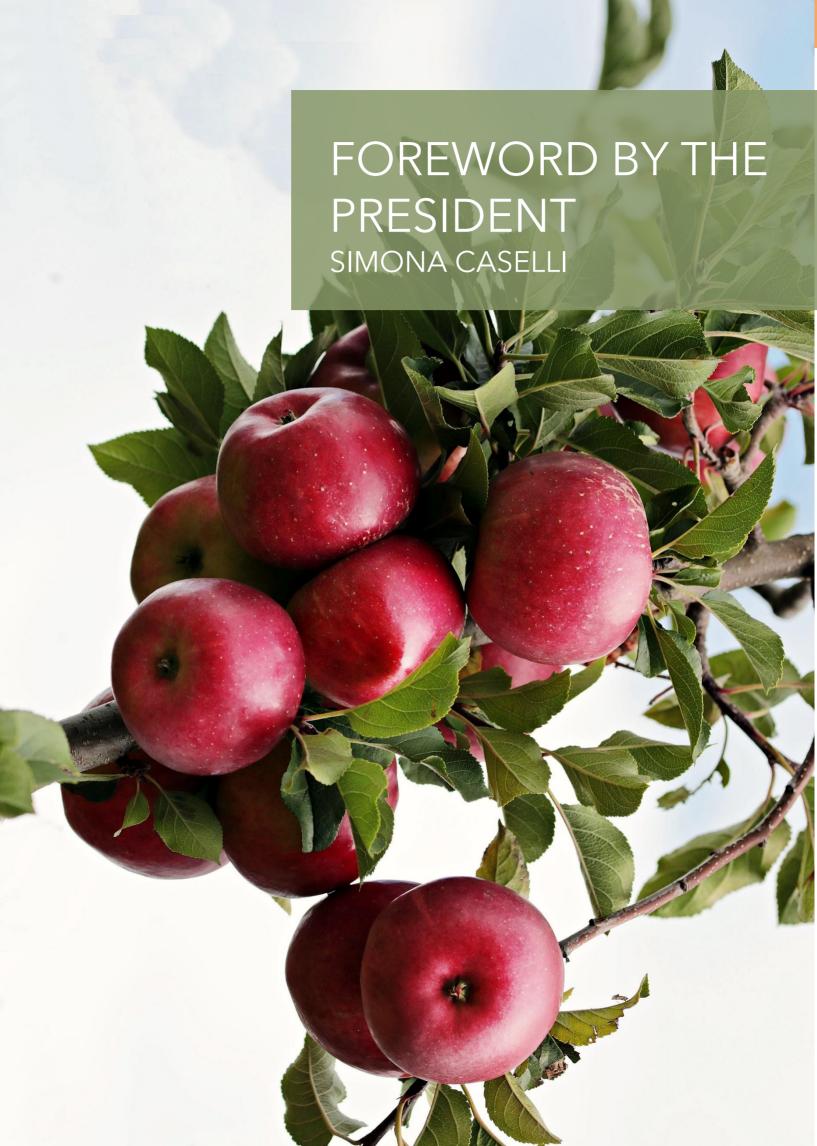




ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN HORTICULTURAL REGIONS

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Foreword by President Simona Caselli



I would like to thank the members who have renewed their confidence in me for these three additional years as President of AREFLH. Once again, we can draw up a very positive balance sheet as regards our actions in defence of the European fruit and vegetable sector in a context of major changes in European policies: the Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy, the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) among others.

The transition to the new programming period and the trialogues that preceded the adoption of the CAP regulations were a new opportunity to demonstrate that AREFLH is an essential stakeholder at the Brussels level. Indeed, several of the legislative amendments proposed by AREFLH were relayed by the MEPs, and we affirmed our position on the environmental regulatory framework of the Common Market Organisation (CMO) for fruit and vegetables in the new CAP.

On the theme of research and innovation, together with other European organisations, AREFLH submitted a vision paper to the European

Commission upon the publication of the new Horizon Europe research framework programme. European research projects are also an important part of our activities.

On promotion policy, in addition to the recommendations made on the European Commission's annual work programmes, important work has been undertaken within a coalition of European organisations.

More recently, AREFLH has joined the European Commission's "Expert Group on the European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism".

AREFLH has always remained in a positive dynamic during these three years; the number of members has not stopped growing, and its position in Brussels has been strengthened. The involvement of members has been important in the different working groups, and new ones have also been created. Despite the pandemic, we have been more active than ever, including in events of international stature.



Objectives and tasks

The Assembly of European Horticultural Regions is a European association created in 2000 on the initiative of a group of Spanish, French and Italian regions.

It represents the voice of the fruit and vegetable and horticulture producing regions and their producer organisations in Europe.

The specificity of the AREFLH, its strength, lies in its original structure. It is composed of two colleges: the College of Regions and the College of Producers. The complementarity of these two colleges allows joint work and common positions between regions and producers' representatives.

Our tasks are:

- to represent and defend the economic and social interests of the fruit and vegetable and flower sectors before the European and international institutions.
- to promote exchanges of experiences, partnerships and joint projects between associate members.
- to be a force for proposals on the main policies that impact the fruit and vegetable and horticulture sector.

PRESIDENT

Governance and administrative team



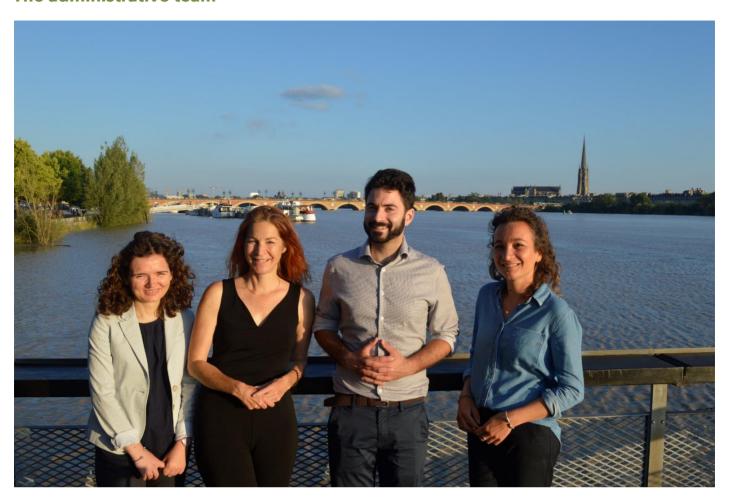
Simona Caselli, Delegated by the Emilia Romagna Region VICE-PRESIDENT

Jean-Louis Moulon, President of IDfel Val de Loire



BUREAUPresident, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary

The administrative team



From left to right: Eriselda Canaj, Laetitia Forget, Luca Contrino, Pauline Panegos

Secretary General : Pauline Panegos s.general@arefh.org

EU Policy Officer , AREFLH representative in Brussels: Luca Contrino eupolicies@areflh.org

European Projects Officer (Brussels) : Eriselda Canaj euprojects@areflh.org

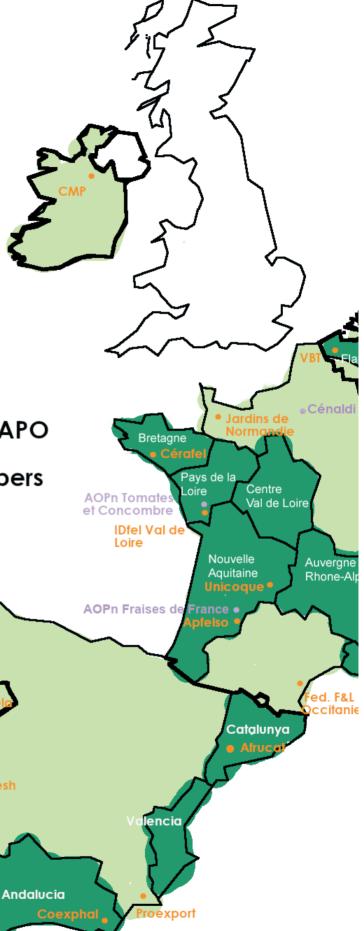
In charge of the communication and administration: Laetitia Forget, communication@areflh.org

Our members



OUR MEMBERS 2022

- Member regions
- Member PO and APO
- Associated members







Highlights 2021/2022

JUNE 2021

General Assembly

The 2021 General Assembly took place online, the first part taking place on 24 June with a European conference on Research and Innovation in the fruit and vegetable sector.

On 25 June, the public part of the General Assembly provided an opportunity to take stock of the negotiations on the reform of the CAP and the events organised during the 2021 International Year of Fruit and Vegetables. The digital event received guests like Gijs Schilthuis, Head of the Policy Unit (DG AGRI), Maria do Céu Antunes, President of the EU Council, and MEPs Herbert Dorfmann and Paolo De Castro.



On 30 June 2021, Pauline Panegos, General Secretary, and Luca Contrino, European Officer, visited the IDfel Val de Loire team and also visited a Fleuron d'Anjou packaging and shipping station.

Fleuron d'Anjou is a cooperative with 80 members specialising in vegetable production (1000 hectares cultivated, including old vegetables, bunch vegetables and bulbs). It is also known for being a leading flower producing cooperative (with 400 species and 2000 references). Fleuron d'Anjou's activities are spread over 3 sites located near Angers in France.



www.fleurondanjou.fr

JULY 2021

Italian fruit and vegetables in the context of the Mediterranean initiative

On 2 July Simona Caselli, President of the AREFLH, participated to the video-conference "Italian fruit and vegetables in the context of the Mediterranean initiative" organised by Cia-Agricoltori and the University of Catania.

Italian Oscar of the F&V sector

On 16 July, President Simona Caselli won the « Oscar dell'Ortofrutta Italiana 2021 » (Italian Fruit and Vegetable Oscar organised by the newspaper Il Corriere Ortofrutticolo in the province of Bari.



The President also had the honour of speaking on 22 July at the "Food for Earth - Environment, Climate and Energy" conference, organised on the sidelines of the G20. Simona Caselli spoke about the importance of farmers' organisations, of innovation for all and of carbon sequestration.

Also in July 2021, Mrs. Caselli represented AREFLH at a round table on "How to respond and restart after the pandemic: business resilience for the future of food systems and the next generation of the EU" organised by the World Food Forum and integrated into the Cibus Congress, in Parma, Italy.

SEPTEMBER 2021

Simona Caselli participated in the Think4Food webinar on innovation in food and agriculture systems (14 September) and in the Next Generation EU initiative together with MEP Paolo de Castro at the Festa Nazionale Unità Bologna (16 September).

Later, on the occasion of the 2nd World Food Waste and Loss Awareness Day, the President also participated in a pre-COP26 event on food waste and the possibilities to accelerate the transition. The event was organised by the Future Food Institute and the FAO.



With professional fairs having reopened after the prohibition of gatherings due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is with great pleasure that the AREFLH team (Simona Caselli, Jean-Louis Moulon, Pauline Panegos and Luca Contrino) went to the Macfrut fair (Rimini, 7-9 September 2021) and to Fruit Attraction (Madrid, 5-7 October 2021).



Jean-Louis Moulon, Simona Caselli, Pauline Panegos, Luca Contrino at Macfruit

On 24 September, Luca Contrino and Eriselda Canaj met, in a hybrid format, with representatives of the French member regions of the AREFLH in the offices of the Pays de la Loire Region's representation in Brussels.

This meeting was an opportunity to get to know the agriculture officers of the French regions in Brussels, as well as to exchange on the AREFLH's work programme and the regions' priorities.

EUROCASTANEA, the European chestnut network

Every year, the beginning of autumn is the time chosen by European chestnut producers to meet. In 2021 the European Chestnut Days were organised over 3 days in New Aquitaine (France) by the Union Châtaigne du Sud-Ouest, Interco Nouvelle-Aquitaine, in collaboration with the AREFLH.



Details on page 27

OCTOBER 2021

SG Marketing and the *Corriere Ortofrutticolo* organised a webinar on 28 October on the theme : "a sustainable food chain".

Simona Caselli attended and gave an update on EU policies and the Farm to Fork (F2F) strategy, as well as on its consequences for businesses.

She thus stated: "now that the processes of many of the measures envisaged by the F2F Strategy have begun, it is essential, in order to obtain a real competitive advantage, that our companies should be protagonists of this strategy, know about it and seize its opportunities by promoting good practices. In particular, it will be decisive to invest heavily in innovation and sustainability throughout the production chain of production. AREFLH will be a reliable reference point for companies in the sector involved in ambitious projects of innovation and development of increasingly sustainable supply chains".



Infographics @ European Union website

NOVEMBER 2021

Simona Caselli at the Science and Cooking Congress in Barcelona

On 8 November 2021, Simona Caselli spoke at the opening of the Science and Cooking Congress in Barcelona. She said she was honoured to be among such prestigious speakers as Ferran Adrià and Joan Roca. She was particularly impressed by the ideas, energy and innovations presented at the congress. She stated that "food is an excellent link in the chain of humanity, a fundamental issue on which we must all cooperate for a sustainable future".

ICOP 2021



Luca Contrino, in charge of EU policies at AREFLH spoke at the Congress of Producers' Organisations, on 24 and 25 November, organised by the GFA.

His presentation addressed the sectoral interventions for fruit and vegetables foreseen in the draft French, Italian and Spanish national strategic plans.

The ICOP was also an opportunity to exchange with the European Commission on the developments related to the new programming period.

JANUARY 2022

The Arcadia APO becomes a member of the AREFLH

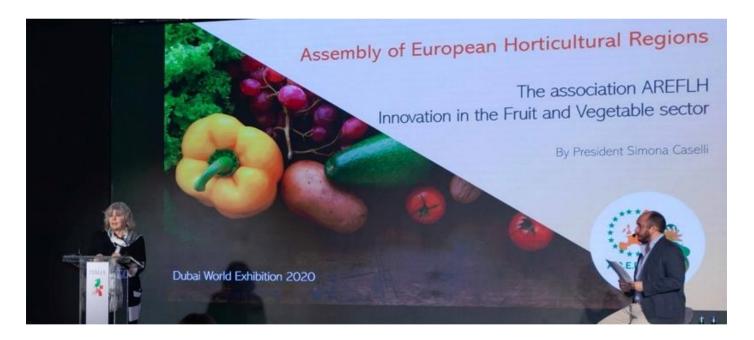


The Association of Producer Organisation Arcadia was born in 2020 and is the first fruit and vegetable APO in the Basilicata region (Italy). Its commitments are quality, market sustainability, the defence of producers' incomes, and innovation. The president of the APO, Francesco Nicodemo, emphasised that "in the agricultural sector, being grouped, and encouraging companies to do so, means being able to be labelled and to participate in the major challenges of contemporary agriculture. The aggregative experience that we are familiar with has enabled us to highlight the products of our regions in southern Italy, giving them the value they deserve.

AREFLH presentation at the "World Expo 2020" in Dubai

At the beginning of January 2021, at the Dubai World Expo 2020, Legacoop and the Italian pavilion highlighted in a conference the good practices in agriculture and fisheries, displayed the know-how of Italian cooperation in the field of sustainability. AREFLH brought its European touch to the initiatives mentioned.

During her speech, Simona Caselli presented the European projects in which AREFLH is a partner: CONSOLE, SmartProtect and LOWINFOOD. She also unveiled the association's new presentation video.



MARCH 2022

Meeting with the Piedmont region

On 14 March 2022 both AREFLH representatives in Brussels, Eriselda Canaj and Luca Contrino, met with representatives of the Piedmont region, a member of the AREFLH.

This meeting was an opportunity to discuss the main current issues for the Piedmont region: the deadlines for the implementation of the National Strategic Plans, the involvement of the region in the activities of the European hazelnut network Group Corylus Europae (see page 29)w, and the representation of the region in the thematic working groups of the AREFLH.

Simona Caselli: "AREFLH wishes to develop exchanges with all the representations of our regions in Brussels and to make sure that we are carefully listening to our members and their priorities.

MAY 2022

The main European hazelnut organisations create the "GROUP CORYLUS EUROPAE GROUP"

After several online meetings and a face-toface meeting in Piedmont in November 2021, Producer Organisations and research centres representing the 3 main hazelnut producing countries in Europe (Italy, France and Spain) have created the Group Corylus Europae.



Details on page 27

Simona Caselli meets representatives of the Commission and the European Parliament

In May 2022, Simona Caselli spoke with Diego Canga Fano from DG Agri, MEPs Simona Bonafè from the ENVI Commission and Herbert Dorfmann and Paolo De Castro from Comagri.

Among the topics on the agenda were the reusable packaging, the reform of geographical indications, the reform of the promotion policy, possible EU interventions in relation to inflation on production factors, the presentations in Brussels of the Life ADA project and the Atlas of good practices in sustainable fisheries, and finally the Farm to Plate strategy.

Simona Caselli thus communicated that "in the months to come, AREFLH will continue to play an active role for these different issues".



Work themes / Actions in Brussels

The position papers are available at www.areflh.org.

CMO/CAP

Throughout the year, the AREFLH has been in contact with the services of the European Commission and members of the European Parliament to exchange on the existing regulations and those contained in the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Current regulatory framework / impact of the health and geopolitical crisis

Within the framework of the current regulations for the fruit and vegetable sector, AREFLH has formulated a number of demands.

Response to the European Commission's initiative on the draft act amending the delegated act 2017/891. AREFLH welcomes the decisions of the European Commission:

- To increase the coverage of the value of the marketed production to 85% in case of loss of at least 35% of the value of a product due to natural disasters, climatic phenomena, plant diseases or pest infestations that are not under the responsibility and control of the producer organisation.
- To introduce coverage of 100% of the value of marketed production in case of loss if the producer organisation demonstrates to the competent authority of the Member State concerned that it has taken the necessary preventive measures against the above-mentioned phenomena.

In addition, AREFLH suggests:

- To amend the text of Article 23 of Regulation 2017/891 to **allow for the formation of mutual funds** to be used for income losses due to disease or pest infestations.
- To amend Article 31 of Regulation 2017/891 to allow for a maximum investment depreciation period of 10 years.

Request for renewal of the derogations to Regulation 217/892 (among others) granted in Regulation 2021/725.

Due to the strong spread of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in Europe, AREFLH has requested the renewal of the derogations to Regulation 2017/892 granted for the first time by Regulation 2020/532.

This included:

- The replacement of physical inspections (field inspections and on-site checks) with other evidence, such as geo-located photographs.
- In 2021, the on-the-spot checks referred to in Article 27 of Regulation 2017/892 shall cover a sample of at least 10% of the total amount of aid applied for in 2020, instead of 30% as provided for in the abovementioned Regulation.
- No application in 2021 of the rule requiring an on-the-spot check every three years for each producer organisation or association of producer organisations having implemented an operational programme.

Flexibility granted to Member States by Regulations 2017/891 and 2017/892.

Due to the war situation in Ukraine and the consequent sanctions, the European agricultural sector is facing exceptional difficulties in addition to the usual challenges associated with development and management programming.

In a letter addressed to DG AGRI, AREFLH underlines that **the flexibility granted to Member States by Regulations 2017/891 and 2017/892 is necessary and must be guaranteed**. Moreover, the exceptional situation should be taken into account in order to avoid negative judgements and sanctions during retrospective audits by the European Commission's auditors.

New CAP - transition period

<u>Proposals on the different drafts of the Delegated Regulation on Strategic Plans (Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/126).</u> The document suggests:

- To include climate change adaptation measures in the list of actions contributing to the 15% environmental expenditure requirement in operational programmes under the new programming period.
- To define the funding rules for Producer Organisations (POs) in the new programming period, in the same way as Article 30 of Regulation 2017/891 in the current programming.



- **To include financial incentives** for Member States and regions where a high level of organisation has been achieved.
- To apply rules equally between POs and APOs.
- Extend the eligibility of environmentally friendly and reusable packaging, in the context of new actions related to climate change mitigation or waste reduction objectives.
- A 100% financing for organic plant protection products to promote their use.

Promotion policy

As part of its actions related to promotion policy, the AREFLH responded to the public consultation on "EU agricultural and food products - review of promotion policy inside and outside the EU". The priorities listed by AREFLH members are the following:

- Building on current successes
- Greater clarity and more realistic targets for sustainable practices
- Ensuring a balance between promotion on the internal and external EU market
- Need for consistency with eligibility criteria, objectives and other legislation.

The AREFLH also submitted a response and position paper to the European Commission's consultation on the "Review of marketing standards for agricultural products". The main points raised are the following:

- A need to define sustainability
- A need for harmonisation of standards
- Ensuring that standards serve their intended purpose.

The AREFLH also reaffirmed its participation in the **European Promotion Coalition**, focusing on the annual work programme of the promotion policy for the year 2022.

Through video conference meetings with the cabinets of Commissioners Wojciechowski, Hahn, Dombrovskis, McGuinness and Breton, and letters co-signed as a member of the coalition, AREFLH expressed the following positions on the annual work programme of the promotion policy for the year 2022:

- Concern for the high allocation of funds to organic products in the work programme
- Concern about the very low allocation of funds for quality products in the work programme
- Highlighting the **lack of clarity on the definition of 'sustainability'** in the context of promotion policy
- Communication of the fear that the privileged position of organic products could lead to the **exclusion of certain sustainable practices** (e.g. integrated production)
- Concern for the adoption of restrictive conditions for certain product categories.

The European promotion coalition is made up of the following members: **AVEC** (Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU), **CEJA** (European Council of Young Farmers), **CELCAA** (European Liaison Committee for Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade), **CLITRAVI** (Liaison Centre for the Meat Processing Industry in the European Union), Copa-Cogeca, **EDA** (European Dairy Association), **EFFAB** (European Forum for Animal Breeders) farm), **EFOW** (European Federation of Origin Wines), **Europatat** (European Potato Trade Association), **ELO** (European Landowners Organization), **FoodDrinkEurope**, **Freshfel**, **OriGin** (Organization for an international network of Geographical Indications), **UECVB** (European Livestock and Meat Trades Union), **Spirits Europe**.



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Other public consultations

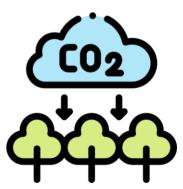
AREFLH also submitted responses to public consultations on the following topics:

• The School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme, including one response on the amendment of the Implementing Regulation 2017/39 (which clarified the documents required for the submission of projects related to the scheme). The second consultation on this topic deals with the amendment of the Delegated Regulation 2017/40 which extended the list of eligible educational actions, including actions outside the school such as visits to producer organisations from the sector.



AREFLH congratulated the Commission on its decision to broaden the list of eligible educational actions and sees it as an opportunity to collect data to better understand uptake of the programme and the possibilities for further development.

- The publication of the implementing rules on the marketing of organic products, which included a list of third countries from which certain categories of organic products have been recognised for equivalence in the EU internal market, as well as a list of third country control authorities and bodies recognised for equivalence purposes.
 - The AREFLH invited the Commission to ensure that there is equivalence between the European Union and third countries not only in terms of the criteria for the recognition of organic products, but also in terms of the powers of the control authorities, in order to ensure uniformity in the processes leading to the recognition of organic products.
- Certification of carbon sequestration. The AREFLH working group on adaptation to climate change proposes:
 - To avoid monopolisation of the purchase of certified carbon removals by a small number of large companies.
 - To better elaborate the carbon sequestration options already available on a large scale and those still in the experimental phase.
 - To avoid over-commercialisation of carbon sequestration certifications to the detriment of carbon reduction measures.
 - To allow companies to purchase certified carbon offsets provided they have demonstrated that they are taking action to reduce carbon emissions.
 - To create a registry of purchases of carbon sequestration certifications by individual companies.



Research and innovation / European projects

SMARTPROTECT

SmartProtect is a thematic network focusing on interregional knowledge sharing on SMART IPM solutions for farmers and advisors. The objective is to stimulate the knowledge flow in regional AKIS (Agriculture Knowledge and Innovations Systems) across the EU and connect them to the innovative potential of advanced methodologies for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in



vegetable production, while integrating precision farming technologies and data analysis. SmartProtect is a project funded by the EU under the Horizon 2020 programme.



Through its online platform, IPM-related knowledge on vegetable crops is collected, shared, managed and distributed. It serves as a reference for SMART IPM's highest innovation model, providing farmers with easily accessible and understandable materials, guidelines and support systems for vegetable crops.

The AREFLH hosted the third General Assembly of the project from 23 to 25 February 2022 in Bordeaux, after two years of meetings by videoconference.

The aim of the General Assembly was to provide an overview of the activities carried out during the 26 months of the project following the report sent by the European Commission, as well as to plan and set the next activities for the remaining months of the project. The project partners discussed in detail the upcoming project activities, such as the knowledge exchange activities that will be carried out mainly through workshops, seminars, training sessions and open days.

More information on https://www.smartprotecth2020.eu/

This project has received funding from the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020" under grant agreement no. 862563.

CONSOLE

The general objective of CONSOLE is to boost innovation in the lasting delivery of agri-environmental-climate public goods (AECPGs) by EU agriculture and forestry, through the development of improved contractual solutions (i.e. the relationship between public administration (at different scales) and farmers). The CONSOLE framework will better design and facilitate the implementation of innovative contractual solutions for the provision of AECPGs under various conditions across the EU.



As part of the CONSOLE project, AREFLH organised an online training course on 20 May 2022 entitled "The CONSOLE project, contractual solutions and lessons learned".

The objective of the training was to inform our members and our network about the contractual solutions adopted on the basis of the results of the CONSOLE research project, to report on the contractual solutions adopted, to report on the lessons learned and to provide testimonies from several contracts. During the training, examples of contractual solutions, their function, potential strengths and weaknesses were presented. The focus was on **performance-based payments, collective implementation/cooperation, land lease and supply chain approaches** that aim to provide environmental benefits and thus to facilitate their adoption.

More information on https://console-project.eu/

This project has received funding from the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020" under grant agreement no. 817949.



Eco-pasture in France, as part of the Console project. Photo credit: @Brest Green Spaces

LOW IN FOOD

LOWINFOOD supports the reduction of food loss and waste in the European Union by demonstrating innovative solutions using a multistakeholder approach that involves actors all along the value chain.

The overall objective of LOWINFOOD is to **codesign low-waste value chains with food chain actors** by supporting the demonstration of a portfolio of innovations in the fruit & vegetable, bakery and fish sectors as well as in-home and out-of-home consumption.



In addition, the LOWINFOOD project aims to provide demonstration and scaling up to enable replication in the market.

LOWINFOOD is an EU-funded project under the Horizon 2020 programme.

The CozZO application, an example of innovation tested in the project :

CozZO is a household food and personal supply management system, combined with a versatile grocery and meal planning system, that helps users avoid food waste by keeping track of what they have and when it expires. The system reduces users' product management efforts through suggestions and automatic updating algorithms based on predictive self-production technology.

During the project, the CozZo application will be tested in Finnish, Greek and Austrian households to calculate waste. The food waste generated should be collected or otherwise recorded before and during the use of the application (quantity and composition).

More information on https://lowinfood.eu/

This project has received funding from the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020" under grant agreement no. 101000439.

CUTE-SOLAR



At the end of 2021 AREFLH joined the consortium of CuTe-Solar ("Cultivating a Taste of Europe in Solar Greenhouses"), a promotion programme focusing on the EU internal market. Its actions are carried out in three EU countries: Spain, Germany and Belgium and consist mainly of a digital content dissemination strategy.

The target audience of the campaign is: parents of young families (18-44 years); children (6-12 years) and opinion leaders, especially food journalists and editors.

CUTE-SOLAR is co-financed by the EU under the EU's agricultural products promotion programme.

Its aim is to inform consumers about the advantages and benefits of consuming fruit and vegetables produced in European solar

greenhouses, as well as the contributions of this production method to environmental, social and economic sustainability.

In 2022, the Cute Solar campaign carried out a promotional and informative action at the gates of the European Parliament in Brussels to raise awareness about the quality and safety of fruit and vegetables grown in solar farms in Southern Europe and to inform consumers about this economically, socially and environmentally sustainable model.

The action was supported by Frank Schwalba-Hoth, founder of the German Green Party and former first member of the European Parliament for this party, who praised the farmers' effort and encouraged the consumption of greenhouse products.

More information on <u>cutesolar.eu</u>









THE EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORTS CAMPAIGNS THAT PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS



Product focus: tomato, chestnut, hazelnut, and pear

Tomato working group

AREFLH is committed to topics specific to the tomato sector, in particular to the topic of the tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV) which is spreading in crops in Europe and beyond.



AREFLH has made proposals to the European Commission:

- To prepare a transversal hygiene protocol for the tomato harvest period.
- **To create a stakeholder group** managed at EU level and linking actors at all relevant stages of the tomato value chain.
- **To support for the development of a vaccine** against ToBRFV as well as tomato varieties resistant to the virus.

In a videoconference meeting with DG AGRI and DG SANTE regarding the aforementioned document, the following points were highlighted:

- The confirmation of the adoption of Regulation 2021/1809 (amending Regulation 2020/1191), introducing the obligation to implement hygiene rules under the responsibility of the competent authorities of the Member States.
- The introduction of a minimum rate of control for consignments of seeds and plants for planting entering the Union, set at 20% of the total quantity (rising to higher percentages for certain countries).
- The confirmation that the new regulation also provides emergency funding for ToBRFV, on a similar model to the planned support for halymorpha halys in 2020.

EUROCASTANEA - the European chestnut network

Like every year, the actors of the European chestnut sector met for **Eurocastanea**, the **European Chestnut Days**, organised in the New Aquitaine region (France) and online.

The event took place in two parts: physical meetings in Corrèze and Haute-Vienne, and then online with an international webinar.





Technical visits were organised in agroforestry and high density orchards. The participants also visited a producer organisation and the Tech-Châtaigne trade fair in St-Yrieix-La-Perche. These two days were an opportunity to receive a delegation of European producers. Indeed, it is the diversity and quality of the exchanges between international professionals that make these European meetings a success every year.

A double online conference was also held to unveil the 2021-22 crop forecast figures for the main producing countries in Europe, followed by a round table on trade, market trends and consumption and a focus on disease and pest management.

The organising committee of the European Chestnut Days 2021 was composed of the « Union Interprofessionnelle de la Châtaigne Sud-ouest France », the « Comité Interprofessionnel de la Châtaigne du Bas limousin », the « Syndicat des Producteurs de Marrons et Châtaignes du Limousin, the Association du Marron et du Châtaignier Limousin », Interco Nouvelle-Aquitaine, AREFLH and the AANA

More information on Eurocastanea: http://www.eurocastanea.org/

Interpera - international pear congress

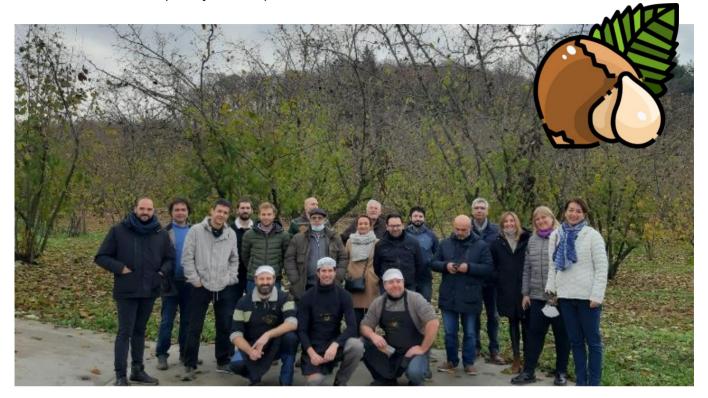
The 2021 edition of Interpera took place online. The event aims to bring together producers and actors in the international sector around common technical and economic themes.



AREFLH, the main organiser of the 2021 digital event, brought together 20 speakers from the 6 main producing countries in Europe: Italy, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal. In addition to an analysis of the past and future campaigns, the second theme was trade, followed by a session on pear consumption trends in Europe. The speakers at this last round table agreed that **communication on pears** (on their health benefits, on their flavour) remains the key to boosting the market

Hazelnut - creation of the Group Corylus Europae

After several online meetings and another one in Piedmont in November, the Producer Organisations and research centres representing the 3 main hazelnut producing countries in Europe (Italy, France and Spain) have created the Group Corylus Europae.



Together they represent almost 80% of European hazelnut production and they have set themselves the following goals:

- Being a **network for the exchange of information** on all matters concerning the European hazelnut;
- Setting up **joint actions**, in particular with the European Union, in favour of the hazelnut production sector in Europe;
- Building together a common identity and promote a sustainable and quality European hazelnut production.

The aim of the group is to guarantee food sovereignty and no longer depend on imports for 80% of the European market. While Europe produces between 50 and 150.000 tonnes of hazelnuts, it imports 500.000 tonnes each year, mainly from Turkey. This objective can be achieved while developing a sustainable and quality production of hazelnuts, perfectly traced, healthy, safe and respectful of the environment.

In a letter addressed to the European Commission, Group Corylus Europae warned of the main difficulties encountered by the European sector, with protection against pests (weevils and Asian stinkbugs in particular) as the main issue.

Concrete proposals are being made and the Group calls on the Commission and the Member States:

- **To work in a coordinated way,** promoting and facilitating procedures for mutual recognition of authorised products between France, Italy and Spain.
- To promote minor use processes and accelerate exceptional authorisations where necessary.

• To approve a specific programme of research, field trials and transfer, both of alternative control systems for the main pests and diseases of the production, as well as alternative systems or plant protection products for the control of new pets. In this sense, the group recalls that the European Commission committed itself, during the annual bilateral meeting with Turkey on the hazelnut market on 30 September 2021, to promote a joint EU-Turkey research plan with the objective of sharing lines of research and information on new pests, especially for the control of *Halyomorpha halys*.

Group Corylus Europae also declared in its letter to the European Commission that the **effects of climate change** (drought and heat stress, increased pests, tree imbalance, etc.) threaten European hazelnut production.

Lastly, the last point of the letter focused on the fact that hazelnut production, which has one of the best levels in the world with regard to health and the environment, is also one of the most fragile.

GroupCorylus Europae will meet several times a year to exchange on the common problems of the European hazelnut sector; AREFLH will handle coordination for the group.

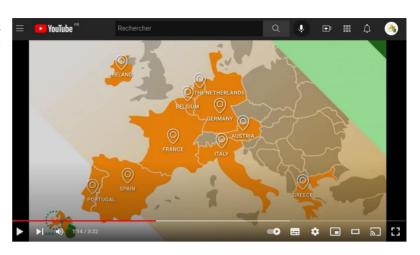




Publications / Communication

In January 2022 the AREFLH summarised its main missions in a 3-minute video. Scan the QR code and watch it on YouTube.





Our means of communication

- The website <u>www.areflh.org</u>
- Our weekly emails (AREFLH flashnews) to members of the association only, Regions and POs/POs, on the news of the sector and the European institutions
- The monthly public newsletter sent to members and subscribers. It includes a review of the
 association's activities, information about our members, news from the sector and the EU, as well
 as the agenda of fruit and vegetable events in Europe. Read the newsletter
- The Twitter account <u>@areflh</u>.



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