

Introduction of FP7 BaSeFood project

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

BaSeFood (Sustainable exploitation of bioactive components from the Black Sea Area traditional foods) is a collaborative research program funded by the European Commission within Theme 2: Food, agriculture and fisheries, and biotechnology of the Seventh Framework Programme.

The BaSeFood research Consortium consists of 13 partners from Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Georgia, Italy, United Kingdom, Greece, Portugal and Serbia. BaSeFood was launched on April 1st, 2009, and will last three years. The project is coordinated by the University of Bologna, Italy.

BaSeFood will refer to already running FP6 programs: EuroFIR and TRUEFOOD, from which methodologies and basic concepts will be applied.



PROJECT SUMMARY:

BaSeFood aims to promote sustainable development and exploitation of Traditional Foods of plant origin containing emerging bioactive compounds with putative health effects in the Black Sea Region (BSR). The general objectives of BaSeFood are to contribute in establishing a rationale for integrating the concepts of health promoting foods and traditional foods, in order to create the knowledge base for a sustainable economic development in the area of production and processing of tradition-based healthy foods.

From an operative point of view, BaSeFood will contribute at scientifically studying bioactives of Black sea area traditional foods by means of rigorous analytical and biological assays, in the context of unifying methodologies and data acquisition, but also considering a vast array of characteristics of traditional foods and consumers issues, in order to put health claims in a favourable context, to be properly understood by people and exploited by processor stakeholders.

Research activities:

BaSeFood structure and activities have been developed around the following points, inherent to key concepts of bioactive substances, micronutrients and traditional foods.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- To investigate the knowledge base of traditional foods of the BSR in order to identify those foods to be collected and analysed.
- To define, characterise and collect nutrient and bioactive data for a subset of about 30 prioritised traditional foods using previously developed and validated EuroFIR guidelines and bioactive databases, with appropriate analyses.
- To carry out case human intervention studies (priority: cardiovascular disease protection), supported by intensive in vitro and in vivo laboratory tests, to address the requirement for supporting evidence in nutrition and health claims.
- To accurately map and describe the flow charts of BSR traditional foods preparation and processing, and determine bioactive retention at both laboratory and pilot plant scale in close collaboration with industry partners.
- To evaluate attitudes of processors and consumers in order to optimise and enhance the whole food chain for improved availability and health benefits of BSR traditional foods.
- To widely disseminate results and findings in order to enhance awareness and sustainable development of traditional foods of the BSR for improved health.

RELEVANCE TO EURRECA NoE

The medium-term strategic lines within which BaSeFood will operate are:

Create opportunities. These will be attained through RTD activities, generating a base of knowledge from which SMEs and other stakeholders can derive transferable information for product development in a European regulatory context.

Create trust. Especially in consumers, in order to enforce the synergy between the health promoting and the traditional food characteristics, and support direct perception of food value, also by addressing environmental, conservation and equity issues.

BaSeFood activities will be anyway carried out in a frame of broad sense sustainability, in which issues of local communities, traditional foods, plant resources, biodiversity knowledge and preservation will be also taken into account. The final aim is to put bioactive substances and micronutrients contents of related health claims in a favorable, consumer's friendly, context, in order to give opportunities to all possible stakeholders, independently of strictly regulatory facts. The recent evolutions of the evaluations of the submitted health claims seem to fully support this integrated approach.

Acknowledgement to future EURRECA publications

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