



Press release

European Union project to boost legume crops launched

Vienna, November 21 2018

More than thirty science and business leaders met in Vienna this week to launch Legumes Translated, a new thematic network funded under Horizon 2020, the European Union's research and innovation programme. Globally, legume crops such as pea, field bean and soybean are essential to our plant protein supplies. Even though these crops bring many advantages for farming systems, they are under-utilised on European farms. This causes unbalanced farming systems in Europe and a European deficit in protein with global consequences.

The key objective of Legumes Translated - Translating knowledge for legume-based farming for feed and food systems - is to support farmers in producing and using European grain legume crops. Hosted by the Donau Soja organisation, the consortium of 18 organisations from nine countries met in Vienna to plan the work of the project. They represent hundreds of farms and other businesses in a network of local groups. The overall purpose is to drive improvement by better linking innovators, especially farmers, and research scientists.

The project was initiated by Donau Soja, whose aim it is to support the sustainable development of Europe's farming and food businesses by improving the production and use of protein for European consumers. The President of Donau Soja, Mr Matthias Krön welcomed the project consortium to Vienna: "Donau Soja decided three years ago that playing a leading role in research and innovation was essential to our goal: a sustainable and European protein supply. Legumes Translated includes leading scientists in this area and the consortium has proven itself to be determined to succeed. As a driver of innovation, we in Donau Soja look forward to our work in the consortium and the fruitful interactions that Legumes Translated now supports."



Legumes Translated (Translating knowledge for legume-based farming for feed and food systems) has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 817634

The project is coordinated by Professor Jens Dauber at the Institute for Biodiversity at the Thuenen Institute in Germany. He highlighted the value of direct access to the insights and knowledge of farmers and other innovators that the project will systematically access and support. He said "The project is designed to enable systematic interaction between researchers and farmers as well as other value chain businesses. This network will allow scientists refine their understanding of these systems using insights from practice while supporting more robust assessments of environmental effects."

Dr Donal Murphy-Bokern from Lohne in Germany, who led the planning of the project and is the project's science coordinator, said: "The European Union makes a very substantial investment in research and innovation for the agri-food sector. This project is a good example of how the EU can uniquely bring researchers and innovators together across Europe. Translating research into support for innovators is essential if the EU programme is to live up to its promise. Legumes Translated is particularly noteworthy as the first thematic network in this area and the EU's first significant investment in research and innovation in soybean production. Led from central Europe, it is also unusual in how it links eastern and western Europe."

Notes

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About Legumes Translated

Legumes Translated - Translating knowledge for legume-based farming for feed and food systems - supports innovation in grain legume-supported cropping systems and value-chains by linking sources and users of quality-assured knowledge using rigorous knowledge synthesis and compilation.

Knowledge is compiled at two levels: at the level of Actor Groups' specific farming system and value chain activities, and in seven technical areas of agricultural sector and value-chain transition (Transition Networks).

The project addresses an urgent need and cross-sector challenges by building on technical opportunities. The urgent need is due to the imbalance in cropping systems now dominated by cereal crops with adverse agronomic and environmental effects. The cross sector challenge arises from the growing demand for alternative sources of plant protein, growing consumer interest in the environmental impact and resource efficiency of value chains, growing demand for GMO-free value chains and grain legume-based foods. The technical opportunity arises from the range of innovation groups in Europe that are now translating relevant knowledge at a local and regional level.

The consortium comprises an existing innovation community represented by 15 Actor Groups with research-based knowledge, value-chain actors' knowledge and insights from the pre-farm side of the value chain right through to retailing, including the supporting and regulating functions such as policy development.

The project uses a co-learning framework to validate the knowledge compiled within Actor Groups and between Actor Groups within the seven Transition Networks. In addition to direct interaction between partners, an extensive range of primary communications provided in an internet-based knowledge platform (The Legume Hub) will have a lasting character documenting the work. Secondary communications will target specific groups along value chains using a wide range of media. The project includes work for impact beyond the project time frame.

The consortium will invest a total of 2.16 million Euros supported by a grant of 2.00 million from the EU.

More information about the project can be found at the European Union's Cordis website at https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/218512_en.html

The project website legumes-translated.eu will be launched in early 2019.

Project partners

- Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute TI, Germany
- Scotland's Rural College SRUC, UK
- University of Helsinki, Helsingin Yliopisto HEL, Finland
- Donal Murphy-Bokern, DM, Germany
- The Circa Group Europe Limited CIRC, Ireland
- Centre for Agricultural Technology
Augustenberg/Landwirtschaftliches Technologiezentrum
Augustenberg LTZ, Germany
- Research Institute of Organic Agriculture/Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau FiBL, Switzerland

- Agriculture and Food Development Authority Teagasc, Ireland
- Leibniz-Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research/Leibniz-Zentrum fuer Agrarlandschaftsforschung e.V. ZALF, Germany
- NIREUS Aquaculture Nirefs Ichthiokalliergeies Anonymi Etairia NIR, Greece
- Agricultural Cooperation of Thessaly THES, Greece
- Agrobioinstitute ABI, Bulgaria
- Schwäbisch Hall Producers Community/Bauerliche Erzeugergemeinschaft Schwäbisch Hall BES, Germany
- Hessen State Centre for Agriculture LLH, Germany
- Danube Soya/Donau Soja GmbH DS, Austria
- Stonegate Farmers Ltd., UK
- Arvum Seed Technology AST, Ireland
- Institute of Field and Vegetable Crops/Institut za Ratarstvo I Povrtarstvo IFVC, Republic of Serbia

Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

The project Legumes Translated - Translating knowledge for legume-based farming for feed and food systems is supported by the European Union's HORIZON 2020 research and innovation programme under the Grant Agreement no 817634.

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