

Update on Task Force activities with FRESHFEL & AREFLH

Michael Oberhuber



Task Force: Freshfel, AREFLH, euftrin, euvrin

Brussels, January 23th, 2018: Conference on Research Priorities with the European Commission.



Brussels, 16 February 2018

Task Force on Fruit and Vegetable research presents policy recommendations regarding position of fruit and vegetable sector in EU's R&I policy

On 23 January 2018, Freshfel Europe (the European Fresh Produce Association) and A.R.E.F.L.H. (the European Assembly of fruit, vegetable and horticulture regions) organised in coordination with the two European university and research centre networks for fruit and vegetable related research, EUFRIN and

endorsed the multi-actor approach

the trend towards broad, multi-product projects cannot highlight the sector's specific problems

The sector laments that fruit and vegetables remain under-represented within Horizon 2020

Policy recommendations

Fruit sector expressed concern with mission-oriented approach (Lamy report)



Task Force meeting the EC: Horizon Europe

Brussels, June 19th, 2018: Meeting with the EC:

Nathalie Sauze-Vandevyver (EC), Kerstin Rosenow (EC), Eleonora Ganci (EC), Pauline Panegos (Areflh), Michael Oberhuber (EUFRIN), Silvana Nicola (EUVRIN), Philippe Binard (Freshfel), Helene Deruwe (Freshfel)

1. Give our feedback regarding Horizon 2020 (work programs 2018-2020)
2. Request explanation regarding concerns in Horizon Europe
 - Missions presented as communication tool, not in terms of a mega project. Aligning the tools (funds), “breaking down silos”.
 - EC is looking for quality projects, not big consortia – „it’s about content“.
 - **Task force members were asked for input - specific problems and research goals. Update SIRA with results of recent (Horizon 2020) projects.**
 - Format: public consultation in strategic programming.

Decision: 4 page summary of SIRA + updates. Map SIRA topics on proposed „missions“.



The „SIRA short document“

Bozen, November 14th, 2018: EUFRIN board meeting

Decision: 4 page summary of SIRA + updates endorsed by EUFRIN board

Based on list of gaps/research goals task force + Michelle Williams

Michelle Williams (support by Marianne Groot and Michael Oberhuber): 4 pager draft for fruit

Endorsed by EUFRIN board and sent to task force in December 2018.

Lack of feedback from EUFRIN until June 2019.

Public consultation launched in July 2019 with deadline in September

Freshfel prepared a cover letter framed around the structure of the survey and combined it with SIRA short document. Sent to EC in September 2019

The survey and the „SIRA short document“



Fruit and vegetable research under Horizon Europe: An opportunity to tackle global food challenges

The European fruit and vegetable sector is faced with global challenges including the need for increased competitiveness along the chain and value added to the products, the transformation towards a sustainable production, supply chain and consumption, the mitigation of the effects of climate change, the implication of changing lifestyles on human health and well-being, an increased ambition for food safety and security, and for reduction of food loss and waste. The horticultural sector faces the risk of being unable to adequately respond to these real and upcoming challenges, if the appropriate innovation and research needs and priorities are not identified.

However, the fruit and vegetable industry can play an important task in tackling these global challenges, for example in the field of climate action and environment preservation. It can help to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular zero hunger, good health and well-being, responsible consumption and production, and climate action.

Research in the fruit and vegetable sector would enhance a competitive Europe: The fruit and vegetable sector involves about 1.4 million farm holdings, with a total chain turnover of about 150 billion euro. In order to further support all the actors along the chain and to increase the competitiveness of the sector, additional research and innovation efforts are needed in Horizon Europe along all the segments of the complete supply chain to reach the goals of responsible consumption and production, sustainability, and increased competitiveness and value. **Horizon Europe should stimulate the increased uptake of new technologies to meet competitiveness challenges.**

The fruit and vegetable sector's contribution to a

- a competitive Europe
- a fair Europe
- a sustainable Europe
- an influential Europe



Fruit and vegetables in Horizon Europe.

Research and innovation challenges change over time, but overall, the sector remains fragile. This is due to erratic **climatic events** and changing climate conditions, leading to **pest and disease** outbreaks, and changes in **productivity** of certain cultivars. All of this impacts the food security. Research and innovation is also needed to foster the potential of digitisation, to secure the fruit and vegetable food system, and to increase its competitiveness through increased focus on sustainability and reduced food waste. Certain fruit and vegetable research and innovation needs can be directly linked to some of the Horizon Europe missions and partnerships proposed:

Missions

1. Soil health and sustainable food systems
2. Adapting to climate change, including societal transformation
3. Healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland water

Partnerships

1. Sustainable, inclusive and circular bio-based solutions
2. Advancing key digital and enabling technologies
3. Global health

Increasing digitisation

- More sustainability due to improved decision-making
- Increased efficiency
- Increased traceability
- Increased connection within

Increasing health

- New cultivar development to match taste of consumers
- New processing technologies
- Smarter communication strategies to increase

Increasing sustainable production methods

- Should include both field and glasshouse crops
- Focussing on circular economy approach

Discussion

- Did or will our EUFRUIT work pay off?
- Are we going to be more successful in Horizon Europe?
- How are we going to be more successful in Horizon Europe?