

Press Release:



## an EU research project to strengthen competitiveness of the European agri-food sector

Halle/Saale, Germany, 19 to 20 November 2012

The European Commission entrusts a consortium of sixteen European partners with the research collaborative project *"International comparisons of product supply chains in the agri-food sectors: determinants of their competitiveness and performance on EU and international markets"* (COMPETE).

The European agri-food sector faces global challenges through changes in product demand and supply of resources as well as a higher number and level of integration of market actors. This puts pressure on efficiency and innovation in today's food production and distribution. COMPETE will gain a more comprehensive view on the different elements which contribute to the competitiveness of the European agri-food supply chain in order to provide better targeted and evidence based policies on the EU as well as on the domestic level.

The COMPETE project will address three main questions:

- How should competitiveness be conceptualized and measured?
- What are the main determinants of competitiveness?
- How can policy-makers best strengthen competitiveness and promote the Knowledge Based Bio-Economy in Europe?

The project is innovative in that it takes a value chain perspective rather than looking at the performance of farms or food manufacturers in isolation. The funding from the European Commission accounts for 2.42 million Euros for a period of three years.

On November 19-20, 2012 the consortium launched the project's kick-off meeting at IAMO in Halle (Saale), Germany. On the agenda was the discussion of important milestones of the project. Further partners developed a strategy for a constant and dynamic dialogue with stakeholders to ensure a broad dissemination of the project results and the success of COMPETE.

The Consortium of COMPETE is coordinated by Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe (IAMO) and brings together academics, trade bodies, NGOs, agricultural co-operative, industry representative advisory services. In addition, the project will be supported by the group of societal actors, incorporating farmer, food processing and consumer associations, providing in-depth knowledge on the agri-food sector and speeding up the achievement of the project goals. The COMPETE project partnership consist of the following organizations:

- Leibniz Institut für Agrarentwicklung in Mittel- und Osteuropa (IAMO), Germany – the project coordinator
- Institute of Agricultural Economics (IAE), Romania
- Wageningen Universiteit (WU), The Netherlands
- Univerza na Primorskem- Università della Primorska Università del Litorale (UP), Slovenia
- Ceska zemědělska univerzita v Praze (CULS), Czech Republic
- Università degli Studi di Milano (UMIL), (DEPA), Italy
- University of Newcastle upon Tyne (UNEW), United Kingdom
- Ekonomski Fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu (BEL), Serbia
- Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Kozgazdasagtudományi Intezet (CERS-HAS), Hungary
- Uniwersytet Warszawski (UNIWARSAW), Poland
- Vod Jetřichovec, Druřstvo (VODJ), Czech Republic
- Potravinárska komora Ceske republiky (FFDI), Czech Republic
- Balkan Security Network (BSN), Serbia
- Asociația Română de Economie Rurală și Agroalimentară "Virgil Madgearu" (ARERA), Romania
- Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Ernährungsindustrie eV (BVE), Germany
- Federazione Italiana dell'Industria Alimentare Associazione (FED), Italy

For further information about the project, please visit the official website: <http://www.compete-project.eu>