France is one of the top 3 countries in agriculture, making it Europe’s largest agricultural producer and exporter.

A national effort of public research largely contributed to the reconstruction of French agriculture after World War II and its diversification over the last decades.

Major areas of research: biotechnology applied to agriculture, animal health and food safety, nutrition and obesity, environmental concerns, economical and sociological aspects of agriculture, cooperation with developing countries.

Compared to the American system, where most agronomic research is located in the Universities, Agronomic research in France is mainly located in large research institutions:

- **3 institutes dedicated to a large scope of agronomy-related research activities**
  - the largest, INRA (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique) which covers agriculture, food and nutrition, and the environment.
  - IRD and CIRAD which are specialized in agricultural development.

- **2 thematic research institutes**
  - CEMAGREF which is devoted to agricultural and environmental engineering.
  - IFREMER which is devoted to sea exploitation.

- **1 general scientific research institute**
  - CNRS which conducts fundamental research in plant and animal sciences.

- **Many universities and écoles d’ingénieurs laboratories**
  - The French école d’ingénieurs in Agronomy give an original education combining the edge in agricultural and life sciences research and management skills.

One of the most developed and diversified national research systems