Welcome to

The 16th European Farmhouse and Artisan Cheese & Dairy Meeting 2026

Basque Country (Spain)

Hosted by ESNEKI Dairy Centre

19 – 21 October 2026

Programme
"Basque Dairy: Tradition Inspiring Innovation"

Monday 19 October 2026	
8:30-17:30	Farm and Dairy visits (5 options)
19:00-22:00	Joint apéro Group dinner at a traditional Basque cider house

Tuesday 20 October 2026	
9:00-13:00	Workshops • Option 1: Traditional fresh cheese and "Mamia" • Option 2: Traditional semi-hard sheep´s milk cheese • Option 3: Technical tasting of cheeses developed at ESNEKI Dairy Centre Including a visit to our facilities
13:00-14:00	Working groups meeting
14:00-15:00	Lunch
15:00-17:00	FACE General Assembly
17:00-19:00	Cultural visit to Markina-Xemein (optional)
19:30-22:30	European Cheese Buffet "Introduction to Basque folklore and gastronomy"

Wednesday 21 October 2026	
Conference/Lectures	
9:00-9:30	Registration and coffee
9:30-10:00	"Welcome speeches and opening of the conference" Local authorities and President of FACEnetwork Kerstin Jürss
10:00-10:30	Session 1 "The role of ESNEKI as a reference dairy center for the artisan dairy sector" By Malen Sarasua, Head of ESNEKI Dairy Centre
10:30-11:00	Session 2 "Types of rennet and starter cultures used in artisan cheesemaking. Current trends." By Ana Arroyo/Maria Arroyo, Laboratorios Arroyo
11:00-11:30	Coffee break Possibility to visit the poster exhibition stands
11:30-12:00	Session 3 "Practical application of metagenomic techniques to adjust cheesemaking and ripening processes, as well as to ensure the safety of dairy products" By Ph. Baroja Careaga, Head of Molecular Biology at ESNEKI Dairy Centre
12:00-12:30	Session 4 "Shepherding as a traditional practice of the Basque Country's cheesemaking sector and its connection to our semi-hard sheep's cheese" By Jon and Martina, GAROA dairy
12:30-13:00	Session 5 "Presentation of a success story showing how rural areas can be revitalized through cheesemaking models that combine tradition and modernity" By Aitor/Sarah, LA LLELDIRIA dairy (QUERED)
13:00-14:00	Lunch Possibility to visit the poster exhibition stands
14:00-14:30	Session 6 "Innovative cheeses made from Latxa sheep's milk" By Iker Izeta, ELKANO 1-GAZTAGUNE dairy
14:30-15:00	Session 7 "Diversification of goat's milk cheeses and its impact on local tourism and gastronomy" By Alicia Gonzalez, MORAITA dairy

15:00-16:00	Session 8 Panel discussion on "Transition of the Basque Country's cow milk dairy sector toward more sustainable production systems" Moderated by ESNEKI Dairy Centre. Cow´s milk producers and artisan cheesemakers.
16:00-16:30	Q&A session
16:30-17:00	Scientific Posters Awards ceremony and closing remarks