

Founding meeting, February 1, 2016, VLEVA, Brussels

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A new framework for the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme has been set up by the European Commission for 2014-2020.

One of the priorities of this programme is that the research results can be exploited by end users, producers and industry stakeholders.





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This is why the three organizations decided in 2014 to create a Task Force to present to the European Commission the research and innovation priorities for the period 2014-2020.



This Task Force is composed of representatives of producers, of the industry and research centers of EU countries.



After a year of work, the strategic agenda was presented to the Commission. It points out the social and economic weight of the sector in Europe. It identifies the needs of the sector and highlights emergencies and priorities.



These are:

- Improving the control of diseases and pests and reducing pesticide use
- Developing machine-based harvest for a more efficient and secure work
- Maintaining the productivity and quality of productions using water and heat stress
- At post harvest level, developing innovative tools to maintain quality and improve the post-harvest life
- Repositioning the fruit and vegetable sector on its nutritional and health benefits





This agenda has been received by the Commission, who now awaits clear and consensual proposals from the sector. Some of these priorities were included in the Commission's work program for 2016-2017. However, the selection is ruthless and several of the programs presented failed.



Today the fruit research sector has a place of meeting, of exchange and of cooperation, it is EUFRIN, but the vegetable sector did not have this kind of organisation. So it was urgent to fill this gap.





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This is why the opportunity was grabbed by Freshfel, AREFLH and Agrolink who joins together Flanders research and transfer centres, and who is hosting us today

We thank them warmly as they played an important role in the preparation and organisation of this meeting.





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Our goal today is to first get to know each other and assess the European Research potential for vegetables.

But another goal is also to give us the ability to work as a network and, for the main themes, to be able to influence the writing of the Commission's work programs and respond to Horizon 2020 calls for tender.





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So today we will set up working groups for the main issues shared by the European vegetable production.

So good work to you all!

