

Quality standards and authenticity to foster competitiveness of agrifood SMEs



NEWSLETTER N° 1

In this issue...

- Kick-off meeting of QUALIFY project.
- Blockchain in the agri-food sector.
- First QUALIFY internal Meetings.
- First QUALIFY stakeholder group Meetings.
- Partners meeting in La Vienne, France.
- Other activities

The kick-off meeting of the QUALIFY project(3-4 October 2019 in Barcelona, Spain)

The two-day event was organized by the Lead Partner-Government of Catalonia, Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food.



Blockchain in the agri-food sector

On October 28, in Barcelona was held the Blockchain day as a traceability and anti-fraud instrument in the agri-food sector, within the framework of the Barcelona Blockchain Week and the Qualify project.



First GENCAT internal Meeting

The meeting was held on Tuesday October 29, 2019 at 12:15 p.m. at the official headquarters of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food (DARP-Government of Catalonia) located in Barcelona.



First BBCI internal Meeting

The meeting was held at the premises of BBCI on Wednesday October 30 with the participation of all team members and representatives of the RPO Ministry of Economy –European Funds for Competitiveness Directorate General. The main aspects of the project were presented and the planned activities for the semester were discussed.



First CCIS internal Meeting

The meeting took place at the organisation's Headquarters on Monday October 21 in the Chamber of Agricultural and Food Enterprises. Participants were colleagues, who are experts on different fields and various subjects were covered such as Food Safety, Public Procurement for Food and Exports.



First ECCI internal Meeting

An internal meeting was organised at ECCI premises on 14 October 2019, presenting the project idea, objectives and main tasks in order to involve all colleagues. During the meeting all colleagues were informed about the project itself, its scope and aims as well as further details such as budget and timeline of activities.



First Region of Thessaly internal Meeting

The internal meeting took place in the Region of Thessaly's premises with the participation of members of the Department of Planning and Development and the Managing Authority of ROP of Thessaly 2014-2020.



First Chamber of Agriculture of Vienne internal Meeting

The meeting took place in the premises of Chamber of Agriculture of the department of Vienne (Nouvelle-Aquitaine) during which its members had the opportunity to be informed about the project, its expected deliverables and the forthcoming transnational meeting at the beginning of 2020



First GENCAT stakeholdergroup Meeting

On November 22, was held the first stakeholdersmeeting of the QUALIFY project "Quality standards and authenticity to foster competitiveness of agrifood SMEs". The event took place at the headquarters of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food.



First Chamber of Agriculture of Vienne stakeholder group Meeting

On 11th of September 2019, the first stakeholders meeting of the QUALIFY project was held at Agence de l'Alimentation de la Nouvelle Aquitaine where we had the chance to collaborate with and their mission. The meeting included different administrations working on the control of authenticity and the fight against fraud and we informed the about the next meeting with European partners in Poitiers and their possible collaboration in this meeting.



First BCCI stakeholdergroup Meeting

The stakeholder meeting was held at the premises of BCCI, Hall B on the 6th of December 2019. In total 22 stakeholder members attended the meeting including representatives from universities public bodies, branch associations and companies' members of the Chamber. The following topics were presented:

- multi funds implementation of a community-led local development (CLLD) approach;
- agroindustry in Bulgaria, structure, sectors, good examples successfully implemented by Bulgarian companies
- GS1 standards.



First Region of Thessaly stakeholders meeting

The first stakeholders' meeting took place on the 24th of January 2020, in the Region of Thessaly's premises with the participation of members of four Chambers of Commerce of the Region that represent SMEs in agri-food sector.



First ECCI stakeholders meeting

The first stakeholders' meeting took place on February, 11, 2020, together with participants from public administration and business associations from Estonia. The important decision-makers of the Estonian agricultural sector and the Ministry of Rural Affairs and other Ministries participated.



First CCIS stakeholders meeting

The meeting was held on 28th of January 2020 at Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, with the following agenda:

- presentation of relevant legislation and publications regarding food fraud, presentation of activities in our countries for quality control of products, for preventing food fraud activities and authenticity of food products,
- presentation of Qualify project and its activities, questionnaire results and current status regarding food fraud and quality control systems in



Slovenian SMEs

Partners meeting in La Vienne, France

On the 30th January of 2020, the Chamber of Agriculture of laVienne received Qualify partners' fora conference to share the results of our survey and also to set up the mutualpolicy learning of the five next months. Later in the day, there were interventions of three structures on the fields of fraud control and authenticity promotion to introduce to qualify partners how French's private and public entities deals with these topics.



Other activities:

Questionnaires to SMEs

All partners during this first project period conducted surveys to local SMEs in the Agrifood sector in order to investigate the:

- Improvement of the quality processes of agri-food SMEs.
- Fight against fraud in the sector.
- Promotion of the authenticity of its products

Report on the knowledgecapitalised from previous projects

During this period, all QUALIFY projects collected and evaluated several EU co funded projects , with a similar theme and different funding source. The final report reviews these projects and summarises the main learning that the QUALIFY project partners consider of relevance for the instruments.

Project summary

QUALIFY has been designed to foster the competitiveness of the SMEs in the agrifood sector by tackling a challenge that affects the involved regions and the whole EU (as stated by the European Commission):

- The improvement of the quality processes of these SMEs.
- The fight against the fraud in the sector.
- The promotion of the authenticity in their products.

Overcoming the barriers related to these challenges is to foster the reduction of costs, better chain values, better processes, and better products that will allow the tackled SMEs to grow and be more competitive in the national and international markets, where they need to enlarge their presence in front of larger companies, which are much less challenged by the presented topics.

To work in this direction, the project tackles the ERDF funds devoted to increase SMEs competitiveness in 7 EU regions/states which are representative of the EU geographical dimension and which incorporate agrifood and SMEs as core aspects of their respective RIS3.

The project aims at ensuring that when the projects funded under these schemes tackle agrifood SMEs they introduce aspects of quality, fraud prevention, and authenticity, which must complement the existing financial and non-financial instruments, enlarging the desired outcome: the growth of these SMEs.

The project also aims at enlarging the capacities of the managing authorities, relevant SMEs representatives and other stakeholders to better tackle these aspects and develop better and more efficient projects.

The main project outputs are: 7 policy instruments enlarged and improved through 7 action plans + monitoring systems, setting-up of a course with materials on the project topics for managing authorities and SMEs to foster an e-learning process, 35 stakeholder meetings, 4 dissemination events, 6 partner meetings with study visits, a continuous contact with national and EU institutions working in these topics, and over 50 best practices learned/exchanged.

Partners



Further information in our web: <http://www.interregeurope.eu/qualify/>