

In Catalonia, and around the world agriculture is based on a limited number of species of plants and animals which are those that have been identified as the ones responding most adequately to the needs of the production of food and other products. They are also based on varieties and races that have developed over the centuries and have shown their value in our environment. This situation has changed in function of the needs of the agricultural and livestock sector that are based on the social and industrial demand and on the emergence of new varieties and breeds which are more productive and more resistant to diseases. For the production of new varieties of plants or animal breeds, it is necessary to have access to genetic variability. Therefore, the conservation of existing variability is essential to respond to the demands of changing environments. The varieties and breeds existing in Catalonia have shown that they respond to the existing conditions in our environment both for the production and demand of products that consumers consider to be adapted to their needs. Efforts to identify varieties of plants and breeds of animals that are characteristic of our environment and to preserve those that have a special value would be necessary and they are discussed in this chapter.