AgroLabs project

AgroLabs project aims to foster the production and distribution of innovative agro-food products of the Balkan-Med area by organizing local value chains, supporting SMEs and producers in their development projects and creating new markets for their products through an open procedure. In addition, specific objectives of AgroLabs will contribute to the inclusion of agro-food chains and creation of local clusters, foster entrepreneurship and innovation, increase the visibility and reputation of typical agro-food products, develop their commercialization, develop local capacity through open access of transnational exchanges and finally to set the basis so as to initiate the Route of Balkan-Med Agro-Food Products and integration with AgroFood Clusters in EU level. To achieve these aims towards the sustainable growth of the Agro-Food sector, all relevant actors should be engaged.

In the Second edition of AgroLabs Newsletter we are going to present the events that were organized until now:

**AGROLABS Workshop in Limassol, Cyprus.** The Workshop on “Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in Cyprus-Perspectives” was successfully held on Wednesday September 26 2018, with more than 140 participants. It was organized by Cyprus University of Technology (PP3).

Key findings/outcomes from the event:
A lot of attention and identification of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants collected in the countryside is required.
Producers face problems for the proper cultivation and utilization of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants.
Cyprus has a rich biodiversity in Medicinal and Aromatic Plants and actions should be performed for the reconstruction and preservation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants.
**AGROLABS Local Event in Fier, Albania.** Municipality of Fier – PP6 organized Local Event on 29th of September 2018, in Hotel Fier Conference Center. The event involved all local stakeholders, including scientific and technical staff of the Municipalities of the Fier district, representatives of the local farmers and their unions, agrofood SMEs, decision makers of Public Local and Regional Authorities, individual service providers, etc.

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The long-term vision of the Municipality is to create the first Albanian Innovation Cluster for Smart Agriculture. The first stage will be implemented within the AGROLABS project in two stages, development of the Local Action Plan and establishment of the Cluster involving all potential users, stakeholders and partners (Central Government, Regional Authorities, public and private associations, Universities, etc.).

**AGROLABS Workshop in Razlog, Bulgaria.** The Faculty of Biology at the Sofia University, Department of Ecology and Environmental Protection – PP8 organized the Workshop on 8th of November 2018, in the Conference Room of Municipal council of Razlog, Blagoevgrad region. During the Workshop were presented and the results of the implementation of the Regional study in the Blagoevgrad region, including supporting focus group discussions among stakeholders. The studies analyzed the State of awareness of three main target groups: primary agricultural producers; processing companies and processors; traders and distributors of agricultural products.

The event involved local stakeholders, including representatives of the local farmers.
AGROLABS Third Project Partner’s meeting in Tirana, Albania.
The 3rd Project Partners meeting of the project AgroLabs was held in Tirana, Albania on 22nd and 23rd of November 2018. It was organized by the Agricultural University of Tirana, Department of Agroenviroment and Ecology (PP5 in the project) and representatives from all project partners participated. During the meeting partners discussed the current situation of the project implementation, the project progress and results and the use of the MIS system. The main part of the 3rd Meeting focused on:
- Discussing the current and future state of project implementation and expenditures.
- Analyzing project results, current weaknesses in the project, and discussing possible solutions.
- Presenting the findings of the Diagnosis Studies.

AGROLABS Innovation Summit
The AgroLabs Innovation Summit was organized by the Municipality of Fier in the context of the Project “Agrofood Innovation Clusters” (AgroLabs) of the Interreg BALKAN-MED 2014-2020 Transnational Cooperation Program, on the 23rd of November 2018, at Dafinat Conference Center, Mbrostar, Fier, Albania, with 110 participants. The Innovation Summit captured, shared and transferred the knowledge and experiences from the stakeholders’ consultation on regional level. In the context of the Summit, networking has been promoted and challenges in the sector have been discussed with the participants, receiving useful feedback in the process, which will be used in order to develop common solutions and strategies concerning the growth of the agro-food sector in the Balkan-Med region.
Don’t miss the upcoming events:

- AGROLABS Local Event in Razlog, Bulgaria
- AgroLabs Local Event in Imathia, Greece
- Two AgroLabs Workshop in Fier, Albania
- Two AgroLabs Workshops in Imathia, Greece
- Workshop in Razlog, Bulgaria
- 4th Project Partner’s meeting in Razlog, Bulgaria