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EU and Mediterranean Partner Countries Citrus Experts Workshop Supports Collaboration to Improve Citrus Supply Chain Quality and Safety

On 26th June, EuroMedCitrusNet, held its First Project Workshop on citrus supply chain safety and quality at Cukurova University.

EuroMedCitrusNet, funded by the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme, aims to promote stronger research collaboration between EU and Mediterranean Partner Countries to improve citrus supply chain quality and safety. This workshop was an excellent opportunity for Mediterranean citrus sector organizations (research institutions, networks, and industry) to increase their awareness of activities across the Mediterranean. Over 20 different organizations from France, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkey, Egypt, Israel and Morocco participated. In addition to project partnership presentations, invited speakers from the following organizations also gave valuable contributions:

- Mediterranean Agronomic Research Institute Bari, Italy,
- CSIC Institute of Geography and Economics, Spain
- Biohim, Greece
- The Volcani Center, Department of Citriculture, Israel
- Maroc Fruit Board, Morocco
- The Department of Agriculture, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
- Union of Adana Citrus Growers
- University of Palermo, Italy
- Ozler Ziraat, Turkey

The workshop report and presentations can be viewed on the project website at www2.spi.pt/euromedcitrusnet.

In addition to the coordinator SPI, Portugal, the EuroMedCitrusNet project is being conducted by a number of highly prestigious institutions including:

- University of Catania, Italy; Cukurova University, Turkey;
- National Agricultural Research Foundation, Greece;
- Euroquality, France;
- Asociacion de Investigacion de la Industria Agroalimentaria ainia, Spain;
- Institut Agronomique et Veterinaire Hassan II, Morocco;
- Horticultural Research Institute, Egypt; Institut National Agronomique de Tunisie, Tunisia;
- Conzorcio Euroagrumi O. P., Italy;
- Station D'Emballage D'Agrumes Kabbage Souss, Morocco.

These organizations will promote improved safety and quality of Mediterranean citrus supply chains through:

- A study of current policies, procedures and research related to the Mediterranean citrus sector to improve quality and safety of citrus supply chains;
- A needs assessment survey to focus research on improving safety and quality including policy recommendations, an action plan of research agendas and preliminary project proposals;
- Mediterranean Networking initiatives to stimulate international co-operation and support policy development by integrating current related research and providing added value;
- Providing information to facilitate access to knowledge, training and technology, increasing SME participation in research, and, thus, improving the exploitation of results, and accelerating innovation.

They aim to bring together scientists and industrialists to create a sustainable Mediterranean citrus network.

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