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*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*



Project no.: 613912

## **Project acronym: TRAF00N**

Project title: Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation

Instrument:  
FP7-KBBE COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ACTION  
(SUPPORTING ACTION)

**Activity 2.2:** Fork to Farm: Food (including seafood), health and well being

**Topic KBBE.2013.2.3-02:** Network for the transfer of knowledge on traditional foods to SMEs

## **Deliverable Report for D2.6**

*Guidelines for transferred innovation*

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<b>Dissemination Level</b>		
<b>PU</b>	Public	<b>X</b>
<b>PP</b>	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
<b>RE</b>	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
<b>CO</b>	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	



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*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*

## **1. Statement**

Deliverable completed

## **2. Use and Verification of Deliverable in TRAF00N**

### **Guidelines for successfully transferred innovations to SMEs**

During 2015-2016, Trafoon project has organized more than 55 Training Workshops (TWs) in 14 European countries with the focus on six different food product sectors: 1) grains, 2) fish, 3) vegetables, 4) mushrooms, 5) fruits and 6) olives, and general topics like food quality & food safety, and entrepreneurship. The main objective of the TWs was to allow the transfer of knowledge and innovation to SMEs, based on the analysis of the Inventory of needs (IoNs) previously performed during the Multi-stakeholder Workshops (MWs) at the beginning of the project.

TRAF00N knowledge transfer network interlinks researchers, knowledge transfer organizations and associations of SMEs on a European, national and regional level. The network acts as a mediator for the transfer of current innovative research in production and marketing of traditional food, and fosters entrepreneurship in the sector of traditional food producers.

The importance of knowledge transfer in the European food industry is obvious, especially in the case of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the food producing sector. These SMEs are increasingly under pressure due to the opening of new markets, an increasing demand of standardized and price competitive food products by the consumers, the rising importance of large retailers, and the need to conform to governmental regulations. To deal with this complex situation, the transfer of new technology and knowledge is essential, becoming an important subject of scientific research, as well as in economic and public policy.

Many obstacles that hamper the transfer of new scientific insights and innovation to SMEs have been identified, e.g. lack of trust, language and culture barriers, lack of ability to transfer knowledge to a non-specialist. Based on the experience in implementation of TRAF00N Training Workshops on Grains, this document collects best practices, practical information, lessons learned and recommendations for a successfully transfer innovations to SMEs.



## List of Training workshops

<b>France (INRA)</b>	19 November 2015	Seminar: Durum wheat and Pasta: innovation and tradition ("Blé dur et Pâtes: l'innovation au service de la tradition")	Campus de la Gaillarde, INRA - Montpellier SupAgro
	10 march 2016	Practical workshops (4): Durum wheat and Pasta: innovation and tradition ("Blé dur et Pâtes : l'innovation au service de la tradition - Ateliers pratiques")	Campus de la Gaillarde, INRA - Montpellier SupAgro
<b>Germany (SEZ)</b>	22 June 2015	Seminar: Tradition and Innovation in the Baking Industry	Bad Boll
	10/11 November 2015	Practical workshop: Ancient grains, gluten-free grains and marketing issues	Stuttgart
	5/6 July 2016	Practical workshop (international): Baking with traditional grains ("Backen mit Urgetreide") (with NBC, NL)	Stuttgart
<b>Ireland (UCC)</b>	14/15 May 2015	Seminar: Creating value in wheat and gluten-free based bakery production chain	Cork
<b>The Netherlands (DLO)</b>	12 May 2015	Seminar: The story of special grains: From Tradition to Innovation	NBC, Wageningen
	13 October 2015	Practical Workshop: Sour Dough, with spelt, emmer and wheat	NBC, Wageningen
	28/29 June 2016	Practical Workshop (international): Sourdough and ancient grains (with SEZ, DE)	NBC, Wageningen
<b>Poland (PAN-O)</b>	29 June 2016	Seminar: From tradition to innovation in buckwheat, oats and gluten-free	Warsaw
	12/13 September 2016	Seminar (international): Bonding tradition with innovation - successful strategies in food chain value; Session during Conference	Olsztyn
<b>Slovenia (UP)</b>	3/4 June 2015	Seminar and practical workshop: Buckwheat between tradition and innovation	Maribor



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*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*

## **Workshops contents and structure**

### ***Selection of transferrable knowledge***

The selection of the transferrable knowledge was based on the needs of SMEs, as identified by the questionnaires, and collated and structured in the Inventory of Needs (IoN) during the respective multi-stakeholder workshops. The first workshops were theoretical. In Ireland, the workshop was focussed on cereal products containing gluten and gluten-free. In France, the focus was on durum wheat products. In the Netherlands, the focus was on bakery products from traditional grains (such as spelt, emmer and einkorn); also included were nutrition and health aspects, and bakery from durum in an exchange with France. The German workshop also treated bakery products from traditional grains, with an emphasis on new marketing tools and concepts, and new products and related process technologies. In Poland, buckwheat, oats and gluten-free processing, production and marketing, and buckwheat as new alternative in the gluten-free diet were discussed. In Slovenia, the subject was buckwheat and the theoretical and practical workshops were combined in one two-day symposium; the practical workshop covered bread and pastry making from buckwheat. In France, Germany and the Netherlands, topics that found interest with the audience in the first workshop were selected for 4, 3 and 3 additional practical workshops with smaller groups (up to 20, and in one case, the first German practical workshop, 63 participants), respectively. Two of the three practical workshops in the Netherlands and Germany were combined into one; the German combined one also discussed brewing. In France the 4 practical workshops were held on one day under guidance of experts in durum wheat processing. Practical workshops in the Netherlands treated practical aspects of sourdough for obtaining high-value products from spelt, emmer and einkorn. In Germany, also sourdough was treated; in addition, baking procedures and marketing of gluten-free grains were discussed. The practical workshops also enabled the exchange of knowledge and experience among the participants. Subjects discussed in workshops also included authenticity of traditional grains raw material and products, and communication about the products (story telling).

### ***Preparation of training material***

For the first seminar workshops, training materials were in the form of flyers, hand-outs of power-point presentations, real product demonstrations, examples of packaging materials and designs, examples of used labels and their impact. Product demonstrations were integrated in the lunches of several workshops. Alternatively, presentations were available upon request or could be downloaded. For the practical workshops, hand-outs of the recipes were



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*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*

distributed to the participants. During the practical workshops, participants had the opportunity to work with real sourdoughs (prepared from the different grain types in advance by the workshop teachers) and to acquire experience on specific processing equipment.

## ***Preparation of promotional material***

For the promotion of workshops, their programmes and short enticing introductions were communicated through websites and printed flyers, which were distributed at preceding conferences and events. In Ireland, associations were contacted in order to promote the conference to small and medium enterprises, and in France, the National Platform on Transformation of plant-based products, in particular of durum wheat and other cereal crops, was involved. Also experts on marketing and product labelling were invited to provide expertise material. In the Netherlands, the bakery association NBC is itself partner in the TRAF00N project and communicated to its members through its own communication platforms.

## ***Structure of the workshop***

In most cases, workshops were held on one day, as SMEs only have limited time available for this sort of activities. Ireland was one exception with a 2 day workshop in the form of a symposium, split in one day focusing on cereal products in general and in one day focussing on gluten-free products. It contained oral presentations and discussion sessions after each presentation. Slovenia organised another two-day workshop in which seminar and practical workshop were combined. One day seminars were focussed on knowledge transfer on topics requested by the SMEs through the Inventory of Needs, and were held in the form of presentations by experts. The (one-day) seminar workshops also included sufficient time for discussions, e.g. in the form of a forum discussion at the end of the program. The practical (one- and two-days) bakery workshops started with a theoretical introduction on the grains and the dough types, followed by demonstrations and real hands-on work under the guidance of experts.

## ***Additional activities***

In the Netherlands and Germany, one day excursions were organized after the practical workshops, during which artisanal bakeries in the surroundings were visited to show their sourdough expertise and artisanal products. In Germany an additional field trip was organized to field trials of traditional grains at Hohenheim University. In France, the pilot semolina mill was visited to see relatively large scale production opportunities, still at the size at which SMEs work, but that could not be included in the workshop activities due to a required longer training period of participants. In Ireland, each day of the seminar workshop, a tour was offered through the cereal research department



# trafooon

*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*

including the chemical lab, the bakery, the bakery laboratory, as well as the micro-brewery and laboratory.

## **Designing and planning Workshops**

### ***Date (special considerations for SMEs)***

Based on feedback of SMEs and in particularly taking into account their time restrictions (each production day counts for an SME), generally intensive programs with a duration of 1 day each were organised. One workshop (Ireland) was organized in the form of a two-day symposium during a short holiday period (Ascension day). Dates can be found in the list of workshops above.

### ***Venue***

Generally, a venue was chosen that combined good accessibility with opportunities to show practical aspects. Thus, in Ireland an easily accessible hotel in Cork was used, from which tours to the research department of the organiser could be made. In France, the site of the National Platform at Montpellier was used that could demonstrate concrete innovation options and is located close to the teaching facilities of Montpellier SupAgro, where on site seminars can be combined with hands-on workshops. Likewise, in the Netherlands, presentation and practical facilities were combined in the building of the organizer NBC (and TRAF00N partner), which is located in the middle of the country, in Wageningen. In Poland, a hotel in Warsaw close to the airport was used.

### ***Invitations***

Invitations were sent around by e-mail to SMEs and advertisements were made. In France and the Netherlands, special invitations were handed over to SMEs that contributed to the interviews underlying the IoNs that were the basis for the workshop programmes. Furthermore, in France, invitations have been sent around to a large number of SMEs active especially in the South of France in the traditional durum wheat sector. In the Netherlands and Ireland, invitations were sent to bakeries, universities, farmers, branch organisations, millers, manufacturers, retail and importers of ingredients. As an indication of numbers of attendees, in Ireland, 96 people from 11 countries attended the two-day seminar workshop, in Germany 80, in Poland 46 and in Slovenia 90. In NL, 244 invitations for the seminar workshop had been sent, from which 110 participated. For the practical workshop, 50 invitations had been sent and 16 (the maximum number) participants were welcomed. At the international workshop in Germany, 25 participants from Germany and the Netherlands attended.





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*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*

## ***Participation of SMEs Associations as mediator***

Generally, the organization of the workshops was in the hands of the TRAFOON partners. In France, the Qualimediterranée organization acted as mediator in contacting the SMEs; however, it was realized that SMEs wanted to have a direct communication with the experts and organizers at the seminar and workshops themselves. In the Netherlands, organizer of the workshops was the NBC who is partner in TRAFOON and actually an SME association. In Ireland, SME associations were involved indirectly through the organizing UCC partner in TRAFOON.

## ***Registration***

Registration for the training workshops was provided via email and sometimes by telephone by the organizers. In France, the registration has been handled by the same persons who have been carrying out the interviews and/or has the direct contacts with the SME. In the Netherlands, a relatively small fee of € 25,- per person was asked for striking a balance between accessibility and engagement.

## ***Agenda***

Programmes needed to be balanced on the one hand, and compact on the other hand in accordance to the limited time that SMEs can afford to spend on workshops. Presentations of usually around 30 minutes (including a short discussion) were distributed across sessions of maximal 3 hours separated by coffee breaks and lunch in order to provide opportunities for 'digesting' the substantial amount of information received. At several workshops (Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia), additional time for general discussions was scheduled in a forum at the end of the workshop. In practical workshops, most of the time was devoted to hands-on activities during which experiences between partners and experts, and partners mutually could be exchanged. In all workshops, time for networking was generated during the coffee and lunch breaks, and in some cases, during the drinks at the end. The two-day form of the Irish workshop provided additional opportunities for networking during dinner and the social event. In addition, the excursions after the Dutch and German practical workshops provided opportunities for further interaction between participants during travelling and at the visited locations.

## **Lessons learned**

### ***What to avoid for a successfully transferred innovations to SMEs?***

- Avoid presenting dreams; SMEs need concrete and realistic information on potential innovations and the topics necessary for their achievement,



# trafoon

*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*

including information on potential obstacles. For instance, re-introduction of old grain varieties require the building-up of knowledge and expertise about availability and authenticity of starting materials (e.g. sowing seed quality and origin), cultivation practices (that may differ substantially from cultivation of conventional and modern wheat varieties), and grain-specific processing requirements (e.g. milling, dough preparation and handling).

- Avoid emphasizing subjects that are interesting to researchers, but are too far away from SME's daily business.
- Avoid tension between the content of the training programme and the available time: too many activities in limited time reduce the process of knowledge transfer and the ultimate value to the participants; create enough time to the participants to make notes, especially during practical workshops. Give enough attention to complex matters such as handling of different types of sourdoughs in maintenance and processing. Avoid duplications in talks.

## **General recommendations**

- Personal beforehand deliberation between expert and participant was seen as extremely important in order to develop the most relevant training program, and to raise optimum interest for attending the workshop.
- Showing that innovations are possible with key examples is a motivating factor for SME, provided that the hurdles are also clearly identified.
- Offering a well-balanced training programme based on providing new insights and creating the opportunity for hands-on experimenting with a diversity of methods is appreciated. For bakers, workshops need to be short, practical, to the point and inspirational.
- Providing a platform at which the SMEs can interact mutually is well appreciated. SMEs are eager to learn, and also very much willing to exchange their views with other participants, and to discuss their view with experts. In this regard, during the two-days Irish workshop, no time was available for (forum) discussions or breakout session, which were suggested as useful in appraisals by participants.
- A challenge is to bring small bakeries to travel abroad as was experienced with bakeries from Germany invited to travel to the Netherlands. The interest and motivation is there, only the time is lacking. The cross-border benefit, though, is great as processes and ingredients differ a lot from country to country. Hence cross-border support is a challenge to be addressed more in the future.
- Artisanal bakers are interested in the cultivation of their grains. Excursions to cultivation areas are recommended as part of the workshop, as was done in the international practical workshop in Germany.
- More attention to 'story telling' about ancient grains, to reach a broader consumers' public.





*Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation*

### **Specific considerations**

How to continue communication with the participating SMEs after the workshop and after the finish of TRAFOON?

Increase feed-back and after-care to the participants through

- social media, websites and apps,
- publication of informative, summarizing and easy-readable proceedings of the workshops

### ***Identified difference between countries***

The various countries treated different subjects (gluten-free in Ireland, traditional cereals [einkorn, emmer, spelt, oat] in the Netherlands and Germany, pseudo-cereal buckwheat in Poland and Slovenia). Practical set up of workshop programmes varied only in details, such as forums for discussion provided.