

# ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN HORTICULTURAL REGIONS

Annual Report

[www.areflh.org](http://www.areflh.org)



2018






# ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN HORTICULTURAL REGIONS

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End of term report by  
Simona Caselli  
2016-2019



After three years as President of AREFLH, it is time to take stock of the actions we have taken and the results we have achieved.

In 2015 AREFLH adopted its strategic project "AREFLH 2025", which set a number of objectives, with priorities reconsidered and redefined around a new governance.

Among these objectives, the reinforcement of AREFLH's positioning appeared necessary. On the one hand, the establishment of a **permanent representation in Brussels** has allowed us to consolidate a close link with the European institutions. As a result, we have significantly improved our effectiveness in completing the objectives set and gained the attentive listening of the EU institutions to our proposals. On the other hand, the

enlargement of our associative basis has granted us greater representativeness and better anchoring on our territories. Today, AREFLH represents the voice of 18 regions and 25 producer organisations and their associations in 7 European countries.

Thanks to the work of our experts, we have performed important legislative monitorings and proposals in the field of the **CAP** and the **fruit and vegetable CMO**. More significantly, during a meeting with DG AGRI in 2016, we contributed to the definition of the application rules for integrated production in the operational programmes presented by producer organisations. Subsequently, in the CMO White Paper presented in 2017, we highlighted all the positive aspects of this successful regime and made a certain number of proposals, particularly with regards to mutual funds.

We have also been very active since the first discussions and consultations on the reform of the CAP, reaffirming our position and underlining the essential role that regions must play in its implementation and management. Throughout 2018 we worked on several position papers and responded to different public consultations on various issues, including the CAP reform, unfair trading practices and the promotion of agricultural products.

AREFLH also continued its actions within the framework of the Task Force on **Research and Innovation** created in 2014. The strategic agenda for research and innovation has been updated, especially by integrating the priorities of the vegetable sector via the EUVRIN network. In this regard, AREFLH aims to be once again a driving force in the definition of the sector's priorities for the next Framework Programme Horizon Europe. Moreover, as an important partner in several consortia AREFLH contributes to the wide dissemination of R&I results for our sector in Europe.

The **consumption of fruits and vegetables** is a major topic and its promoting represents one of our key priorities. In our Regio'com guide, updated in 2018, we highlight a series of good practices and actions implemented by our regions and member organisations to promote fruit and vegetable consumption. In addition, by joining the international alliance AIAM5 as an associate member AREFLH participates in the exchanges and synergies between the actors engaged in the promotion of fruits and vegetables.

Finally, we wish to highlight some important actions carried out in support of certain productions:

In the summer of 2017, we alerted the European Commission about the **summer fruit crisis** and thus contributed to the **extension of exceptional measures** put in place following the Russian embargo.

In September, the European interbranch committee for chestnuts became **EUROCASTANEA, the European Chestnut network**. Since its creation in 2011, AREFLH has played a significant role in organizing the European meetings of the chestnut that take place each year. In parallel, thanks to our involvement in the organisation of **Interpera**, AREFLH has become an important promoter of prestigious events for the sector.

To conclude, it must be noted that these three years have been marked by constructive exchanges between our members, by unifying projects and by the success of the actions we have taken to defend our territories and our producers.

For the future, we will have to continue on the path that we have drawn by renewing our commitment to broaden the social and geographical base of our association, reinforce our role as a privileged interlocutor of the European Commission - especially at this crucial moment in which the future of our sector is being redefined - as well as to develop new activities in the field of research and innovation and the promotion of fruit and vegetable consumption.





# ABOUT US

## About AREFLH

### Objectives and missions

The Assembly of European Horticultura Regions is an association created in 2000 on the initiative of a group of Spanish, French and Italian regions.

It represents the voice of the fruit, vegetable and horticultural regions and their producer organisations in Europe.

The specificity and strength of AREFLH lies in its original structure, as it is composed of two Colleges: **the College of Regions** and the **College of Producers**. The complementarity of these two colleges allows a collective work and the definition of common positions between regions and representatives of producers..

#### Our missions :

- Representing and defend the economic and social interests of regions and producers of the fruit and vegetable and flower sectors in European and international institutions.
- Promoting the exchange of experiences, partnerships and joint projects between associate members.
- Being a force of proposals on the main policies that impact the fruit and vegetables and horticulture sector.

### Governance and administrative team



#### PRESIDENT

**Simona Caselli**

Minister for the Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing at Emilia Romagna Region, Italy



#### VICE-PRESIDENT

**Jean-Louis Moulon**

President of IDfel Val de Loire

**COLLEGE OF REGIONS**  
Chaired by Simona Caselli

**COLLEGE OF PRODUCERS**  
Chaired by Jean-Louis Moulon

#### ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

Chaired by Simona Caselli

#### BUREAU

President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary



**Secretary General:** Pauline Panegos  
[s.general@arefh.org](mailto:s.general@arefh.org)

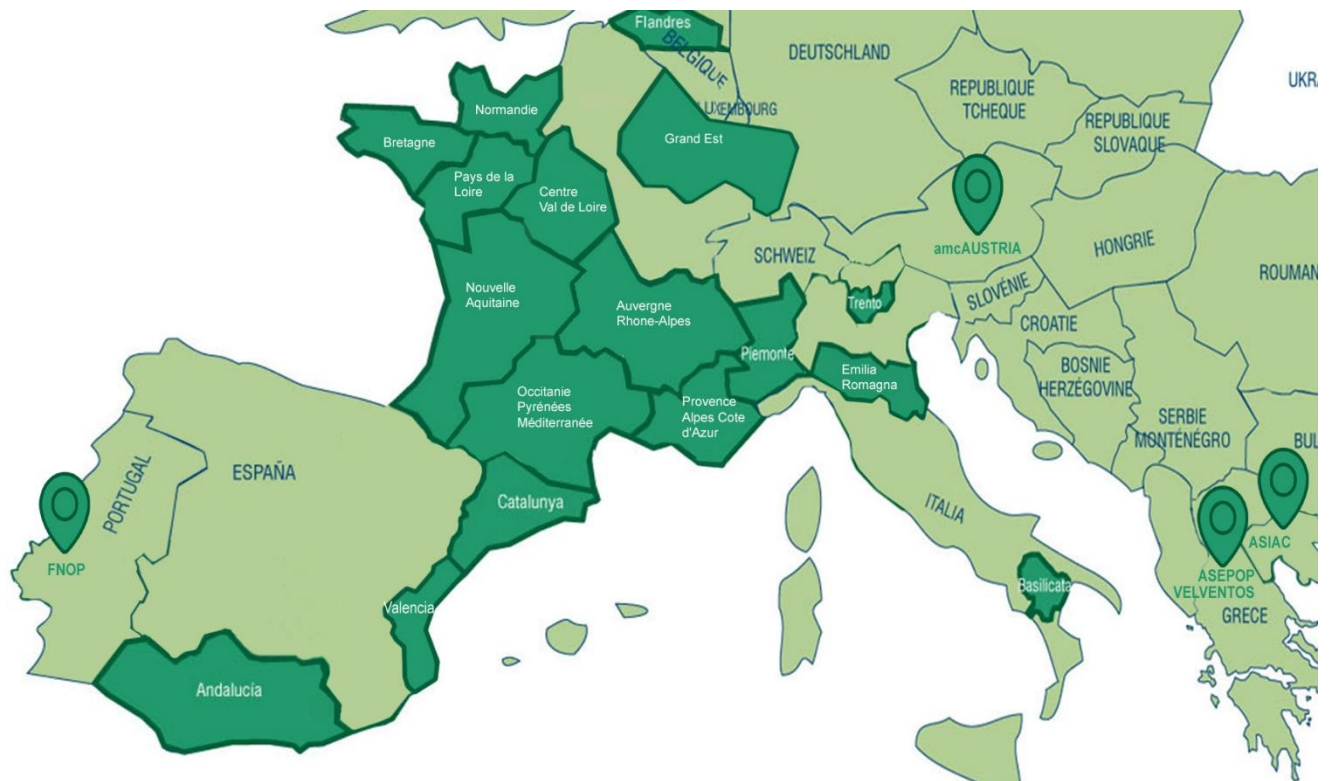


**EU Policy officer and AREFLH representant in Brussels:** Andrea Tivoli  
[europe@areflh.org](mailto:europe@areflh.org)



**Communication and administration officer:** Laetitia Forget,  
[communication@areflh.org](mailto:communication@areflh.org)

## Our members in 2018



### College of Regions

New Members: Valencia (Espagne)

#### Belgium

Flandres

#### Spain

Andalucia  
Catalunia  
Valencia

#### France

Nouvelle Aquitaine  
Normandie  
Bretagne  
Centre -Val de Loire  
Occitanie Pyrénées  
Méditerranée  
Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur  
Pays de la Loire  
Auvergne Rhône-Alpes

Hauts-de-France

#### Italy

Basilicate  
Emilie-Romagne  
Piemonte  
Provincia autonoma di  
Trento

### College of Producers

#### Austria

AMC Austria

#### Belgium

VBT

#### Spain

COEXPHAL  
Afrucat  
PROEXPORT

#### France

Interprofession F&L d'Alsace  
APFELSO  
AOP Jardins de Normandie  
Cerafel

Fédération des Fruits &  
Légumes d'Occitanie  
Chambre d'agriculture PACA  
IDfel  
Hyères Hortipole  
OP des Cimes

#### Greece

Asepop Velventos  
Association of Imathia's  
Agricultural Cooperatives

#### Italy

Assomela  
Finaf  
Gruppo VI.VA

CIO  
Romandiola  
AOP Piemonte  
AOP Italia  
CIOP

#### Portugal

COTHN  
Portugal Fresh  
FNOF



# 2018 Highlights

## 2018 Highlights

JANUARY

### European Conference on Research and Innovation



The Task Force on Research and Innovation (AREFLH, FRESHFEL EUROPE, EUFRIN, EUVRIN) organised a meeting of key stakeholders in the fruit and vegetable sector and their research partners on 23 January in Brussels (see page 23).

MARCH

### AREFLH's General Assembly



The General Assembly was held on 28 March in Brussels. In the presence of distinguished guests such as MEP Herbert Dorfmann and João Onofre from the European Commission, AREFLH presented its position paper on the future of the fruit and vegetable sector in the post-2020 CAP.

The General Assembly was preceded, the day before by the seminar of the College of Regions, which made it possible to draw up AREFLH's position paper.

APRIL

### Medfel, Perpignan

Vice-President Jean-Louis Moulon participated in the round table on the 20th anniversary of the fruit and vegetables CMO organised as part of the Medfel, in the presence of MEPs Eric Andrieu and Michel Dantin. The objective was to take stock of the implementation of this tool and to review the timetable for negotiations on CAP reform.

MAY

AREFLH participated in the **General Assembly of the Fédération des fruits et légumes d'Occitanie** which was held on May 4 in Castelnaudary.

### Origo Global Forum

Pauline Panegos and Andrea Tivoli attended the second edition of Origo Global Forum in Parma. This event of European and international scope aims to promote quality agri-food products. The 2018 edition welcomed Commissioner Phil Hogan, as well as representatives of international authorities, consortia, experts and academics.

The overall objective of the second edition of the Origo Forum was to strengthen relations between these different stakeholders, focusing on issues such as innovation, sustainability of agri-food production and trade agreements.



### Macfrut - Regio'com Conference

On May 11, AREFLH presented the 4th edition of its Regio'Com guide at a conference organized in Macfrut with the support of the Emilia-Romagna region.  
(See p. 22)



### Peaches / nectarines – 2018 campaign

AREFLH participated in several meetings concerning the peaches and nectarines markets during the 2018 season. A first meeting was held in early May with representatives of DG AGRI to review the results of the 2017 campaign and discuss the upcoming campaign.

Initial harvest forecasts were presented at Macfrut, in the presence of the main French, Italian, Spanish and Greek operators.

The final forecasts prepared by Europech were presented at the Alcarràs forum on peach and nectarine on 24 May.

Finally, on 29 May, DG AGRI convened European experts on peaches & nectarines to a meeting as part of the work of the Civil Dialogue Group on Horticulture, Olives and Spirits. AREFLH presented the results of the 2017 season as well as the 2018 harvest forecasts.

### Mission in Greece

Jean-Louis Moulon and Pauline Panegos travelled to Greece in the framework of a mission organized by the Association of Agricultural Cooperatives of Imathia, a new member of AREFLH. On this occasion, meetings were held with the regions of Thessaly, Central Macedonia and Central Greece as well as professional organisations to present AREFLH's activities.

## JUNE

### Unfair trading practices: AREFLH's response to the EC's public consultation

AREFLH expressed its position on the draft Directive on unfair trading practices as part of the public consultation launched by the European Commission in June 2018. (see p.25)

AREFLH was present at the **APFeL SO General Assembly** on June 15 in Agen and **Astredhor** on June 21 in Nantes during the Salon du Végétal.

## SEPT.

### 13 to 15 September, the IXth European Chestnut Meeting

European actors in the chestnut sector met for the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the European Chestnut Meetings in Plasencia. Co-organized by the Junta de Extremadura, the Jerte Valley Cooperative Group, FUNDECYT-PCTEx and AREFLH, the event was part of the second sectoral meetings of Extremadura's Bioeconomy platform.

More than 180 participants attended these two days and the presentations focused on two main areas: the contribution of chestnuts to the bio-economy and rural development. The theme of chestnut disease control methods was also discussed, and the main producing countries presented the first harvest estimates for 2018.

Technical visits were also organised to one of the cooperatives in the Jerte Valley, and to the El Comun farm in the Ibor Valley.

## EUROCASTANEA, the European chestnut network

Since 2010, representatives of the four main European chestnut-producing countries have been working together under AREFLH's coordination with a common vision: to promote the development of the European chestnut sector through an improved coordination between countries.



Every year, representatives from these countries meet during the European Chestnut Days, which bring together between 200 and 300 participants each year. This event is an opportunity to discover the production areas and the local supply chain. Presentations and round tables are organised to provide an overview of European production, review research on health problems and highlight examples of how the product is being used, particularly through processing.

More broadly, organizations in these four countries are seeking to find the levers to revitalize the sector, innovate, increase the added value of this traditional product and create new consumption patterns.

In September 2018, they decided to formalise this cooperation with the creation of EUROCASTANEA, the European chestnut network. The signing of the agreement took place in Plasencia during the 9th annual meetings.

EUROCASTANEA aims to represent, defend and promote the common interests of producers, industrialists and commercial operators in the European chestnut sector.

The definition of common strategic lines for the development of the sector is another of the network's missions.

A Coordination Committee is set up to lead the network and decide on the actions to be implemented and ensure their follow-up. The focal points of each country meet regularly to discuss their common issues, share their experiences and prepare for the annual meetings, which will take place in Portugal in 2019.

Professional missions to a producer country outside the European Union are organised every two years by AREFLH and EUROCASTANEA. These missions allow you to discover local production, as well as local actors in processing and research. They are also an opportunity to create a strong bond between participants.



The chestnut market is currently dominated by China and its production of nearly 1.9 million tonnes, while the total production of the 4 European countries (Spain, France, Italy and Portugal) is in a decreasing phase, with nearly 150 000 tonnes. This reality raises many questions in Europe.

Faced with this and other challenges such as climate change, cynips and ink disease, EUROCASTANEA's partners are more effective together to raise awareness among national and European public authorities of the need for a recovery plan to ensure the survival of the European chestnut, and to implement common strategies to

achieve this.

More information on [www.eurocastanea.org](http://www.eurocastanea.org)

## **Conference on "The contribution of producer organisations to an efficient agri-food supply chain", organised in Brussels by the European Commission**

On 21 September 2018, AREFLH attended the conference organised by the European Commission on the contribution of producer organisations to an efficient agri-food supply chain.

The event was opened by Jens Schaps (DG AGRI) and MEP Paolo de Castro, Parliament's rapporteur on unfair trading practices. Both speakers highlighted the essential role of producer organisations in creating a level playing field between farmers and downstream actors in the food supply chain. In particular, the MEP for Castro focused on the innovations brought about by the omnibus regulation, which clarified and ensured the predominance of the role of POs and PDOs over competition law, provided new contractual typologies and helped to strengthen their overall negotiating position.

In the morning session, speakers explored the benefits that producer organisations can bring to their members and the food chain, for example in terms of prices, better marketing opportunities (market access), development of quality products and socio-economic benefits (e.g. role of POs in rural development and more disadvantaged regions).

OCT

## **8-10 October: AIAM Alliance General Assembly<sup>5</sup> / 14th International Congress on the Promotion of Fruit and Vegetable Consumption**

AREFLH was invited to the AIAM<sup>5</sup> Alliance General Assembly and formalized its membership in the movement as an associate member.

(See page 22)

## **Asparagus days**

AREFLH was present at the 2nd World Asparagus Days, organized in Italy from 16 to 18 October. The event brought together nearly 2,100 visitors from all over the sector, with a significant presence of foreigners (38% of the total). In addition, there were 200 operators who participated in the technical visits on the third day in Emilia Romagna and Veneto.

In parallel with the numerous conferences and round tables on economic and technical topics, two equipment and services exhibition halls gave producers and actors in the sector access to the most innovative techniques.

AREFLH presented an overview of the European Union's support policy for asparagus production, highlighting its role in representing and defending producers and production areas.

## **AREFLH at the European Commission's Outlook Workshop**

On 22 and 23 October in Brussels, the European Commission brought together officials responsible for economic issues and agricultural and research policy at DG AGRI and the Joint Research Centre. The Commission's objective and ambition is to equip itself with tools to forecast developments in agricultural production and markets in the short and medium term and thus better adapt European policies.

Experts from the livestock, dairy, cereal and fruit and vegetable sectors were invited to share their analysis and vision for the future of their crops at European and global level.

AREFLH presented its analysis for peaches and nectarines, apples and pears alongside a representative from Coexphal (Almeria, Spain) for tomatoes and the Carrefour group for distribution.

The issues of climate change, waste and waste management and pesticides were omnipresent in the debates during these 2 days.

## **Biosourced fertilizers: launch of the Nutriman thematic network**

The launch meeting of the Nutriman project took place on 25 and 26 October in Brussels. AREFLH is a partner in this 30-month project, funded as part of Horizon 2020.

(See page 21)

## Fruit Attraction

The Madrid Fruit Attraction show was an opportunity for AREFLH to meet its members.



NOV.

## ICOP

AREFLH attended the 13th edition of the ICOP, which took place from 21 to 23 November in the Netherlands.



# ICOP2018

INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE  
OF PRODUCER  
ORGANISATIONS

Designed as a three-day event with visits from local producer organisations and a one-day conference, the 2018 edition took stock of fruit and vegetable production in the Netherlands, and provided participants with valuable updates on the current situation in the sector.



On 22 November, participants were informed of the current state of the Common Market Organisation (CMO) for F&V. Philippe Appeltans, representing COPA-COGECA and BelOrta, presented the new rules that have an impact on the F&V sector, highlighting the innovations introduced by the Omnibus Regulation and the Commission's legislative proposal on the new Common Agricultural Policy. Mr Appeltans recalled the key role played by producer organisations in changing the supply side of the food chain and welcomed the new

legislative proposal on unfair commercial practices, currently under negotiation between the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council. He concluded by stressing the need for the sector to focus on research and innovation for the coming years.

## General Assembly of the EUFRUIT project

The consortium held its last general assembly in Bolzano on 15 November, on the margins of the Interpoma trade fair, to present the results of this thematic network and discuss the continuation of the project after its closure in March 2019. A dedicated stand to raise awareness of the project among visitors was set up in the exhibitors' area.

(see page 20)

DEC.

## Annual meeting of the EUVRIN network

On 6 and 7 December in Vilnius, Pauline Panegos and Andrea Tivoli participated in the network's annual meeting. The objective of this meeting was to review the activities of the year for the various working groups.

(see page 19)



**Seminar on " The Common Agricultural Policy: Regions as drivers of the transformation of agricultural and food systems" in Bordeaux on 13 December.**

Organised by the Regions of France and the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region, this seminar aimed to take stock of the implementation of the second pillar of the CAP by the regions and to review the prospects contained in the Commission's legislative proposal for the CAP after 2020.

On this occasion, President Simona Caselli was able to share experiences and the management model of the Emilia-Romagna region in the field of agricultural policy and rural development.





# Working themes



## Working themes

The priority working themes were defined in the "AREFLH 2025" strategic document. This project aims to meet the main challenges of the sector, identified by a working group within AREFLH and validated by the Board of Directors and the General Assembly in 2016.

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### Fruit and Vegetables CMO / Common Agricultural Policy

The year 2018 was the opportunity for AREFLH to present its positions on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Following the European Commission's communication on "The future of food and agriculture" AREFLH organised a seminar of the College of Regions in March 2018. In particular, AREFLH members stressed the importance of maintaining the F&V CMO regime, its budget, as well as the need to strengthen producer organisations, the actors in the system.

The seminar made it possible to finalise the position paper on CAP reform post 2020, which was successively validated by the AREFLH Board of Directors (see page 24).

AREFLH presented a new position paper on the subject following the presentation of the Commission's CAP legislative proposals on 1 June 2018. An AREFLH / AREPO meeting resulted in a joint document highlighting the importance of ensuring an adequate agricultural budget for a strong CAP, and preserving the key role of European regions in its definition and implementation..

AREFLH welcomed a series of provisions in the Commission's proposal, such as:

- Maintaining an open budget for the CMO in fruit and vegetables, a measure that helps to recognise and consolidate the success of the scheme.
- the introduction of sectoral measures - such as the CMO for fruit and vegetables - in the CAP's national strategic plans, which gives appropriate strategic value to this particular Community support scheme and the operational programmes of the POs and POs, which are the instruments for implementing the CMO.
- Introducing the obligation to establish operational programmes for the fruit and vegetable sector in all Member States. This is a positive addition, as it ensures the consolidation of the CMO system.
- The obligation for Member States to choose from their CAP strategic plans one or more types of intervention related to crisis prevention and risk management measures.

However, several new features of the Commission's proposal, such as the increased subsidiarity granted to Member States to meet their specific needs and its strong environmental orientation, need to be carefully reassessed in order to achieve realistic objectives. The AREFLH CMO expert group therefore carried out a more in-depth analysis of the regulations (see p.25), which led to the preparation of a list of amendments submitted to several members of the European Parliament in November 2018 (see p.27).

In addition, the expert group also provided the European Commission with recommendations for the implementation and functioning of mutual funds.

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## Research and Innovation

### Task Force for Research and Innovation

The Research and Innovation Task Force (AREFLH, FRESHFEL EUROPE, EUFRIN, EUVRIN) organised a meeting of key stakeholders in the fruit and vegetable sector and their research partners on 23 January in Brussels with the following objectives:

- Take stock of current research and innovation projects in the fruit and vegetable sector,
- Present the F&V sector projects that have been successfully funded in the 2017 work program,

- Identify relevant opportunities included in the 2018-2020 work programme for the sector,
- Establish contact with policy-makers of the European Commission and key representatives of the sector and research,
- Share the experiences of researchers and stakeholders in the sector.

At this conference in Brussels, the four organisations joined forces to organise, for the second time, a pan-European multi-stakeholder meeting to discuss the state of research and innovation in the fruit and vegetable sector. The event brought together nearly 100 experts and aimed to further strengthen the fruitful cooperation between the four organisations and to provide a unique platform for discussion between business representatives, researchers and representatives of the European institutions. The conference reviewed the current situation and lessons learned from the sector's participation in the Horizon 2020 funding programme, as well as the way forward for the future FPG funding programme.

## EUVRIN



The EUVRIN network (European Vegetable Research Institutes Network - a network created in 2016 as a continuation of the work of the Task Force for Research and Innovation) held its annual meeting in Vilnius. On this occasion, members reviewed the activities carried out and the meetings organised by the various working groups in 2018.

EUVRIN now has nearly 280 members from 26 countries, divided into 6 working groups:

- [Fertilization and irrigation](#)
- [Integrated pest management for vegetable production](#)
- [Genetic resources, seed selection and production](#)
- [Greenhouse crops](#)
- [Post-harvest and plant quality](#)
- [Systemic approach and value chain](#)

The annual meeting in 2018 saw the creation of a seventh working group on mushrooms. Initiatives exist in mushroom research, but this crop faces a significant gap between private and public research, with a sharp reduction in public funds allocated to research, and a decrease in the number of institutions conducting research on mushrooms.

On this basis, the founding members of this working group believe that the EUVRIN network is a good opportunity. Indeed, the network will offer them the opportunity to exchange information on research at European Union level, and will possibly allow them to access new funding opportunities. The objective of the working group in 2019 will be to communicate in order to welcome new members, in particular through the creation of a website.

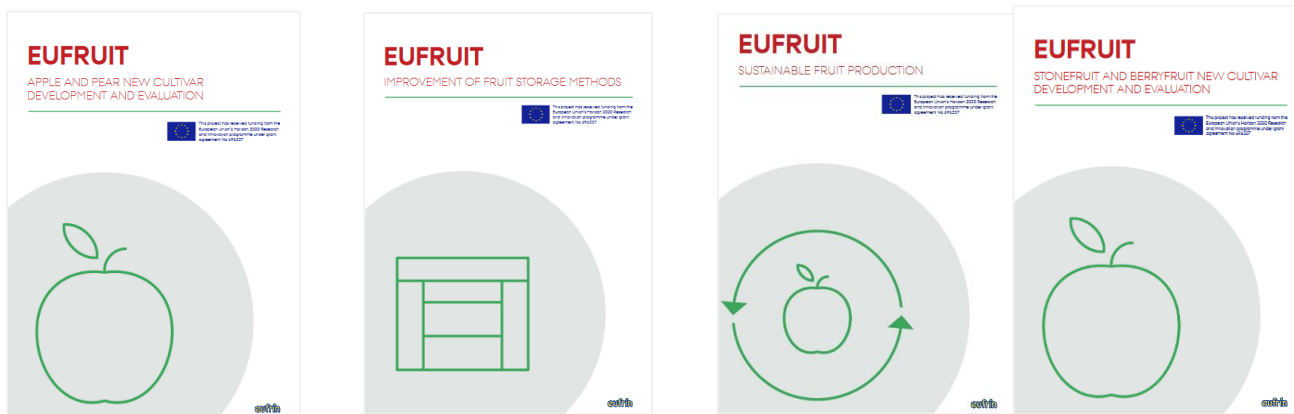
In 2016, members of the EUVRIN network actively participated in the updating of the SIRA; in 2019 they will contribute to the vision document to be developed by the R&I Task Force in response to the public consultation on the new Horizon Europe Research Framework Programme.

More information on [www.euvrin.eu](http://www.euvrin.eu)

## EU Projects

### EUFRUIT

This European Thematic Network on Fruit aims to collect and analyse research results and best practices in four areas: the development and evaluation of new varieties ([apple and pear, berries and nuts](#)), [the minimisation of residues on fruit and in the environment](#), [the optimisation of fruit storage and quality](#), and [the improvement of sustainable production systems](#)



The network held its final conference and its last general assembly in Bolzano last November, on the sidelines of the Interpoma trade fair, the consortium presented the results of the project, and discussed the continuation of the project after its closure in March 2019.

The knowledge platform developed as part of the project (<http://kp.eufrin.eu/>) will continue to exist and will be fed by individual researchers.

It is an international database of open access electronic documents on productivity, sustainability and quality in the European fruit sector. The database contains new knowledge on fruit research and best practices at European level.

The consortium includes 21 partners from 12 countries. EUFRUIT is characterised by a multi-stakeholder approach, bringing together both research centres and organisations representing professionals in the sector, such as AREFLH and Freshfel. These two organisations are in particular responsible for disseminating the results of the project and communicating to the European institutions on the activities of this thematic network.

## NUTRIMAN

AREFLH is a partner in this 30-month project (October 2018 - March 2021) funded under the Horizon 2020 programme.

### Background information

Currently, most of the fertilizers used, particularly mineral fertilizers, are manufactured from fossil and "non-European" resources, which creates dependence on them and could lead to food insecurity.

These mineral inputs sometimes escape from elementary cycles and participate in polluting events. This cycle breakdown has been amplified by the geographical specialisation of agricultural activities in the world, with territories depleted in nutrients or in excess. It is in this context that the European Union wishes to revise its regulations on fertilizers in the near future.

The project

It aims to build a thematic exchange network on innovative ready-to-use knowledge, technologies and practices on bio-based fertilizers for the benefit of agricultural practitioners. The project focuses on the application of innovative and commercially mature results in relation to market needs and current industrial practices.

### The main objectives:

- Develop an inventory of innovative FP7 / H2020 / LIFE / LIFE research results / Mature operational groups in the field of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and nutrient recovery technologies, methodologies and products that are about to be put into practice, but not sufficiently known, both at the scale of industrial agriculture and smaller scale operations.
- Evaluate innovative technologies for the recovery of N, P nutrients and new N, P fertilizer products and practices, both by experts and potential end-users (farmers, farmers' associations, producer organizations).



- Dedicated and targeted communication to a diverse group of stakeholders to promote action and results.
- Disseminate the knowledge of agricultural practitioners on the results of innovative research on the recovery of underutilized P&N with a "ready to use" performance:
  - Collect (at least 100) multilingual (in 8 languages) practice-oriented summaries in the IEP-AGRI format.
  - Develop innovative materials for the application of multilingual fertilizer products and training materials, audiovisual material, information graphics for agricultural practitioners, farmers, farmers' organizations and advisory service providers in Chambers of Agriculture.
  - Set up a multilingual interactive NUTRIMAN web platform.
  - Provide a cross-border knowledge exchange and organize interactive dissemination and exploitation for practitioners and agricultural advisors.
  - Increase the flow of practical information between farmers in Europe in a geographically balanced way through the engagement of the EU network<sup>28</sup> of farmers' and producers' organisations and effective networking with European networks (COPA-COGECA, EUFRAS).
- Increased awareness among farmers of the need to review fertilizer regulatory policy. Organize legal/political education and training for farmers.

### The consortium

It brings together 14 European partners: Terra Humana Ltd (Coordinator, Hungary), Baustoff-Forschung Institute (Germany), Ghent University (Belgium), INAGRO (Belgium), Vlaco VZW (Belgium), CARTIF Foundation (Spain), Depuracion de Aguas de Mediterraneo SL (Spain), APCA (France), AREFLH (France), Chamber of Agriculture NAK (Hungary), University of Turin (Italy), EFFoST (Netherlands), ZLTO (Netherlands), IUNG-PIB (Poland).

More information: [www.nutriman.net](http://www.nutriman.net)

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## Promotion

### Presentation of the Regio'Com Guide

In order to fight against the stagnation of fruit and vegetable consumption in Europe, which represents a major challenge for our sector, AREFLH wanted to highlight a number of food promotion and education actions implemented in its regions, highlighting their richness and diversity.

The Regio'Com guide provides an overview of fruit and vegetable consumption in Europe and highlights the challenges of promotion, a crucial lever for relaunching it over time.

It also identifies a series of initiatives at both international and local level, with a focus on inter-professional programmes and actions carried out by producer organisations.

The Regio'Com guide is available at [www.areflh.org](http://www.areflh.org)



## AREFLH becomes an associate member of the AIAM5 alliance



AREFLH was invited to the [14th International Congress on the Promotion of F&V Consumption in Mexico](#), in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, from October 8 to 10, organized by the "5 al día México" Foundation.

At the same time, the [AIAM5 alliance](#) (global alliance for the promotion of F&V consumption "5 per day") held its annual General Assembly; AREFLH formalized its membership of the movement as an associate member.

These three days of intense exchanges between stakeholders in the promotion of fruit and vegetables, national associations of the "5 a day" movement, but also representatives of institutions such as FAO, provided an opportunity to share experiences, successes and possible solutions to increase fruit and vegetable consumption and reduce waste and food waste.

This last point was the main theme of the entire congress. It led to the signing of the Tuxtla Gutiérrez Declaration, which calls for reflection and action by governments and civil society on the serious problem of food loss and waste. Indeed, nearly 1.3 billion tons of food are wasted each year in the world, that is, 1/3 of all food produced for human consumption!

The Tuxtla Gutiérrez Declaration, signed by AREFLH and AIAM5 alliance members from 26 countries, believes that all sectors of society should establish strategic alliances to promote more sustainable and fairer production systems, with the aim of reducing food waste in production and distribution chains by half. You can read the statement in Spanish by [clicking here](#).



The background of the cover is a photograph of the European Parliament building in Brussels, featuring a modern glass and steel facade. In the foreground, numerous national flags of EU member states are flying on tall silver poles. A semi-transparent yellow rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the title text.

# Brussels Activities

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## Position Papers

### AREFLH position paper on the 2019 annual work programme on information and promotion measures concerning agricultural products in the internal market and in third countries

This document was drawn up in March 2018 to present AREFLH's recommendations for the preparation of the future 2019 annual work programme on information and promotion measures for agricultural products implemented in the internal market and in third countries. The document focuses around the following points:

- To define a better balance of budget lines between the internal market and third countries.
- Further simplify the priorities of the AWP by defining macro-zones with large budgets,
- Differentiate budget allocation and analysis of data on fresh and processed fruit and vegetables (including preparations),
- Maintain a significant budget to promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables on the internal market, taking into account the accessibility of non-European markets,
- Better recognition of the added value provided by transnational consortia in multi-programmes,
- Provide additional support to address SPS barriers in third countries,
- Continue to promote programmes aimed at the sustainability of EU production methods.

### Position paper on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy

AREFLH's recommendations on the post-2020 CAP focus on four main themes:

#### **The fruit and vegetables CMO: protecting and strengthening an effective instrument:**

- Maintenance of the F&V common market organisation (CMO) and its open budget
- Strengthening the role of producer organisations.

#### **Simplifications and structural improvements of the fruit and vegetable sector in the CAP after 2020:**

- Maintenance of the small farmers' scheme
- Promote generation renewal and access to land for young farmers
- Avoid the funding dualism that is created between the rural development aid schemes and the CMO
- Maintain, innovate and simplify payment terms for environmental, health and quality standards
- Develop tools to promote innovation, investment and competitiveness
- Avoid the complexity of standards and excessive bureaucracy.

#### **Securing farmers' incomes and stabilizing agricultural markets:**

- Establish a European land register and a monitoring system,
- Define and clarify the applicability of the new actions introduced by the Omnibus Regulation for crisis prevention and management
- Develop crisis management instruments, such as voluntary agreements with the sector
- Elimination of the principle of budgetary annuality from the current crisis reserve mechanism
- Develop tools to help farmers strengthen their position in the supply chain.

#### **Additional proposals for a more competitive agricultural sector:**

- Ensure equality and reciprocity in EU free trade agreements with third countries

- Clarify competition rules for POs
- Increase market transparency and information provision within the agri-food supply chain
- Promotion of the exchange of knowledge and information on plant pests and diseases.

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## **AREFLH position paper on the European Commission's proposal for a directive on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relations in the food supply chain**

AREFLH welcomes the Commission's initiative to establish a uniform approach to the introduction of a minimum standard of protection for unfair trading practices in the internal market. The prohibition of a series of unfair practices listed in Article 3 is, in this respect, an obvious step in the right direction, as they clearly contradict the principles of good faith and loyalty between the two parties.

However, AREFLH would like to make the following comments on some of the provisions of the proposal that, in our opinion, need to be carefully reassessed:

- Extension of the provisions of the Directive to all producer organisations, irrespective of their size
- Ensure that the Directive applies to third-country suppliers/purchasers.

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## **Position paper on the Commission's legislative proposal for the CAP post-2020**

Co-signed by AREFLH and AREPO, this document was drawn up in June 2018, following the publication of the European Commission's legislative proposal.

In the first part, the document notes the worrying decline in agricultural resources in the new CAP and the multiannual financial framework. The organisations also question the role of the regions in the future CAP.

In view of these observations, they plead for:

- Ensure an adequate agricultural budget for a strong CAP
- Preserve the key role of European regions in defining and implementing the CAP.

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## **Working document: Potential impacts of the new CAP provisions for the fruit and vegetable sector**

In September 2018, AREFLH's CMO expert group developed a document to analyse the regulations published by the Commission.

Overall, the new CAP proposal seems to strengthen the F&V CMO, in particular by maintaining an open budget with no ceiling, a concrete request made by AREFLH in its position paper on the future of the CAP. In addition, the requirement to establish operational programmes for the fruit and vegetable sector in all Member States is a positive addition, as it ensures the consolidation of the CMO system.

However, the group of experts pointed out that some elements require careful evaluation:

- The list of objectives to be pursued in the fruit and vegetable sector: most of the objectives seem to be excessively detailed and too focused on environmental objectives.
- Types of interventions in the fruit and vegetable sector: the article concerned seems to be too detailed and restrictive in the types of interventions envisaged.

In addition, other provisions may be potentially negative for the sector:

- The duration of operational programmes: the maximum duration of seven years foreseen for operational programmes seems too long and could be problematic, in particular for the following reasons: faster evolution of new legislation, complexity of implementation of five-year operational programmes.
- The setting of a percentage for each operational programme equal to 20% for environmental actions and 5% for research does not allow the necessary flexibility required by POs. While taking into account the underlying objective, POs must be able to manage their operational programme in a way that takes into account both its size and its specific production characteristics, which do not always allow a percentage of expenditure to be fully applied to the total operational fund.
- The rate of EU support in the fruit and vegetables sector: the recognition of a higher percentage of EU support in this proposal introduces a bonus only for certain legal forms (APOs rather than POs) and for transnationality, without taking into account the actual level of aggregation.
- Consequently, an AOP composed of two POs with a VMP at the limit of the level authorized for its recognition would obtain a significantly higher contribution than an PO with thousands of producers with a VMP above the national average. Similarly, under the proposal in question, a producer organisation with a small proportion of producers established in another Member State would benefit from a higher contribution than a large APO which involves a larger number of POs on its own national territory.

The document also highlights other points that require clarification:

- The apparent inconsistency between the stated objectives (i.e. marketing, production planning) and the types of intervention that have an almost exclusive environmental purpose.
- The transition from the current regime to the future regime, given that several of the national CMO strategies developed by Member States are active until 2023, with approved operational programmes going beyond 2021.

Finally, the group of experts suggests other proposals for the CAP 2020:

- The possibility of taking into account earlier the VMP provided by young people and new farmers in the OPs.
- With regard to monitoring indicators: at EU level, monitoring indicators often do not allow for a proper assessment of the implementation of actions and the achievement of objectives. It would be interesting in this case to allow more flexibility, so that each Member State can define the most appropriate indicators to assess the effectiveness of the actions undertaken.
- The eligibility of indexed insurances,

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## Amendments proposed by AREFLH to the Commission's legislative proposal on the CAP Strategic Plans 2021-2027

In November 2018, AREFLH forwarded to the European Parliament a series of amendments to the legislative proposal on the CAP 2021-2027 Strategic Plans. 12 of the 13 proposed amendments were supported by a total of 18 MEPs from 5 different political groups.

The amendments proposed by AREFLH concern in particular:

- Objectives in the fruit and vegetable sector
- Types of interventions in the fruit and vegetable sector
- Mutual funds
- The fixing of a percentage for certain actions in the context of operational programmes
- EU financial support in the fruit and vegetable sector
- The transition from the current regime to the future regime of operational programmes.
- The eligibility of indexed insurances.

All position documents can be consulted on [www.areflh.org](http://www.areflh.org)

A photograph of a hydroponic lettuce farm. The foreground is filled with rows of vibrant green lettuce plants, likely Butterhead or similar variety, growing in a structured system. To the left, there are rows of dark red lettuce plants. The background shows a vast field of similar plants stretching towards a line of trees under a cloudy, overcast sky. A semi-transparent yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'PUBLICATIONS COMMUNICATIONS' in a dark brown, serif font.

PUBLICATIONS  
COMMUNICATIONS

## Publications / Communications

- Regio'Com Guide
- White Paper on the Fruit and Vegetables CMO, a positive report on the 20th anniversary of the CMO
- The European Chestnut White Paper
- Strategic innovation and research agenda for the Fruit and Vegetable sector
- Tasty recipes based on fruits and vegetables from AREFLH regions

All documents are available on [www.areflh.org](http://www.areflh.org) / our publications



## Our communication tools


- Our brand new website [www.areflh.org](http://www.areflh.org).
- Our weekly emails (AREFLH info) to members only, with news on the sector and on European policies (CAP, CMO, Promotion, Official Journal articles, etc.).
- Our monthly newsletter (you can subscribe from our website), with information on the activities of AREFLH and the sector.
- Our Twitter account (@areflh).
- Physical and phone meetings








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