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Welcome to the 2 SPAS newsletter which is regularly disseminated in order to keep you up to date in interesting achievements, news and events related to the agrofood sector.

SPAS: "SMEs Virtual Platform on Agro-Food Sector to access the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes"

Proposal Contract n° ETI-EC-023339-SPAS

SPAS is an initiative promoted by a consortium of **13 organisations** coming from 9 different European countries, and **supported by the European Commission** within the **6th Framework Programme (FP6)**.

The SPAS Project will create a **pool of enterprises of the agro-food sector** in order to promote **technological cooperation** among companies, and support **research and innovation activities**.

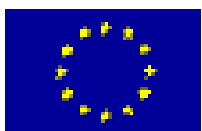
The aim of SPAS is to **encourage small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to take part in the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes** through new instruments like **Integrated Projects (IP)** and **Networks of Excellence (NoE)**. The participation will be focused on new and on-going projects, paying particular attention to calls for proposals and calls for tenders.

For more information please visit the "SPAS" website: www.spas-project.eu

Expert Words

METHOD FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF PESTICIDES USING MICROSYSTEMS

The Goodfood Project (Supported by the 6th Framework Programme) develop a method for the identification of pesticides using Microsystems. Pesticides are routinely administered throughout the world in order to maximise crop yields and protect agricultural products. Within the food production process, pesticides are generally applied to the crop during the growth stage. However, pesticides may also enter the food production cycle through accidental contamination, such as via contaminated storage containers, process water and the production environment. The goal within WP2 is to develop a simple to use, low-cost device for the determination of a range of pesticides in food matrices at analytically valid levels. The device is multi-channel, allowing determination of multiples of 4 analyses simultaneously. The device is intended to be used by minimally trained personnel in decentralised locations without recourse to complex instrumentation. It is intended for the device to serve as a "management tool" to minimise the ingress of pesticides into the food chain by allowing the food producer and/or processor to test food products at every part of the food production process to allow identification and hence elimination of contaminated foods from the production cycle. Source: *Good-food project*



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

Biotechnology - derived crops provide options and potential solutions for a number of challenges in modern agriculture. The extent to which they may be the preferred option depends on many economic, social, and regional factors. Several general conclusions about the environmental benefits of biotechnology-derived soy bean, corn, and cotton have been documented by studies in the USA and elsewhere (CAST). These studies concluded:

- Biotechnology-derived soy bean, corn, and cotton provide insect, weed, and disease management options that are consistent with improved environmental stewardship.
 - Biotechnology - derived crops can provide solutions to environmental and economic problems associated with conventional crops including production security (consistent yields), safety (worker, public, and wildlife), and environmental benefits (soil, water, and ecosystems).
 - Although not the only solution for all farming situations, the first commercially available biotechnology derived crops provide benefits through enhanced conservation of soil and water, increased beneficial insect populations and improved water and air quality.
- Source: New Genetics, Food and Agriculture: Scientific Discoveries – Societal Dilemmas.

EUROPEAN TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM. “FOOD FOR LIFE”



The European Commission is facilitating the development of European Technology Platforms (ETPs) to promote innovation in Europe. ETPs will bring together stakeholders in key economic sectors so as to:

- Develop a long term vision of the sector,
- Create a strategy for delivery, and
- Establish a management structure to ensure maximum impact.

The agro-food sector currently has a number of ETPs, including *Plants for the Future*, *Global Animal Health*, *Animal Breeding*, *Forestry*, *Industrial Biotechnology* and *Food for Life*. Whilst each has its individual focus they will operate in a co-operative manner so as to best exchange information, minimize duplication and maximize their overall impacts.

The **ETP Food for Life Vision for 2020 and beyond** was launched in Brussels on 5 July 2005. The next stage, currently underway, is the development of a **Strategic Research Agenda [SRA]** affording a dynamic strategy for achieving this vision and meeting the innovation challenge, and a detailed **Implementation Plan** that describes the research, training, education and dissemination requirements needed to fulfil the vision and strategy.

The immediate focus is on defining the requirements and priorities for the [European Commission's Framework Programme 7](#), but in the longer term this focus will be broadened to include nationally-funded initiatives.

An effective integration of strategically-focussed, trans-national, concerted research in the nutritional-, food- and consumer sciences and food chain management will deliver *innovative, novel and improved food products for, and to, national, regional and global markets in line with consumer needs and expectations*.

These products, together with recommended changes in dietary regimes and lifestyles, will have a *positive impact on public health and overall quality of life* ('adding life to years').

Such targeted activities will support a successful and competitive pan-European agro-food industry having *global business leadership securely based on economic growth, technology transfer, sustainable food production and consumer confidence*.

Source: ETP food for Life. http://etp.ciaa.be/asp/about_etp/welcome.asp



Focus

SPAS launch a Virtual Factory in agrofood industries

SPAS presentation at the Dusseldorf fair

Developing collaboration with agro-food related European Technology Platforms and SPAS Projects

Cooperation between EUROPREVALL (6 FP Integrated Project) and SPAS

SPAS dissemination in relevant fora in Madrid (Spain)

SPAS dissemination in IBERWINE

Promote your project ideas in SPAS project

SPAS News

SPAS launch a Virtual Factory in agrofood industries

The 'Virtual Factory' a decision support tool for SMEs who wish to improve their food processing, will soon be available in the SPAS website www.spas-project.eu. At this moment you can access it at <http://www.atoapps.nl/virtualfactory/spas/>

SPAS presentation at the Dusseldorf fair

On the 26th of September the SPAS partnership has promoted the SPAS project in the International Trade Fair in Dusseldorf (Germany), which gathers three major events: INTERMEAT, INTERCOOL and INTERMOPRO, the most important European meeting point in the freshness sectors. This was an excellent occasion to present SPAS activities and opportunities to a series of relevant companies in the agro-food sector.



Developing collaboration with agro-food related European Technology Platforms and SPAS Projects

The managers of the European Technology Platforms (ETP) "Plants for the future" and "Food for life" attended the 3rd SPAS progress meeting. This meeting was celebrated on the 26, 27 and 28 of September in Arnhem (The Netherlands). It was a very clear result from the exchange of ideas that ensued that the SPAS project is an opportunity to bring together ETPs and SMEs, facilitating communication and supporting the participation of SMEs in the Platforms. The SPAS project will provide further information about ETPs and their activities to all SMEs participating in the project.

Cooperation between EUROPREVALL (6 FP Integrated Project) and SPAS

The 8th of November a workshop between SPAS manager and EuroPrevall participants was held in Madrid. The participants discussed future information scenarios for food allergic consumers. SPAS contributed in the contact of a new SME partner in the project. **More information:**

BESEL: Mr. Jose Ignacio Blanco Cuesta (j.i.cuesta@besel.es)

EUROPREVALL: Mrs. Sylvia Pfaff (sylvia.pfaff@web.de)

SPAS dissemination in relevant forum in Madrid (ES)

On the 19th September 2006, the SPAS Project coordinator presented the SPAS project in a relevant forum in Madrid. The forum was held in the Madrid, in the CEIM Confederation of Employers and Industries of Madrid Region, branch of CEOE (Spanish Confederation of Employers' Organizations)

Also SPAS was presented in IBERWINE International wine fair held in Madrid (Spain) from 21 to 23 of November 2006.

Promote your project ideas in SPAS project

SPAS is providing assistance and support to those small and medium sized enterprises interested in finding or becoming a partner in a joint RTD project or Technology Platforms. As a specific support action SPAS offers to publish your search request via email to over 1,000 agro-food organisations. After publication, each idea will be listed on the SPAS website at www.spas-project.eu, and directly promote between the SPAS network.



Projects and Events of Interest

European Commission announces date for first FP7 calls

The European Commission has announced the date of the opening of the first calls for proposals under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

With FP7 reaching the end of its adoption process (the European Parliament expected to give its green light on 30 November), the European Commission has announced 22 December as the day when the first calls for proposals will open.

Source: www.cordis.europa.eu

Goodfood project launch a Call for Expressions of Interest for the Demonstration Phase

GoodFood is a 4-year integrated project co-funded by the EC with the strategic objective of contributing to the new generation of analytical methods based on Micro and Nano Technology solutions for the safety and quality assurance of the complete food chain

Agenda for the Demonstration Process:

- Launching of the call for Expressions of interest: 30th of October 2006
- Closing of the call for Expressions of interest: 30th of November 2006 at 5PM (Brussels time).
- Publication of the results of the Expression of Interest Call: 16th of December 2006
- Starting Negotiations with new partners: 17th of December 2006
- Starting administrative work with new partners: 2nd of January 2007
- Starting demonstration activities: 2nd of January 2007
- End of demonstration activities: 30th of June 2007

The funding amount available from the EC for the present call is 275.000 Euros.

Technology Platform of the European Forest-Based Sector (FTP)

The European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), The Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF) and the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI) have set up a project to establish a [Technology Platform](#) for the forest-based sector. This project aims at establishing and implementing the sector's R&D roadmap for the future and is supported by a wide range of different stakeholders.

The Forest-based sector technology platform is an industry-driven process, embedded in industry reality, and supporting the sector's strategy.

<http://www.forestplatform.org/index.php?cid=ftp>

20 and 23 March 2007

Improving Sustainability in Organic and Low Input Food Production Systems Stuttgart, Germany

The Congress "Improving Sustainability in Organic and Low Input Food Production Systems" is the 3rd in a series organized as part of the EU funded Integrated Project (IP) Quality Low Input Food (QLIF). The IP aims to improve quality, ensure safety and reduce cost along the organic and «low input» food supply chains through research, dissemination and training activities. Website: <http://www.ecoweblog.elr.dk/>

More info and updates on www.spas-project.eu

Links of Interest

SMEs for Food

www.smesforfood.org

Food safety From the farm to the fork

http://ec.europa.eu/food/index_en.htm

European Commission Agrinet Portal.

http://ec.europa.eu/research/agriculture/index_en.html

European Food Safety Authority

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en.html>

Plants for the Future Technology Platform.

www.plantTP.com

Calendar of Events (Quarterly)

Short course on biomarkers in cancer epidemiology

The EU-funded Network of Excellence ECNIS (Environmental Cancer Risk, Nutrition and Individual Susceptibility) will hold a short course on biomarkers in cancer epidemiology in London, UK on 11-13 December. For more information, please visit: <http://www.ecnis.org>

International Food Fairs

Barcelona Degusta

2-5 May 2007

www.barcelonadegusta.com

Alimentaria Lisboa.

27-30 May 2007

<http://www.alimentaria-lisboa.com>