



European meeting for the innovation and the research of Fruit & Vegetable

Brussels, 22nd January 2014



Task force, synthesis & Proposals of the meeting

From the presentations of the regions, several points arise as regards research, experimentation and innovation, and the methods of their financing:

- ⇒ Sustainable agriculture or integrated agriculture is a common priority to all the regions and stations.
- ⇒ The operating process, in particular the decisional process, of the regional stations and their scientific network is in direct contact with the production and linked to the structures of the sector.
 - The regional stations thus fully work within the framework implemented by the Commission on the 'bottom-up' principle.
 - The regional stations daily work with their network of partners.
- ⇒ The regional stations already function with a very coherent logic, a logic that is designed for the EIP
- ⇒ As the EIP does not include specific financings on the programmes, it is important to facilitate the geared allocation of the funds such as horizon 2020 and EAFRD to facilitate their access.
- ⇒ The access procedures and funds justification must as simple as possible so that they do not constitute a brake with the projects carried by the small and medium-size organisations.

In a more general way, the participation and the debates of this conference show the capacity of the fruit and vegetables sector to organize itself to face the research & innovation challenges.

With the objective to transform this conference as a starting point, the co-organisers, AREFLH, FRESHFEL, and the Eufriin group, are committed right now in the creation of a **task force** for research experimentation and Innovation. The first meeting of this group will be held in a few weeks.

As primary goals we propose:

- ⇒ **To develop a strategic agenda for the research and the innovation, representing the needs for the fruit and vegetables sector. This could be used as a roadmap, in the horizon 2020 projects, for the priorities of research and innovation of the sector.**
- ⇒ **To help and coordinate the regional and national administrations with the fruit and vegetables sector and with the research and innovation institutions in order to develop common projects within the framework of the EIP and the horizon 2020 projects.**
- ⇒ **Be a communication platform that represents the fruit and vegetables sector, with the research and innovation services of the DG Agri and DG Research of the Commission and the European Parliament.**

The composition of this task force is still to be precisely defined, with the objective of the largest broadcast possible representativeness of the sector in its European dimension.

Taking into account the fall of the fruit and vegetables consumption and the concerns that generates in terms of public health, research, we think that **experimentation and the innovation are the key factors of a more respectful production of the environment, preserving employment in the territories and producing of the healthy and sufficient food.**

So far the actors of the sector have always known how to take up challenges. We are thus trustful on the fact that the new framework proposed will make it possible for our sector to answer the future challenges.

Freshfel Europe

Conclusions of the European meeting on Fruit & Vegetable research (Brussels 22nd jan. 2014)

Access the powerpoint presentations of the meeting

AREFLH www.areflh.org (mission@areflh.org) - FRESHFEL www.freshfel.org

the European Fresh Produce Association, a non-profit organization, is the forum for the fresh fruit and vegetables supply chain in Europe and beyond. Its members and associated members are associations and companies that have an interest in the European fresh fruit and vegetable sector, including production, trade, logistics and retailing. Freshfel represents stakeholders across the fresh produce chain and coordinates tasks for the benefit of the fresh produce sector. The organisation defends the interests of the sector on the European and international scene, and updates members on recent legislative and supply chain developments. Freshfel also provides a networking platform for its members and facilitates contacts among representatives of the sector. Within Freshfel, the sector has a platform to meet, to share views and to gear positions towards one another.

AREFLH

is the organization of European regions producing fruit, vegetables and ornamental plants. Its aims main objectives are:

a/ To represent, defend and promote the common interests of the Fruit, Vegetables and Horticulture producing Regions in European and world economy as well as part of the expanded European Union

b/ To organize and lead the dialogue and the cooperation between Regions, to develop synergies, to instigate the setting of actions and joint programs in order to consolidate and develop the fruit, vegetable and horticultural regional activity

c/ To reinforce, with the support of the Europe Regions Assembly (AER), the representation of these Regions in European and world Institutions, and to facilitate their participation in the construction of Europe as well as the decision-making processes. Within AREFLH, the research commission, which is composed of representatives of the research centers and experimental stations of each region, work to identify and establish research and innovation priorities and to foster cooperation leading to joint projects for the benefit of the fruit sector.

EUFRIN

is an organization of university departments and research institutes that specialize in research, development, and extension on temperate fruit crops and which are based within countries of the European Union, Switzerland, and Eastern Europe. It was setup and held its first meeting in Bonn in 1993. Its Board, with representatives of each country and chairman of each working groups, meets once a year to identify research priorities, foster common projects. EUFRIN is organized in thematic working groups ranging from variety testing and chemical thinning to fruit quality, genomics and breeding or irrigation among others. EUFRIN it has been very active in promoting projects within the different research framework programs of the European Union. EU research projects ISAFRUIT, EUBERRY and FRUITBREEDOMICS are a few examples of EUFRIN lead research initiatives.

After the completion of Framework Program 7, the European Union research funding scheme H2020 for the period 2014-2020, has launched its first research call in December 2013. With a strong emphasis in innovation, it includes two new tools: the multiactor projects and thematic networks. Multiactor projects are research and innovation projects that must include active involvement of all stakeholders, growers, researchers, advisers in all phases of the research project from the design phase, development and dissemination.

European Innovation Partnership in Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-Agri) is a new scheme inserted in the CAP of the EU aiming at putting research into practice with a bottom-up approach or demand driven innovation by seeking a more interactive model of innovation among all stakeholders instead of the more classical linear development model. Key for this new scheme are the so called Operational Groups that will include growers, advisors, researchers and other stakeholders to develop and implement specific innovation projects. These operational groups can be facilitated by innovation brokers with the capacity to identify innovation opportunities, potential partners putting forward and catalyzing proposals. The funding of this new scheme will be based on different sources, among others the Rural Development Program of each country/region and the H2020 into which the new tools of multi-actor projects and thematic networks are closely related to the EIP.

AREFLH, FRESHFEL and EUFRIN, have joined forces by creating this task-force with representatives of the three institutions.