

February - March 2016

EUFRUIT project kick-off in Brussels

On 3-4 March 2016, a kick-off meeting took place in Brussels of the new project EUFRUIT, in which Freshfel will actively participate. EUFRUIT is a Horizon 2020 European funded project aiming at facilitating the access to knowledge and at disseminating existing research and innovation potential for the benefit of the fresh produce sector and consumers.

EUFRUIT is setting up a unique thematic European Fruit Network where research institutes and the European representative organizations of the fresh fruit sector are joining forces. Altogether, EUFRUIT gathers a consortium of 21 partners from 12 different countries. The consortium will focus its activities on 4 crucial thematic areas for the competitiveness and innovation potential of the European Fruit sector. These areas include 1) new cultivar development, 2) minimise residues on fruit and in the environment, 3) optimise storage and fruit quality as well as 4) enhance sustainable production systems. As such, EUFRUIT will act as a knowledge platform while providing unique networking opportunities for academics and researchers partners, fruit business operators as well as decision makers. With a total budget of 1.8 million €, the network will establish in the upcoming three years a systematic approach for knowledge gathering and dissemination.

From the fresh produce sector, both AREFLH (Association of the Regions producing fruit, vegetables and horticulture products) and Freshfel Europe (European fruit and vegetables Association) will be actively involved in the dissemination of the project achievements to the sector.

The full press release can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1MDHMzD>



Freshfel Annual Event 1&2 June 2016

Europatat and Freshfel Europe's First-Ever Combined Annual Event at the 2nd of June 2016 in Brussels will look beyond "business as usual".

Freshfel Europe and Europatat will jointly celebrate their first common annual meeting at the 2nd of June 2016 in Brussels. Adhering to the European Commission work programme 2016, the common conference will be held under the theme "Not business as usual". The conference will review the upcoming challenges and opportunities for both sectors in light of a more and more disrupted political and business environment. With a broad international line up, covering policy and business perspectives - among them Maria Åsenius, Head of Cabinet of Trade Commissioner Malmström, Technology-Futurist Franziska Kraushaar from TrendOne and the online-pioneer and "Hello Fresh" founder Thomas Giesel - Freshfel wishes to contribute to prepare our both sectors for the future in an ever-disruptive environment. It will also feature senior Commission officials including Ladislav Miko, deputy director general of DG SANTE, in charge of the safety of the supply chain and Diego Canga Fano, Director of DG AGRI in charge of multilateral international affairs as well as quality and promotion policy. Freshfel looks forward to welcome its members for this unique networking event.

More information & registration details can be found [here](#).

Join us at:
EUROPATAT AND FRESHFEL EUROPE'S FIRST-EVER COMBINED ANNUAL EVENT
1-2 June 2016 - Brussels

Network with industry leaders at the annual European fresh produce and potato summit!

NOT BUSINESS AS USUAL:
Discover how to manage change in an uncertain world to remain successful

- Benefit from the unique opportunity to network with industry leaders from the potato and fresh fruit and vegetable sectors at the first jointly organised Europatat and Freshfel event
- Learn how to anticipate and respond to changes driven by the technological revolution, climate change, a growing demand for sustainability, new trade patterns, demographic shifts and modern consumer behaviour
- Build uncertainty into your conventional planning strategy and explore new ways to address the multifaceted challenges facing our sectors today
- Take advantage of the combined expertise of two major agricultural sectors in Europe to exchange views and best practices

Anecoop's Francisco Borrás speaks at public hearing of the EP about barriers to trade

The European People's Party under the lead of MEP Czeslaw Adam Siekierski had held a public hearing concerning non-tariff trade barriers inside and outside the European Union on the 17th of February 2016. The meeting took place in the European Parliament, initiated by the publication of a report, pointing out potential discriminatory barriers to trade within the single market. Next to comments from leading MEPs of the Agricultural and Rural Development Committee as well as the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee, the meeting gave the floor to stakeholders from the agri-food sphere. Our member, Anecoop's Deputy Managing Director Francisco Borrás had been invited to take a closer look on trade barriers from the fresh produce sector's perspective. He used the opportunity, to once more underline, that the real challenges still remain within the trade relations to third countries outside the European Union. He highlighted the fragmented application procedures as well as protectionist SPS hurdles hindering the access to new markets for fruit and vegetable.



FRESH DEMO Project update

Visitors of the Freshfel stand in Berlin had the opportunities to learn more of the Fresh Demo project sharing the same location as the Freshfel stand. Equipments for fresh produce humidification modelling as well as visual and displays materials were allowing visitors to learn more about this new technology aiming at improving shelf life and freshness of fresh produce from picking down to the supermarket shelves. Early March a first testing of strawberries shipped from Huelva to Bremerhaven were undertaken under the humidification process. First lab results of the Fresh Demo sample compared with a conventional sample indicate very promising results. The project will be continued with additional tests (stonefruit, table grapes,..) in the next twelve months. More information can be found [here](#).

Freshfel joins Commissioner Hogan in Colombian and Mexico trade mission

Francisco Borrás, Chairman of the Freshfel Export division and Freshfel's General Delegate Philippe Binard , were part of the European delegation accompanying Commissioner Hogan in Colombia and Mecico. The fresh produce sector continues to be confronted with the consequences of the Russian embargoes and eager to diversify. The latest trade data indicate that in 2015, exports decreased by ca 7% in volume and ca 15% in value still as a result of the on-going Russian ban. Opening new opportunities and diversifying markets were therefore one of the key objectives of the Commissioner initiative. Some promising steps resulted from



the discussion in Colombia aiming at speeding up the authorisation processes for EU fresh produce. The visit was also the opportunity to review the trade aspects of the organic legislation and its impact in international trade, the EU and Colombia moving closer towards equivalency and mutual recognition. In Mexico , and with a view of an upcoming reform of the FTA, Freshfel urged the Mexican authorities to stop their protectionism and to completely reshuffle their protectionist import policy in regard to European fresh produce. Current situation lead to a complete lack of reciprocity, the Mexian, under the current FTA having boosted their export from 15.000 T to 150.000 T in the last 15 years while EU fresh produce remains virtually banned.

Freshfel sets priorities for the 2017 calls for EU promotion campaign

In preparation of the upcoming (2017) call for tender for promotion programme for EU agriculture product, Freshfel prepared a statement highlighting priorities for fresh produce both on the internal and on the international markets. Freshfel advocated in particular for a better balance between single and multi countries programmes and also called for more synergies for actions on the international market rather than the fragmented target approach set by the Commission in 2016. While assisting EU exports, Freshfel also stresses that actions on the EU market remain crucial with a view of reversing the negative produce consumption trend. Improving the positioning of fresh produce to new consumption opportunity Fresh fruit and vegetables are one of the main beneficiary of this policy among the agricultural products. With increased budget and co-financing rate moving up to 80%, this policy remains ambitious and attractive for fresh produce.

Civil dialogue group on Horticulture

Under the chair of Freshfel representative, Mr Jose Antonio Garcia Fernandez (Director of Alimpo) , the Civil Dialogue Group for Horticulture met in Brussels on 26 February 2016. The meeting reviewed the latest developments in regard to the CAP instruments , reviewing in particular the efficiency and attractiveness of the CMO instruments. A particular focus was made on the simplification of the CMO, the(lack of) attractiveness of withdrawal schemes, the consolidated school fruit scheme and the uptake and way forward for the compensation measures in the frame of the Russian embargo. The Civil Dialogue Group also reviewed the reform of the plant health regime and how to cope with a more robust policy. New breeding techniques were also debated.



Freshfel board meeting of 25 February



Freshfel held a board meeting on 25 February in which many topics were discussed on agriculture policy, plant and food safety, new technologies in the sector, research and innovation, sustainability and consumption. The Board under the leadership of Luc Clerx, chairman gave in particular new orientation for the association on some of the topical issue. Among the issues discussed, one could highlight the review of the organic legislation , the position of the association towards new technologies such as new breeding techniques as well as the involvement of Freshfel in Research and Innovation projects under the Horizon 2020 programme. Issues relating to plant and food safety as well as the market situation (on -going consequences of the Russian embargoes and the stagnation of consumption) were other core issues discussed in depth by the Freshfel Board. Since Freshfel is increasingly involved in projects, Freshfel is currently in the process of looking for a new colleague to deal with project management.

Remembrance and sympathy for victims of terrorist attacks



Freshfel wishes to express their sympathy for the families and friends of the casualties of the terrorist attacks, taking place in Brussels on 22 March 2016. Since the secretariat is based in Brussels, the airport and the Maelbeek station are just at the doorsteps of the Freshfel 's office. These places will also sound familiar to many of the Freshfel members. This time, the attacks came close to home, but the secretariat wishes express strength in these difficult times and of course underlines their sympathy for victims of terrorist attacks worldwide.