of the European companies involved in this business.
- Adopting a sociology of innovation perspective, the analysis would deal with the co-construction of efficient insects between producing companies and users. Experimental system and the relationships between insects suppliers and farmers may be analysed.

To sum it up, the post-doctoral research will enable to use classical approaches in sociology of innovation, in sociology of markets and sociologies of companies in order to study original fieldworks.

Requirements

- Holding a PhD (or PhD will have been awarded by mobility start date);
- Having a maximum of 10 years research experience (after Master's degree, i.e. after the title giving access to PhD);
- Not having spent more than 12 months in France within the last three years immediately prior to the expected date of recruitment;
- Being able to write and speak fluent English or French;
- Having at least one publication in an inter-disciplinary or specialised peer-reviewed journal;
- Having one publication in an inter-disciplinary or specialised peer-reviewed journal per two years of post-doctorate period taking into account the breaks.

Location and type of contract

The position is a 24 months contract, mainly located at the RiTME Unit (Ivry-sur-Seine, metro from Paris center), starting on the 4th quarter of 2012. The gross salary is 3465€ per month (about 2900 € after social insurance taxes, but before income taxes).

How to Apply

Interested candidates should send their CV (fill in this [formular](#)), publications list, two publications and a cover letter at their earliest convenience, the deadline for submission being May, 8th. Application should be sent by email to Didier Torny, head of RiTME : didier.torny@ivry.inra.fr