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## **An Internet site serving the entire agricultural community: French experience**

In 2000 Crédit agricole's experience of and success in Internet banking and its standing in the world of French agriculture inspired it to set up a **major site for information on agriculture** aimed at each and every farmer: *www.pleinchamp.com*.

The site is defined by two guiding principles:

- **It is a virtual community:** every day 600 national and local partners of farmers (chambers of agriculture, farming co-operatives, management centres, regional centres of Crédit agricole, trade journals, ...) publish information on economics, law, tax, technology and finance,
- **It is the day-to-day site** that enables farmers to buy and sell at the right time: real-time information, continuous quotations and high-level expertise on the agricultural products markets (cereals, oil-producing plants, breeding, wine) and inputs (fuel, gas, nitrogen fertilisers, etc.).

Nearly half the 350,000 French agricultural farm holdings use the Internet. *pleinchamp.com* receives 300,000 different visitors and 1 million hits a month. That means it reaches every Net-surfing farmer and all their partners.

By taking financial and commercial responsibility for this project, Crédit agricole is developing the Internet as an information, communication and management tool available to farmers. It is also providing a unifying tool for the farming community by bringing their partners, including Crédit agricole, together on one site.