

Welcome to TRUEFOOD info!



Welcome to this first edition of TRUEFOOD info. This new bi-annual newsletter, published in English, is the voice of TRUEFOOD – Traditional United Europe Food – an Integrated Project financed by the European Commission under the Sixth Framework Programme for Research Technology and Development: Contract Number FOOD-CT-2006-016264. TRUEFOOD info is launched with the aim of reaching not just our project partners, but also a wider audience seeking information about our project activities. Featuring key project events, research and training activities on traditional food (traditional food means for us all regional and national products in cooking traditions), policy developments, publications and other traditional European food production related issues, our newsletter will highlight the most important news about TRUEFOOD during the whole duration of the project. Complementing this newsletter is our new website www.truefood.eu, where you can find additional information on our work. We look forward to producing an attractive, informative and useful newsletter. We welcome feedback on this issue and contributions to future newsletters.

Daniele Rossi (TRUEFOOD Project Coordinator - SPES GEIE Administrator)

European food and drink sector needs

The European food and drink industry is the largest manufacturing industry in Europe. It transforms over 70% of the EU production of agricultural raw materials, employs over 4 million people mainly within the small to medium size enterprises (SMEs) and had a turnover of 840 billion euros in 2005. SMEs contribute half to this turnover. The traditional food sector, for instance consists mainly of such SMEs.

Research and innovation in the European food and drink sector is lagging behind its major competitors. As a result of globalisation, international challenges are increasing. Remaining competitive and achieving sustained growth is essential. Whilst Europe is a world leader in innovation and investment in some areas of food science and technology, such as process engineering, there is increasing competition from low wage cost countries

across all areas except those where the consumer demand required for market penetration can be provided through a high research and development (R&D) input. This can range from flexible processing, novel processing methods, authenticity preservation, improvement of the nutritional quality or overall quality, functionality and safety of food, to mention only a few. R&D expenditure for advanced technology in the food and drink sector, as in other sectors, requires investment that many individual companies have difficulties in financing on their own. Research networks and pan-European initiatives are important tools to help meet this challenge. Equally important is a broad dissemination of the results to all segments of the food and drink sector and to all companies, regardless of their size. We trust that this TRUEFOOD project will make a crucial contribution to improve research capacities of SMEs and combined with other activities, such as the contribution to the European Technology Platform "Food for Life" <http://etp.ciaa.be>, will help to improve the performance of F&D industry in R&D.

*Beate Kettlitz, Director Scientific Affairs,
CIAA - Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the EU*



www.truefood.eu

Great Expectations: The Potential Impact of TRUEFOOD

The TRUEFOOD project is not just another 6th Framework Programme Integrated Project, even though in terms of its size and scientific content, it is not so different from other IPs. TRUEFOOD is a unique and pioneering initiative because it directly involves a large part of the European food & drink industry, the SMEs, which would not normally have such direct access to the benefits of high quality R&D. The presence of SMEs in the project is secured by the presence of a formal consortium of 11 National Food Federations, the SPES GEIE. That Food Federations, across Europe, are assuming a role in the promotion, execution and dissemination of research, is a highly significant development with potentially, a wide reaching impact in many areas. It is not a coincidence that the CIAA (the Confederation of European Food and Drink Industries) has taken a key role in the European Technology Platform – Food For Life, and that SPES members have been instrumental, within the CIAA, in pushing the research agenda forwards. The Technical and Scientific Mediators (TSM) who are recruited by the National Federations and specifically trained to take the outputs of the project directly into the SME's, represent an innovation which impacts not only on the transfer of knowledge

and technology but on the ambition and organisation of the Federations themselves.

The external discipline, which is imposed by being a part of a formal project, will stimulate Federations to put R&D and Innovation high up in their priorities. Hopefully the positive consequences of this project will mean that this subject will remain a major priority long after TRUEFOOD has finished.

The close proximity to Food SMEs, which TRUEFOOD offers, is also a major opportunity for the research partners to learn how to work with this type of company.

Those researchers with the right spirit and attitude can forge links, which will be invaluable in the years to come. So TRUEFOOD is genuinely not just another 6th Framework Programme IP it is a great opportunity for all partners to create a new way of working.

Tim Hogg, Chairman of the SPES Scientific Committee and Associate Professor at the Escola Superior de Biotecnologia, Universidade Católica Portuguesa.

Publications on TRUEFOOD related issues

SMES-NET Project: the Vision Paper "Ten Theses on Food and Drink SMEs and Innovation in Europe. Evidence on Needs and Policy Recommendations" has been published at <http://smes-net.ciaa.be>. The document has been translated into 10 different European languages. Translations are available on the web. Inquiries can be addressed at resio@federalimentare.it

Why TRUEFOOD?

One of the main challenges in traditional food production is to improve competitiveness by identifying innovations which comply with EU safety policies and regulations and guarantee the safety of traditional food products (TFPs), while at the same time meet general consumer demands and specific consumers expectations and attitudes to innovation in TFPs.

This is not an easy task. Consumer expectations are sometimes contradictory. For instance, traditional food consumers demand products, which are completely safe with respect to microbiological hazards but are also minimally processed, free or low in preservative content and of high nutritional and sensory value.

This is a particularly challenging task for SMEs, which constitute

the majority of European traditional food producers and processors. Research into safety innovations has mainly focused on the needs of large-scale production and processing systems, and SMEs often lack the facilities or capital to establish facilities for microbiological or toxicological safety assurance systems. In addition, recent studies have indicated that many sectors of the traditional food industries have done little to identify and introduce innovations in primary production or processing that can increase nutritionally desirable compounds (e.g. antioxidants, vitamins) and reduce nutritionally undesirable compounds (e.g. salt, sugar, pesticides, saturated fatty acids), while maintaining or improving their sensory qualities. A central goal of the EU policy is therefore to increase the competitiveness of the traditional food sector via improvements in food safety and quality characteristics that can be translated into consumer demand. The TRUEFOOD project focuses on supporting this European strategy.

TRUEFOOD objectives and activities

TRUEFOOD aims to improve quality and safety and introduce innovation into Traditional European Food production systems through research, demonstration, dissemination and training activities.

Traditional Food Products intends to include not only protected and patented food, but also *all regional and national products in cooking traditions*. The project focuses on increasing value to both consumers and producers.

The project is divided in 8 different Work Packages (WP) covering research, technological development and innovation activities, demonstration and training:

WP 1: Determination of consumer perception, expectations, and attitudes

WP 2: Innovation for improving microbial safety of TFPs origin, and Control of biologically derived and process induced chemical hazards in TFPs

WP 3: Predictive Modelling and Risk Assessment of Traditional Foods

WP 4: Improving nutritional quality of traditional products in line with consumer demands

WP 5: Improved marketing and food supply chain organisation methods for traditional food products

WP 6: Pilot scale evaluation, demonstration and transfer of innovation to industry

WP 7: Environmental, societal, human and economic impacts of innovation

WP 8: Dissemination, training and technology transfer

TRUEFOOD project IDENTITY CARD

PROJECT TITLE: Traditional United Europe Food

Contract number FOOD-CT-2006-016264

DURATION: 4 years, starting from 1 May 2006

PROJECT COST: 20.08 millions of which 15.5 millions financed by the EU within the 6th Framework Programme for RTD

EU TYPE OF INSTRUMENT: Integrated Project (IP) – 6th Framework Programme for RTD

EU THEMATIC PRIORITY: Food Quality & Safety (Priority 5)

PROJECT COORDINATOR:

The overall coordinator is Spread European Safety - SPES GEIE (EU). SPES GEIE Administrator is Mr Daniele Rossi. The Group associates 11 European Food & Drink National Federations representing 280 branches and 35.000 European small to medium size enterprises:

- ANIA – Association Nationale des Industries Alimentaires (France)
- Federalimentare – Federazione Italiana dell'Industria Alimentare (Italy)
- FEVIA – Fédération de l'Industrie Alimentaire (Belgium)
- FFDI – Federation of the Food and Drink Industries (Czech Republic)
- FHFI – Federation of Hungarian Food Industries (Hungary)
- FI – Foedevareindustrien (Denmark)
- FIAA/LVA – Fachverband Lebensmittelindustrie/Lebensmittelversuchsanstalt (Austria)
- FIAB – Federación Española de la Alimentación y Bebidas (Spain)
- FIPA – Federação das Indústrias Portuguesas Agro-Alimentares (Portugal)
- SETBIR – Union of Dairy, Meat, Food Industrialists and Manufacturers (Turkey)
- SEVT – Federation of Hellenic Food Industries (Greece)

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Project partners are "centres of excellence" in food related R&D, with strong technology transfer units or cooperating with the traditional food sector:

- Institute National de la Recherche Agronomique (France)
- Ente per le Nuove Tecnologie, l'Energia e l'Ambiente (Italy)
- Matforks AS, Norwegian Food Research Institute (Norway)
- Agricultural University of Athens (Greece)
- Ghent University (Belgium)
- Association de Coordination Technique pour l'Industrie Alimentaire (France)
- Istituto Nazionale di Ricerca per gli Alimenti e la Nutrizione (Italy)
- Institut de Recerca i Tecnologia Agroalimentàries (Spain)
- Warsaw Agricultural University, Faculty of Human Nutrition and Consumer Sciences (Poland)
- National Agricultural Research Foundation (Greece)
- Technische Universität München (Germany)
- Institute of Chemical Technology Prague (Czech Republic)
- Università degli Studi di Perugia (Italy)
- Universidade Católica Portuguesa Escola Superior de Biotecnologia (Portugal)
- Progetto Europa Regions S.r.l. (Italy)
- Karadeniz Technical University (Turkey)
- Campden & Chorleywood Food Industry Development Institute Hungary Kht. (Hungary)
- Agricultural Institute of Slovenia (Slovenia)
- Technological Educational Institution of Ionian Islands (Greece)
- University of Applied Sciences of Weihenstephan (Germany)
- Università degli Studi di Milano (Italy)
- Food Industrial Research and Technological Development Company SA (Greece)
- Istituto Superiore di Sanità (Italy)
- University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)
- Confédération des Industries Agro-Alimentaires de l'UE (Belgium)
- Centre National Interprofessionnel de l'Economie Laitière (France)
- Agriconsulting S.p.A. (Italy)
- Genus plc. – Pic (Great Britain)
- Adour Bio Conseil (France)
- Norwegian University of Life Sciences (Norway)
- Research Institute of Plant Production Grassland and Mountain Agriculture Institute Banská Bystrica (Slovakia)



The main strategic objectives are therefore to:

- Identify and quantify consumer perceptions, expectations and attitudes with respect to (a) safety and quality characteristics of traditional foods and (b) innovations that could be introduced into the traditional food industry.
- Identify, evaluate and transfer into the industry innovations which guarantee food safety, especially with respect to microbiological and chemical hazards.
- Identify, evaluate and transfer into the industry innovations which improve the nutritional quality, while at the same time maintaining or improving other quality characteristics recognised by traditional food consumers (e.g. sensory, environmental, animal welfare and ethical qualities).
- Support the marketing and supply chain development of traditional food products.
- Establish an effective and sustainable system of technology transfer of innovations (those developed within the TRUEFOOD projects and in other EU, national and industry funded R&D projects) into traditional food industry, focussing specifically to SMEs.



PROJECT NEWS

TRUEFOOD Kick-off meeting in Rome

The TRUEFOOD kick-off meeting took place in Rome, at SPES GEIE premises, on 14 and 15 September 2006 with nearly 100 people. The event saw the participation of representatives from the European Commission DG Research (Mrs Dyanne Bennik and Mr Patrice Lemaitre), Work Package leaders, project partners and SPES Food and drink National Federations. The kick-off meeting allowed all representatives to convene for planning the first phase of activities of each Work Package. Social events were organized after the meetings. The visit of Villa Torlonia and the dinner at the Limonaia of the Villa Torlonia were highly appreciated. Furthermore, the General Assembly on 15 September provided the participants with information on both the Scientific Pillar and the Industrial Pillar of the project, on the Commission expectations and contractual and financial aspects.



Training and Dissemination Units(TDU) established within SPES Members

The successful selection of Techno-Scientific Mediators (TSM) led to the establishment of 11 Training and Dissemination Units (TDU) within the European Food and Drink National Federations members of SPES GEIE: TDU Federalimentare (Italy), TDU ANIA (France), TDU FEVIA (Belgium), TDU FFDI (Czech Republic), TDU FHFI (Hungary), TDU FIAA/LVA (Austria), TDU FIAB (Spain), TDU FIPA (Portugal), TDU SETBIR (Turkey), TDU SEVT (Greece) and TDU FI (Denmark).

The TDUs are composed of a dynamic and committed group of professionals, with substantial experience in the food and drink industry.

The aim of the TDUs is to ensure a structured link between research and industry. In order to enhance the capacity of the TDUs to dialogue and interchange with science and to reach SMEs, a tailored training programme will be implemented during the first phase of the project.



Green light for the TRUEFOOD Training Programme

Training is one of the core tasks of TRUEFOOD. During the first phase of the project, the selected Techno-Scientific Mediators (TSM) will be trained on key elements of the traditional food industry and on current trends in relevant research. The first 2 training courses will be held in 12/16 December 2006 at the premises of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa Escola Superior de Biotecnologia (Porto – Portugal). The topics: "European legislation on food quality and safety" and "Food quality control". The trainers: a pool of experts from TRUEFOOD project partners. Other training courses will be hosted in 2007 by project partners in Turkey, Hungary, Czech Republic, Greece, France, Italy and Spain.

For any additional information:

Cecilia Chiapero (TRUEFOOD Training and Dissemination Manager)

Email: spes-training@federalimentare.it

TRUEFOOD has its own website

The TRUEFOOD website can now be visited at www.truefood.eu.

Thanks to the new website, all project partners can exchange information more easily. The website is an instrument that allows communication between all partners and makes the project known to the general public and consumers.



It is accessible and user-friendly. It contains all the information generated by TRUEFOOD and presents information related to quality and safety of traditional food. Feedback and contributions by all project partners are welcome.

For any additional information:

Francesca Resio (TRUEFOOD Communication Officer)

Email: info@truefood.eu or resio@federalimentare.it

TRUEFOOD has a new definition of traditional food products (TFPs)

The 1st workshop of WP5 was organised in Gent (Belgium) in July. At the workshop, the participants developed a new definition of traditional food products. What is traditional food, some say this is grandmother' cuisine. In France, they venerate regional dishes like "bouillabaisse", the "Provençal fish stew", and their infinite local varieties of cheese, Italy is renowned for "Parma ham" or "Genoan pesto sauce" and Spain has given the world "Valencian paella" and the "orange marmalade from Sevilla". For the purpose of this project WP 5 agreed on a definition of traditional foods which are: 1) PRODUCTION: the key steps of the production must be local (national/regional/local). Once firms start to produce in other countries, the food is no longer considered as traditional. 2) AUTHENTIC: the product has to fulfill at least one of the following steps: authentic recipe (mix of ingredients) and/or authentic origin of raw material and/or authentic production process, and 3) COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE: for the public for at least 50 years (=1950 and before) in stores or restaurants; it may happen that during that period the food product disappeared from the market, but was on market at least 50 years ago. 4) GASTRONOMIC HERITAGE: the product must have a story which is - or can be - written down in 2-3 pages.

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