**International delegation visits Catalonia’s good practices in gastronomy and education**

*With a wide and varied range of public and private initiatives, Catalonia is considered an international leader in projects that link Gastronomy and Education.*

**Catalonia hosts the second Interregional Exchange Visitof the Europe-wide project EUREGA (EUropean REgions of GAstronomy), to be held from 26 to 29 March in Barcelona. The meeting will revolve around local projects that link Gastronomy and Education, and Catalan experience in this field.**

Seven European countries, represented by 25 delegates from nine leading European institutions, will discover first-hand, analyze and debate good practice models developed in Catalonia. Catalonia is considered a leader in the field, due to a number of innovative ventures designed to communicate the values of gastronomy to all areas of society. These ventures are run at different centres across the country. Working sessions will focus on analyzing Catalonian experiences and their impact on gastronomic activities, as well as the challenge of stimulating and generating opportunities in the agro-food industry and local production.

**Health through food and exercise**
During the working sessions, delegates will also study the implementation of Catalonia’s Public Food Procurement Plan, the Health Department’s PAAS program for promoting health via physical exercise and healthy eating, and a range of programs designed to encourage good eating habits in school dining halls.

The organiser of the conference, also responsible for designing the working sessions, is PRODECA, the Catalan Agrifood Exports Promotion Agency. PRODECA is one of 9 partners that make up the EUREGA group.

**Catalonia, a leader in Gastronomy and Education.**

This EUREGA Interregional Exchange Meeting brings together Catalonia’s benchmark projects in gastronomic innovation, training and outreach, including:

* CETT, the international school for education and knowledge transfer in tourism, hotel management and gastronomy, affiliated to the University of Barcelona. CETT offers training and study programs at all levels (vocational training, graduate and postgraduate education, ongoing training for professionals as well as tailor-made courses for companies). CETT’s unique educational model is based on a team of teachers and professionals that combines academic rigour and broad experience, and the pursuit of specialised knowledge in hospitality and tourism.
* The ALICIA FOUNDATION, a centre for research into cooking, foods and culinary processes to improve eating habits, connecting them to the food and gastronomic heritage of the region.
* LABULLIGRAFIA, a disruptive project led by Ferran Adrià, based on a creative audit of the world-famous El Bulli restaurant, whose historical archive will be displayed according to the *Sapiens* methodology to encompass the scale of the legacy of knowledge, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship generated by Ferran Adrià and his team.
* The CULINARY INSTITUTE OF GASTRONOMY, a new cooking school whose mission is to transform the way we cook, with an educational philosophy based on professional training that applies innovative learning methods drawn from Silicon Valley and adapted to provide powerful solutions, in which technology, creativity and innovation are key.

**EUREGA: gastronomy as a** **cultural asset and necessary tool**

EUREGA is an INTERREG project that highlights the importance of gastronomy in a country’s policies and strategic decision-making. In 2016, Catalonia was chosen as European Region of Gastronomy. As a result of that experience, the EUREGA project was launched in 2018, with other European partners, to run between 2018 and 2022. EUREGA’s principal objective is to the inclusion and promotion of the importance and potential of gastronomy in EU strategy and policy at a regional and national level, as an asset and a distinctive element in regional cultural identity, capable of generating new opportunities for economic development.

Gastronomy, local and regional food heritage, is part of Europe’s shared cultural heritage and an important economic asset. Regional agrifood value chains and the cooperation they generate between different sectors – including the agrifood sector, tourism, the hotel business, education and others – offer significant potential for local development in the face of complex challenges, such as gastronomic uniformity and impoverishment and all that they entail, deriving from globalisation. EUREGA’s efforts are focused on highlighting the singularity of gastronomic heritage as a subject for protection and empowerment in public policy-making. These are the goals and the areas of work established by the 9 partners in the EUREGA project.

**Participating regions in EUREGA**

The 9 partners of the Eurega project are: Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch (Netherlands), Province of Noord-Brabant (Netherlands), ProAgria Pohjois-Savo (Finland), Northern and Western Regional Assembly (Ireland), Development Agency of South Aegean Region -READ S.A. (Greece), Sibiu County Council (Romania), Hajdú-Bihar County Government (Hungary), IGCAT (Catalunya) and Prodeca – Government of Catalonia (Catalonia).

**About Prodeca**

Prodeca is a public company of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Government of Catalonia. Its mission is to promote Catalan agrifood products, providing support services in marketing and internationalisation to Catalan agrifood businesses, introductory programs on export markets, diversification and consolidation in foreign markets, etc. Prodeca’s work is based on coordination with associations and agents that promote competiveness and internationalisation in the Catalan agrifood sector. Prodeca also organises business meetings between Catalan companies and different agents in national and international markets, and takes part in initiatives relating to Catalan gastronomy and the Mediterranean diet as a means of improving the standing of Catalan agrifood products and companies within Catalonia and around the word. Prodeca also takes part in various European projects relating to the competitiveness of Catalan companies, via action plans focused on gastronomy and the agrifood sector.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**