



Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

A project labelled by the UfM



ARISTOIL

Promoting Mediterranean innovation capacities to develop smart and sustainable growth



Countries:

Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Croatia, Spain

Target Groups:

Public Authorities (PAs) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Theme:

Food Systems

Keywords:

Olive oil, health, agriculture, regional development, rural development

Starting and Ending Dates:

November 2016 - January 2020

ARISTOIL aims to reinforce the competitiveness of the Mediterranean olive oil sector through the development and application of innovative production and quality control methodologies related to olive oil health-protecting properties. The core ob-

jectives of the project are to provide Mediterranean producers of olive oil the potential to increase the value of their product, to increase Knowledge capacity of olive oil producers and to Increase demand for high quality olive oil.

We are only as strong as our weakest link.

ARISTOIL Pilot Projects



Challenges

There is a lack of quality control and standardised procedures for measuring the health properties of olive oil, which can be aided by developing and adopting a transnational strategy for the production of olive oil with increased health-protecting

properties. Regional or local efforts don't gain the critical mass of producers needed to make a meaningful impact on consumers of olive oil.

Solutions

- Transferring of know-how by organising conferences
- Contributing to the Olive Oil Living Lab database by registering producers and olive groves
- Establishing the Mediterranean cluster of olive oil producers
- Analysing olive oil samples using the NMR method
- Offering a guide for the production of olive oil with increased health-protecting properties
- Developing an open database with agronomic indicators
- Creating a feasibility study on certification centres and pilot certification centres

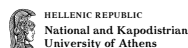
The goal is to create a cluster of well educated olive growers who are able to consistently produce high phenolic olive oil that conforms or surpasses the 432/2012 EU Health claim labeling regulation for polyphenols. EGTC Efxini Poli (Greek project partner) is continuing its awareness-raising activities with local olive oil producers in the Messenia area, and provides free access to olive oil mills for small-scale producers, so that producers can extract olive samples in periods that olive mills are not operating.

Lessons learnt and broader recommendations

The development of a standardisation and certification process is necessary for all stakeholders in the production, transportation and trading of olive oil. One of the challenges faced is to gain and maintain the interest of olive oil producers, sharing

ways for them to add the highest possible value to their products. The certification process will also increase visibility of the EU Regulation 432/2012 regarding the health-promoting properties of olive oil polyphenols

Partners:



The InterregMED Green Growth Community

Green Growth is a thematic community that promotes sustainable development in the Mediterranean within the framework of the Interreg Med Programme. It supports the sound management of natural resources by enhancing cross-sectoral innovation practices through an integrated, territorially-based cooperation approach.

The community supports its projects in communicating and capitalising on their results to increase their impact at the policy level and ensure their potential transfer into other territories.

Visit our website:

green-growth.interreg-med.eu

Join the Green Growth Capitalisation Platform:
interregmedgreengrowth.eu

Further Information:

ARISTOIL Website:

aristoil.interreg-med.eu/

Links of interest:

- [Aristoil Family Platform](#)
- [Aristometro](#)
- [Guide for production and quality control](#)
- [Training material in e-form](#)

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ARISTOIL

Type of the result:

- Online tool
- Offline tool
- Methodology
- Strategy
- Action plan
- Policy recommendation
- Guideline

Language(s) in which the result is developed:

English (also Spanish, Greek, Italian and Croatian for educational materials, such as the guide for producers and subtitled videos)

What is the most appropriate level for its use/ implementation?

Local and regional

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESULTS

The project offered trainings and seminars to olive oil producers and millers, introducing them to innovative production methods and tools that could support their production.

The Training Course for Olive Oil Producers is a deliverable from the first stage of the Aristoil project, based on the results of the phenolic composition generated after analysing olive oil samples provided by the countries involved (study phase). The training material is used by all partners to carry out trainings for producers interested in increasing the health value of the extra virgin olive oil they produce. Generic material was prepared for use in five countries, and each partner tailored this material according to the peculiarities of their country (crops, oil extraction process, ripening, production practices, etc.).

A total of 39 trainings and 28 seminars were organised for olive oil stakeholders in all partner countries with the events received 1,282 and 1,933 participants respectively, of which 791 and 593 were SMEs/beneficiaries. In total, 67 trainings and seminars took place with 3,215 participants, of which 1,384 belonged to the SME target group.

The training materials can be used by individual producers and olive millers to gain a better understanding of how agricultural processes and practices impact the quality of the final product. They may also develop a better understanding of the value of their products, adjusting their market value accordingly. In addition, the results and lessons learned from the project may be valuable to policy-makers. Wholesale enterprises, distributors and consumers can also benefit from learning what to look for when choosing a particular product.



PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION BY END-USERS

Aristoil aims to strengthen the Mediterranean olive oil sector through development and application of innovative production and quality control methods. The project analysed over 5,600 olive oil samples from all project countries, and affiliated producers received information from certification centres in Athens and Cordoba, providing information on their products' qualities.

In total, over 3,660 olive oil producers and olive millers benefitted from the project. The project also increased consumer awareness of the health benefits of olive oil. This information also reached local and regional public authorities (over 390 representatives), interest groups and NGOs (over 390), and international organisations such as the International Olive Oil Council.

Overall, thousands of consumers from all partner countries and interest groups participated in Aristoil infodays, networking events, conferences and seminars. Aristoil developed a standardised procedure for olive oil health certification, based on polyphenol concentration. This was done by creating a user-friendly colorimetric test kit (Aristometro) and two different laboratory analysis methods, which were calibrated to accurately quantify polyphenol. The platform used to disseminate information and promote Aristoil is the Aristoil eHub - a platform designed to promote the results of the project and offer users a wide range of communication material. Throughout the project the platform's end-users have provided feedback by participating in seminars, info days and trainings, and will continue to do so after the end of the project through the eHub.

WHAT IS THE TRANSFER POTENTIAL?

Continued cooperation with the Aristoil support team (over 3,500 producers and olive millers) from five European Mediterranean countries will be further explored. In addition, Svimed has committed to maintain, update and improve the Cluster eHub for at least three years following project closure, with the support of all partners. Triannual teleconferences are planned for the next three years, to plan cluster related activities. The Protocol for Med Cluster of Olive Oil Actors has provided the basis of the roadmap ahead. In addition, the Interreg MED Aristoil partnership has agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding developed by the lead partner of WP5 (Transferring), with the assistance of Svimed, determining the conditions for continued cooperation.

WHAT IS THE PROJECT REPLICABILITY?

The results are highly replicable in all olive-producing areas and result is durable, as it involves production and certification guidelines for every stage of production and quality control. Until recently we lacked the tools to measure specific phenolic compounds in olive oil. The guidelines for olive harvesting and oil production cover the entire production cycle, aiming to maximise product quality.

WHAT CHALLENGES MAY ARISE?

The partnership's main challenge is to maintain strong ties within itself and with international and EU organisations, within the agriculture sector and olive oil production. However, the partnership developed tools to provide structure and direction for the next vital steps, such as the Protocol for Med Cluster of Olive Oil Actors, which constitutes a strategic analysis of what developing a cluster entails, incorporating the lessons learned from the project.