

# NEWSLETTER

#1 - DECEMBER 2019

**1. FOCUS ON..... P. 2**

**2. PARTNERS' NEWS..... P. 3**

**3. PROJECT UP TO DATE..... P. 6**

**4. AGENDA..... P. 6**



## 1. FOCUS ON

### *FEEDtheMIND, Food-related European Education in the Digital era to Motivate Innovative New-product Development*

The FEEDtheMIND project (Food-related European Education in the Digital Era to Motivate Innovative New-Product Development) is a Strategic Partnership project funded by the Erasmus+ program that brings together Higher Education Institutions and food federations from 5 European countries around the promotion of a food innovation education of excellence and a project-based approach using a digital pedagogical platform. This 3-year project will facilitate the exchange of pedagogical methods between the different European HEIs partner organisations and foster the acquisition of transversal skills and competences.



2

Europe's Food and Drink Industry represents 4.57 million people employed throughout the EU, a turnover of €1.1 trillion and €230 billion in added value, which make it the largest manufacturing industry in the EU. There is a strong innovation dynamic in this sector to answer consumer's expectations, which has been leading to the development of R&D departments and to the increase in agri-food start-ups European-wide. Although students demonstrate will for the development of innovative food products, as demonstrated by the national and European ECOTROPHELIA competitions, it seems that it is not enough for them to launch their products on the market. European students in food-related courses, i.e. the future professionals of the sector, show skills gaps when it comes to areas such as project management, entrepreneurial mind-set, communication, marketing, finances and business plan, because the HEIs' curriculum is, in most cases, focused on food sciences and process. These skills gaps limit their potential to create their own company and even to better succeed in the professional world.

In this context, the FEEDtheMIND project intends to demonstrate that the European food education requires a systemic, interdisciplinary approach based on a food innovation education of excellence and a project-based approach.

**For a duration of three years, this project has the following objectives:**

- adapt, test and implement a digital pedagogical platform focusing on the development of an innovative food product;
- facilitate the exchange of pedagogical methods between the different European HEIs partner organisations;
- contribute to the rethink of the curriculum design by enabling HEIs to provide online courses.

Ultimately, this project aims to foster entrepreneurship among students attending food-related degrees.

**Within the framework of this project, various contents and tools are going to be developed, namely:**

- a digital pedagogical platform that will allow the students to acquire transversal skills and competences by following their individual path;
- case studies on new pedagogical approaches and the acquisition of new competences;
- a list of perceived skills and knowledge underdeveloped and considered necessary both for the higher education and the labour market;
- innovative food products, supported by the FEEDtheMIND multidisciplinary digital learning tool, by transnational teams, through a mobility activity and/or virtually;
- a good practices guideline that would be the foundation for new and innovative pedagogies and, ideally, the adaptation of the curriculum.

**In the long term, this project will have an impact at three different levels:**

1. at an individual level (the students), by proposing a pedagogical approach that delivers knowledge and transversal competences, promotes an entrepreneurial mind-set and creative thinking;

FEEDtheMIND NEWSLETTER #1 – DECEMBER 2019

2. at **an organisational level**, by training professors/researchers and staff and consequently improving the quality of education, and by strengthening the cooperation and network between leader HEIs in five different countries;
3. at **a system level**, by contributing to a more innovative food sector through the training of the future professionals of this sector and the connection between HEIs and the industry.



### FEEDtheMIND targets three groups of participants:

1. **higher education students** that will directly benefit from the digital pedagogical platform developed to tackle their skills gap and to promote their creativity and entrepreneurship;

2. **higher education professors/researchers/pedagogical staff** that will benefit from the exchange of good practices and the innovative pedagogical methods;
3. **professionals** from the food sector that will share their expectations regarding the industry's future professionals.

To stay up to date on the project activities follow the updates on: <https://feedthemind.ecotrophelia.org>

## 2. PARTNERS' NEWS

The project is carried out by a consortium of 7 partners, led by the **EEIG ECOTROPHELIA EUROPE**, and made up of 6 Higher Education Institutions from 5 European countries.

### EEIG ECOTROPHELIA EUROPE

is a European Economic Interest Grouping that aims to unite stakeholders from different Member States together around a common objective and brings together food industry actors from seven European countries to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the European food industry through implementing and developing innovative programmes.

In particular, the EEIG, with the assistance of its members, aims to:

- Promote cooperation and exchanges between SMEs and universities, research institutes, public and private bodies involved in food innovation,
- Define policies, organise the ECOTROPHELIA Europe competition and promote the participation in the competition and its results,
- Promote excellent education programmes linked to food innovation,
- Increase awareness and spreading information, particularly to students and young entrepreneurs.

The members are: ANIA (FR), FEVIA (BE), FIAB (ES), SEVT (GR), CCIS-CAFÉ (SL), SI (IS), LVA (AT) and FoodDrinkEurope. The French, Spanish, Greek, Slovenian and Austrian member federations will contribute to the project by making the connection to the agri-food sector and its actors.

#### ANIA - France

The French Food and Drink Association (ANIA) brings together 40 trade unions and 16 regional associations, representing 17,723 food companies in France. The agri-food sector is the leading French economic sector with a turnover of 176 billion euros and the leading industrial employer with 427,594 employees. ANIA is the main contact for public authorities, administrations and the media on food-related issues: The Association promotes, supports and defends the agri-food companies depending on their needs. As a national Association, ANIA has contact with all members of the food production and retail chain, and has both a strong national, regional and local anchoring. This vast network and knowledge of the agri-food chain will strongly help the implementation of the project's various tasks.

**CCIS-CAFÉ ▪ Slovenia**

CCIS-CAFÉ is an independent, voluntary and non-profit interest group of legal entities, who carries out lucrative business activities in the agricultural or food sector or related activities on the market. It comprises the interests of around 230 agricultural & food companies, registered in Slovenia. As a representative of the national food industry association CCIS-CAFÉ is a multiple purpose adviser and develops strategic partnerships for the purpose of innovation.

**FIAB ▪ Spain**

The Spanish Food and Drink Federation (FIAB) was established in 1977 to represent the Spanish food and beverage industry through a single body and one voice. Its main activity is to inform the sector of the main developments that may affect its operation and competitiveness. It also represents its interests in different government and decision-makers, both nationally and at the European and international scope. Currently it encompasses 45 associations.

**LVA ▪ Austria**

LVA is a private non-profit centre of excellence for the food industry in Austria and was founded as independent association with the aim to fulfil a broad range of tasks like services for coaching and consultancy, maintaining a competent training programme in the food sector, offering authoritative partnerships in technology transfer, European research programmes and mediating industry-related scientific co-operations.

**SEVT ▪ Greece**

SEVT represents the Greek Food & Drink Industry on national, European and international level. It consists of food and drink companies and sector associations. The Food & Drink Industry is among the leading manufacturing sectors in Greece, in terms of turnover, added value and a key job provider. The mission of SEVT is to facilitate the development of a friendly enabling business where all food and drink companies, whatever their size, can operate responsibly to respond to the increasing needs of both consumers and society.

**6 Higher Education Institutions from 5 European countries:**

**University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna - BOKU - Austria**



The University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences perceives itself as a teaching and research center for renewable resources, which are necessary for human life. It is BOKU's objective to help make a considerable contribution to the conservation and protection of resources for future generations by providing diversity in its fields of study.

The Department of Food Science and Technology contributes significantly to the provision of top quality and safe food by means of research and teaching both in a national and international context. Research focuses in particular on specific needs of the population of Austria and Central Europe. In addition to providing profound knowledge, teaching prepares and educates students for transdisciplinary, critical and ethically responsible thinking.

BOKU has a total of 1000 scientific staff members and around 12000 students. The Department of Food Science and Technology consists of around 80 scientific staff members.

**University of Ljubljana ▪ Slovenia**



University of Ljubljana is the oldest, the largest and internationally best ranked university in Slovenia. Biotechnical Faculty of University of Ljubljana is the leading national education and research institution covering the sciences of living nature (biology, microbiology) as well as agriculture, forestry and the related food processing technology, nutrition, wood technology and biotechnology. The fundamental mission of the Biotechnical Faculty is to provide top level university and postgraduate level education, as well as to carry out scientific research related to various aspects of the management of natural resources. Concepts of sustainability together with modern knowledge entail global challenges which may only be positively addressed by pursuing a continuous and relentless search for what is newer and better, by acquiring and developing the breakthrough solutions and applying them in everyday life. The academic community of the Biotechnical Faculty is well connected into the national and global community through numerous activities which is one of the main faculty's missions.

**Agricultural University of Athens ▪ Greece**



The Agricultural University of Athens is the third oldest university in Greece, established by law in 1920 as the Highest Agricultural School of Athens. In 1989 (renamed as AUA), it was organized into seven independent academic departments. The AUA campus is 25 hectares in area bordering on both sides the historic Sacred Way of antiquity, at the heart of the ancient Olive Grove close the Center of Athens.

Its 28 building complexes comprise 42 laboratories for teaching and research, and 55 modern auditoriums and lecture rooms. AUA consists of six schools and six departments.

The Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition of the School of Food and Human Nutrition will be involved in this project, represented by the Laboratory of Food Quality Control and Hygiene (LFQCH) established in 1994. The main research areas of LFQCH are fermented products, food spoilage, foodborne pathogens, natural preservation methods, active and intelligent packaging, predictive modelling and quantitative microbial risk assessment.

## Polytechnic University of Valencia ▪ Spain



The Universitat Politècnica de València is a public, dynamic and innovative institution dedicated to research and teaching that, while maintaining strong bonds with the social environment in which it carries out its activities, advocates for a solid presence abroad. It is a young university, which celebrates its 50th anniversary during the 2018-2019 academic year.

Its community is made up of around 34,000 students, 3,600 lecturers and researchers and 1,500 administration and services professionals distributed among its three campuses located in Alcoi, Gandia and València.

At present, the UPV comprises 13 university centres, of which nine are higher technical schools, two are faculties and another two, higher polytechnic schools. In addition, it has a Doctoral School and three affiliated centres (Florida University, Berklee College of Music and EDEM Business School).

## Montpellier SupAgro, Institut national d'études supérieures agronomiques de Montpellier ▪ France



THE FRENCH NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES - SOUTH OF FRANCE - Montpellier SupAgro is a French public institution devoted to higher education and research in Agriculture, Food and Environment. Montpellier SupAgro is widely open to international issues

and partnerships, with specific focus and recognized expertise on southern and Mediterranean areas. Montpellier SupAgro offers students and professionals two engineering courses and a wide range of programs following the European LMD framework (Bachelor, Master/Advanced Master, PhD).

Montpellier SupAgro upholds a long tradition of international training and research. On its campuses, 23% of the student body is composed of international students, 60% of whom come from non-French speaking countries. The signing of academic exchange agreements with about one hundred institutions all over the world has opened a broad range of mobility opportunities for students and researcher-professors. Framework agreements for cooperation and educational exchange have been signed with institutions in some 30 countries in order to set up support systems for the training programs.

## AgroParisTech, l'Institut des sciences et industries du vivant et de l'environnement ▪ France



AgroParisTech is a leading higher education and research institute, that aims at addressing the major challenges of the 21st century: feeding a growing population while sustainably managing territories, preserving natural resources, fostering innovation and developing the bioeconomy.

Its curriculum relies on research-based training and is closely associated with public or private research centers, main relevant technical-vocational centers and industrial partners. AgroParisTech deploys a diversity of trainings: a MSc in engineering, a Master of Science and a doctoral programme in partnership with major French and foreign universities as well as a range of advanced master's degrees and executive education.

AgroParisTech is structured in 8 campuses in France, 5 training and research departments, 24 mixed research units, one experimental farm, two experimental pilot plants and 4 business pre-incubators. AgroParisTech gathers more than 2000 students, 230 academic staff and 375 doctoral students.

It is a founding member of Université Paris-Saclay, a French leading scientific and technological cluster.

### 3. PROJECT UP TO DATE

Kick-off Meeting ▪ Paris ▪ November 13<sup>th</sup> 2019



On November 13<sup>th</sup>, AgroParisTech hosted the Kick-off Meeting of the FEEDtheMIND project that counted with 21 attendees representing the 7 partners of the project. The partners came together to define a shared vision for the project over the next 3 years.

On November 13<sup>th</sup> 2019, the FEEDtheMIND consortium met in Paris (France), at AgroParisTech, for the Kick-off meeting of the European project funded by the Erasmus+ program.

The meeting begun with an introductory round-table of the attendees representing the 7 partners of the project, where the HEIs highlighted the

different courses available on their organisations and reflected on the future participants. After the partners' introduction, the project and historical context were presented, followed by the administrative and financial aspects that need to be taken into account. The second-half of the day was dedicated to the project's activities, namely the intellectual outputs that make up the project and the multiplier events that will promote them to the key-actors of both academia and agri-food sectors. The consortium took the time to review them and discuss the implementation of the work plan for the following 3 years. After a productive day, the Kick-off meeting ended with an overview of the next steps and the wish for fruitful years of collaboration.

6

### 4. AGENDA

**20/04/2020: FEEDtheMIND launch conference at Alimentaria Alimentaria Barcelona** (date to be confirmed)

Alimentaria Barcelona is a leading tradeshow for the food industry that aims to anticipate trends, boost the business and facilitate transversal synergies. It highlights innovation and the educational system through its side events, such as international conferences. UPV, in cooperation with FIAB, will organise an international conference to launch the project, with the aim of presenting the context, main activities and expected results to key actors of the food industry and food-related HEIs. On top of that, this conference will be the opportunity to present the results already achieved during the first months of the FEEDtheMIND project.

**09/2020: Seminar on the pedagogical practices and the acquisition of key competences**

On September 2020, the FEEDtheMIND consortium will held a 2-day seminar for the exchange of good practices supported by the productions already developed and the training of the professors, researchers and HEI's staff to use the FEEDtheMIND digital pedagogical tool.

**20/10/2020: FEEDtheMIND Special @SIAL Paris 2020** (date to be confirmed)

SIAL Paris, "The world's largest food innovation exhibition", welcomes visitors and exhibitors from around the world and aims to be a source of inspiration, exploring food trends and innovations worldwide. In this scope, recognizing that Higher Education students are the future professionals of the food sector, SIAL receives the ECOTROPHELIA Europe competition, the "Food Innovation Students Awards".



This year, aligned with the ECOTROPHELIA Europe competition, the FEEDtheMIND consortium will held an international conference bringing together Higher Education and the agri-food sector in what aims to be a productive session to promote results and knowledge/experience sharing between these actors.

**Next edition of your Newsletter : June 2020**

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