

ASSEMBLY OF
EUROPEAN HORTICULTURAL
REGIONS



ACTIVITY REPORT
2022-2023



ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN HORTICULTURAL REGIONS

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EDITORIAL BY THE PRESIDENT

SIMONA CASELLI



Photo © Fabrizio Dell'Aquila

The mandates of the AREFLH presidency were renewed during the general assembly of 2022, and I would therefore like above all **to thank the members for their reiterated trust** in the work that has been undertaken for the past six years, in tandem with the Vice-President Jean-Louis Moulon. We can congratulate ourselves on the significant progress and actions carried out within the framework of the strategic project adopted in 2015. The role of AREFLH in representing the European fruit and vegetable sector is **increasingly recognized by European institutions** and this recognition has enabled us to achieve great successes. **We are a source of proposals** at the level of European policies concerning the sector.

The 2022 General Assembly also validated the creation of **a third college of members within AREFLH who bring additional expertise and representativeness.**

The expertise of our members has enabled us to carry out very important work within the framework of the current European legislative process, with **decisive regulatory revisions for the future of the sector**, in particular within the framework of the Green Deal.

We defended our positions by responding to the public consultations launched by the European Commission, and by meeting the various Directorates General concerned (DG AGRI, DG ENV, DG SANTE).

Our work has been rewarded by the favorable decision of the European Commission to allocate us **seats in the various Civil Dialogue Groups**. Thus, we will even better carry the voice of our members and actively participate in decision-making on the various European policies. **AREFLH has also joined the EU CAP network**, which aims to share knowledge and information on the agricultural and rural policy of the European Union.

Our involvement in European projects allows us to disseminate the results to producers to enable them to find technical solutions to the many challenges they face.

Finally, AREFLH supports information exchange networks on specific products such **as pears, hazelnuts and chestnuts**. They make it possible to share the problems linked to these productions and to reflect together on the common actions to be implemented.

On all these themes, substantial work is undertaken by our experts from the three colleges, which is what makes the strength of our network.

For this new mandate, I wish to continue on this path, to enhance the expertise of our members, and also to increase the associative base for even more representativeness in the service of European fruit and vegetable production.



ABOUT AREFLH

Objectives and missions

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.

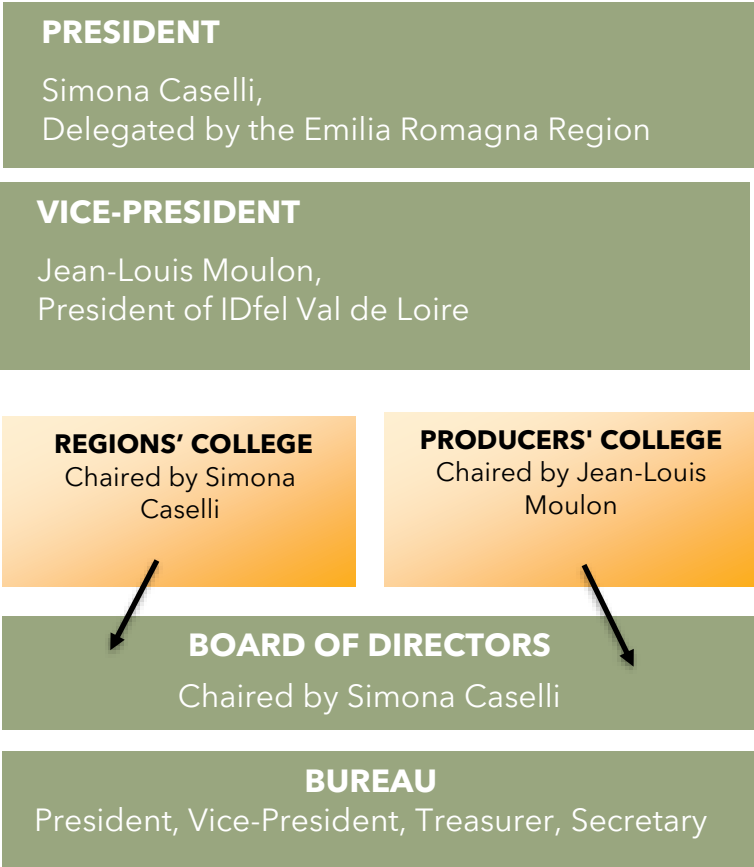
It represents the voice of the fruit and vegetable and horticulture producing regions and their producer organisations in Europe.

The specificity of the AREFLH, its strength, lies in its original structure. It is composed of **three colleges: the College of Regions, the College of Producers and the College of obverse Regions**, consultants and experts. 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.

Governance and administrative team



The AREFLH team



From left to right:

Luca Contrino, Laetitia Forget, Simona Caselli, Jean-Louis Moulon, Eriselda Canaj, Pauline Panegos

Image © Filippo Corbo

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

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

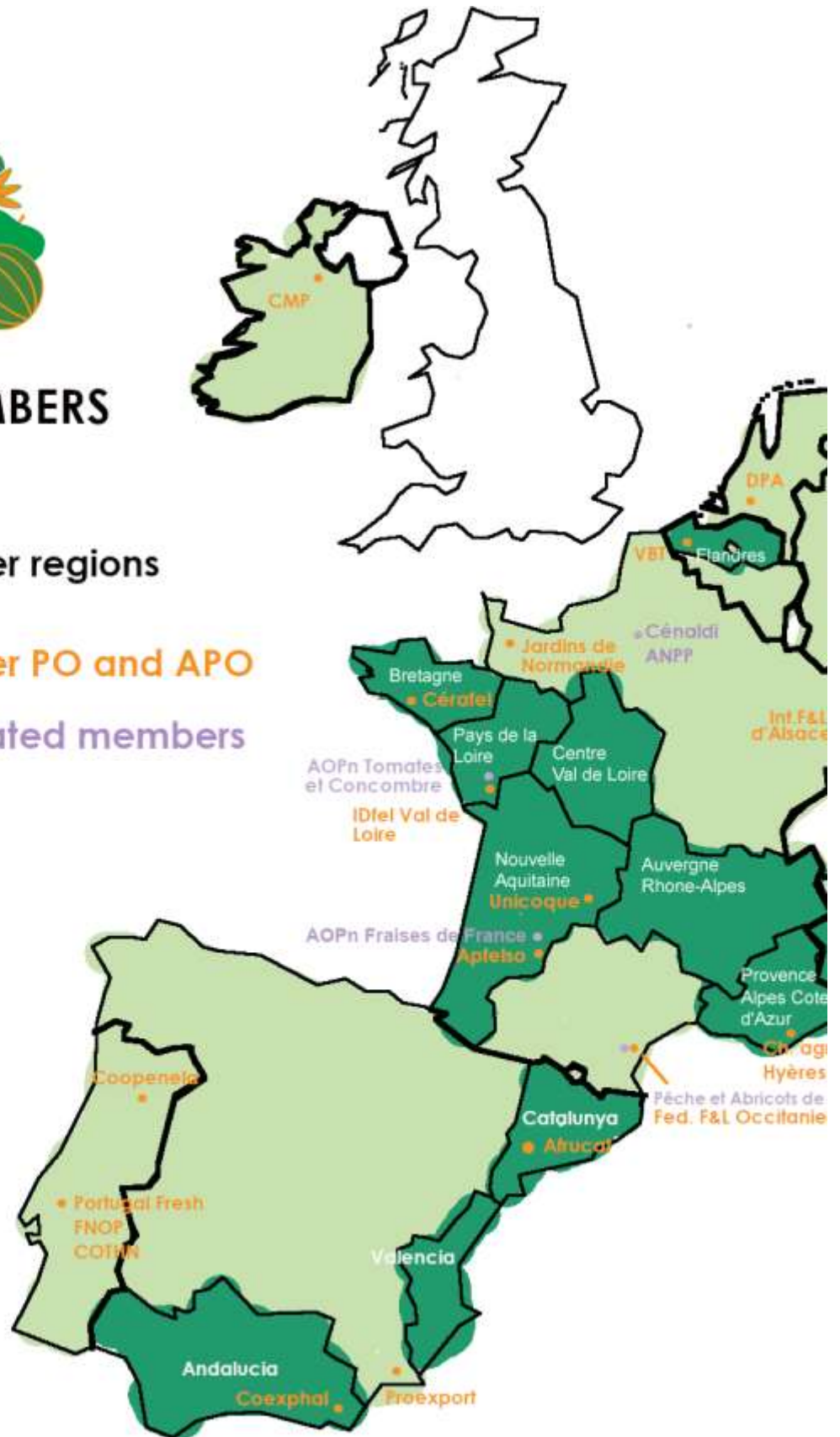
European Projects Officer (Brussels) : Eriselda Canaj
euprojects@areflh.org

Communication and Secretariat Officer: Laetitia Forget
communication@areflh.org



OUR MEMBERS 2023

- Member regions
- Member PO and APO
- Associated members





A photograph of an artichoke field under a clear blue sky. The background is filled with rows of artichoke plants, their green leaves and developing heads visible. In the foreground, a single artichoke head is shown in close-up, highlighting its layered, scaly structure. A semi-transparent green rectangular box is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing the text.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2022-2023

Highlights for 2022/2023

JUNE 2022

AREFLH General Assembly in Trento, Italy

During the 2022 General Assembly Simona Caselli and Jean-Louis Moulon were re-elected respectively President and Vice-President of the association. The Board of Directors was also renewed on this occasion.



Interpera in Rotterdam



The 13^{ème} edition of Interpera, the **international pear congress** (28-30 June 2022), was co-organised with DPA (Dutch Produce Association). Participants enjoyed an intense three-day programme in and around Rotterdam.
(see page 28)

Interpera is an itinerant event, organised every year by AREFLH and a local partner from a pear producing country.

AUGUST 2022

Simona Caselli at the inaugural conference of the "Emilio Sereni" Landscape School

During the conference Mrs Caselli emphasised, among other things, that the landscape is a valuable element in horticulture.

The inauguration was dedicated to the relationship between landscape and infrastructure, as the result of man's inevitable need to move through space, to connect places and people, goods and cultures, cities and countryside.

Eriselda Canaj at the International Horticultural Congress (IHC) - Angers



The 31^{ème} edition of the IHC was held in Angers (France) from 14 to 20 August 2022, bringing together more than 2,000 delegates from 100 nationalities and comprising more than 25 thematic symposia.

Within the framework of the Smartprotect EU project, Eriselda Canaj represented the AREFLH on a stand presenting technology that are part of the project (see page 22).

SEPTEMBER 2022

Simona Caselli speaks out on the draft EU regulation on the sustainable use of pesticides and on the mobilisation of the AREFLH

Simona Caselli spoke on 8 September to the Italian newspaper *Il Corriere Ortofrutticolo* about the draft EU regulation on the sustainable use of pesticides.

Simona Caselli at the Future Food Institute bootcamp

Simona Caselli represented AREFLH on 9 September at the closing conference of a boot camp organised by the Future food Institute and the FAO at the Centre for International Studies on Mediterranean Food, in the town of Pollica, Italy.

The aim of this boot camp is to investigate and reflect on sustainability issues, with a focus on local and global regeneration. After the boot camp participants are invited to put their knowledge into practice to become "climate shapers".



Eurocastanea: the European Chestnut Days in Italy

The AREFLH participated in the European Chestnut Days. In 2022 the event was organised in Italy, 80 km from Naples, in Montella, from 12 to 14 September. The Italian Minister of Agriculture Stefano Patuanelli, the European deputy Paolo De Castro, Pasquale Di Rubbo of the European Commission, and a representative of the FAO answered positively to the invitation of the organizers. (see page 27)



OCTOBER 2022

Fruit attraction - Madrid



ICOP

Luca Contrino attended the 2022 edition of the ICOP, the International Congress of Producer Organisations organised by GFA Consulting, which took place from 12 to 14 October in Weiz (Austria).

Luca Contrino at the Global Food Crisis conference



The Global Food Crisis conference organised was organised on 25 October 2022 by the European Parliament, in the presence of Commissioner Wojciechowski. It brought together several speakers on two topics: the agreement on cereal exports to Ukraine and solving the world food crisis. It was on this later panel that Luca Contrino represented the AREFLH.

The objective of this panel was to identify the reasons for the global food crisis and to propose solutions to return to a normal food situation.

NOVEMBER 2022

Simona Caselli at the conference on the Life ADA project in Brussels

The objective of the project is to provide practical support to the agricultural sector and to strengthen farmers' skills to cope with and withstand climate change. The Emilia-Romagna region is the pilot region. Other regions like Lazio, Veneto and Tuscany will follow. The project concerns three supply chains: fruit and vegetables, wine and dairy products. More information: www.lifeada.eu/en

Novasoil project kick-off meeting

The kick-off meeting took place by video conference on 29 and 30 November. More information on page 23.



Participation in various conferences organised in Brussels

Simona Caselli and Luca Contrino represented the association at the EU CAP Network's Forum on Good Practices in the agrifood chain during the conference on "**Mediterranean Food - Conviviality, Sustainability and Innovation**", and also at the conference on "**Innovation to reduce soil pollution**" at the Committee of the Regions.

DECEMBER 2022

Final conference of the CUTE SOLAR project

The closing event of the project took place on 1^{er} December in Brussels. A conference was organised in the European Parliament with the support of MEPs Aguilera, Zoido and De Castro (see page 26).



Presentation on women's work in agriculture in Italy

Simona Caselli participated on 14 December 2022 in an initiative on women's work in agriculture in Italy. The event was organised in Bari by CREA, the Italian Council for Agricultural Research and Agricultural Economics.

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2023

INSTITUTIONAL MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS

Meeting with DG AGRI

Simona Caselli and Luca Contrino met with representatives of DG AGRI. The meeting was an opportunity to start a discussion on the themes on which the AREFLH is working, such as packaging, pesticides, and the publication of the regulation amending the delegated regulation establishing the conditions for sectoral interventions in operational programmes (Regulation 2022/126).

Meeting with DG ENV

AREFLH organised a hybrid meeting with DG ENV on 17 January. This meeting was organised to highlight some of the sector's concerns regarding the draft regulation amending the rules on packaging and packaging residues.

Presentation meeting with the Committee of the Regions

A hybrid meeting was also organised with the Committee of the Regions on 17 January. The objective was to present the activities of the AREFLH, as well as to establish themes of common interest such as crop protection, the legislative framework for a sustainable food system and the certification of carbon sequestration.

Luca Contrino also made a face-to-face intervention at the stakeholder consultation organised by the Committee of the Regions on the legislative framework for a sustainable food system.

The intervention emphasised the need to **define sustainability in economic, environmental and social terms**, the need to define responsibilities at each administrative level (European, national, regional, etc.) and how to organise the labelling of products according to different means of "sustainable" production.

Presentation meeting with MEP Camilla Laureti



Jean-Louis Moulon, Pauline Panegos, and Luca Contrino met with Italian MEP Camilla Laureti in Brussels on 24 January.

The meeting started with a presentation of AREFLH and later highlight the actions in progress in Brussels: packaging, energy, sustainable use of pesticides and the legislative framework for a sustainable food system.

Mrs. Laureti confirmed her willingness to start an exchange with the AREFLH on these themes as well as on the programme stimulating the consumption of fruit and vegetables in school.

AREFLH meeting with the EU CAP Network team

Simona Caselli, Pauline Panegos (by video conference), Luca Contrino and Eriselda Canaj met with Elena García Garrido (Network Contact Point) at the EU CAP Network offices in Brussels on 26 January.

First the objectives of both organisations were presented, then followed a discussion on the possibilities of collaboration.



Meeting with DG SANTE

Jean-Louis Moulon and Luca Contrino, accompanied by Laurianne Le Leslé (French APO Tomatoes and Cucumbers), Luc Vanoirbeek (VBT) and Wim Rodenburg (DPA), met representatives of DG SANTE in their offices in Brussels on 2 March 2023.

The purpose of the meeting was to present AREFLH to the departments of DG SANTE responsible for the labeling of agri-food products, to establish communication channels on the revision of the INCO regulation currently being developed, and the potential challenges of this review for the fruit and vegetable sector.

Civil Dialogue Groups

- AREFLH participation to sit on five Civil Dialogue Groups of DG AGRI was validated, the themes they deal with are related to the new programming:
- CAP and Strategic Plans
- Environment and climate change
- Quality and promotion
- Organic Agriculture
- International aspects of agriculture.

MEETINGS WITH DELEGATIONS FROM EUROPEAN REGIONS IN BRUSSELS

Throughout the year 2022 Eriselda Canaj and Luca Contrino met with delegations from the AREFLH member regions in Brussels. These meetings were an opportunity to review the current work themes, to exchange with the member regions on their work priorities and on the actions to be carried out within the framework of the AREFLH.

These visits aim to ensure an active collaboration between the AREFLH and its regions, to listen and be as close as possible to their priorities with regard to the fruit and vegetable sector.

These meetings also provide an opportunity to network with non-member organisations.

- **June 2022: Delegation from the Valencia region**
- **July 2022: Delegation from the Catalonia region**
- **September 2022: delegation from the Andalusia region**
- **October 2022: Delegation of the Extremadura region** (a non-member region)
- **December 2022: video conference meeting with the Lazio region**





WORK THEMES & ACTIONS IN BRUSSELS

Work themes and actions in Brussels

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

Common Agricultural Policy and Common Market Organisation for F&V

AREFLH monitored the developments related to the transition to the new CAP and the regulations governing it. Several meetings with DG AGRI have been organized in 2022 and early 2023 to clarify certain elements of the legislation currently being drafted.

These meetings helped to clarify certain issues related to the draft regulations governing the conditions for sectoral interventions in the Strategic Plans as well as the conditions governing the payment of advances for operational programmes:

- The admissible costs in the operational programmes considering the very uncertain geopolitical context.
- The conditions to be met in order to receive advance payments in operational programmes.
- The final evaluation of the producers' operational programmes by the European Commission.
- The possibility for eco-schemes to contribute to the objective of 15% of environmental expenditure for operational programmes. The Member State responsible must ensure that there is no double financing (Member States being responsible for financing the eco-schemes, and the EU contributing to the financing of environmental actions).

Promotional policy



Image copyright ©Unsplash

Public consultation on the revision of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

In July 2022 the AREFLH responded to the public consultation launched by the European Commission. The members of the AREFLH underlined:

- promoting sustainability requires **key definitions**,
- the need to promote **holistic approaches** rather than fragmented target setting,
- the possibility of **adapting the initiatives carried out under the aegis of the programme as much as possible to the cultural and food context of** the participating countries,

- the importance of **taking the whole supply chain into consideration with regard to** the sustainability of proposed initiatives.

Read the full document on www.areflh.org (About us >Position statements)

Other public consultations

New genomic techniques

AREFLH responded in July 2022 to the public consultation on the use of new genomic techniques. The following points were highlighted:

- The need for a **clear definition of sustainability**,
- The potential gains inherent in the establishment of **a legal framework** around new genomic techniques,
- The issue of **intellectual property**,
- The need to **assess the impact of crops derived from new genomic techniques** on existing crops, on ecosystems and on health.

Read the full document on www.areflh.org (About us >Position statements)

Sustainable food system

After reacting to the publication of the impact assessment on a sustainable food system, AREFLH members have published a document to accompany the response to the public consultation.

The documents focuses on the following points:

- The **lack of clear definitions for sustainability** and the need to clarify how to label sustainability on sustainably produced products,
- The **absence of packaging-related questions** in the consultation questionnaire,
- The **role of political will** in achieving a sustainable food system.

Read the full document on www.areflh.org (About us >Position statements)

Draft Regulation on the sustainable use of pesticides

After responding to the public consultation on the sustainable use of pesticides, AREFLH prepared comments on the draft regulation that has been drawn up by the European Commission on this same topic.

AREFLH members have identified the following points as causes for concern:

- The very limited effective time to obtain the reductions in use required before 2030.
- The unequal pressure on the Member States due to the different productions and therefore different phytosanitary protection requirements.
- The risk of a regulatory imbalance with third countries exporting to the European Union.
- The need to take into account the availability or absence of alternatives for certain phytosanitary products.
- Lack of information on financial support and technology transfer to farmers to meet reduction targets.

Read the full document on www.areflh.org (About us >Position statements)

Draft regulation on the certification of carbon removals

In 2022, the AREFLH prepared a position paper in response to the publication of the draft regulation dealing with the certification of carbon removals. The members raised the following concerns:

- **Lack of conditionality** for the purchase of certified absorbers,
- **Lack of clarity on the rules for other greenhouse gases**,

- Lack of detail regarding the authorities that will be required **to monitor certification and the purchase of certified carbon uptakes.**

Read the full document on www.areflh.org (About us >Position statements)

Draft Regulation on Packaging

In 2022 and early 2023 AREFLH has started working on the draft regulation modifying the rules for packaging and packaging residues.

The points voiced by AREFLH include:

- The lack of easily recyclable or reusable alternatives for certain products
- The need to take into account the different requirements of different products
- The need to guarantee the same requirements for products imported from third countries

AREFLH has adopted a transversal approach to communicate the concerns of its members on this issue, having obtained a meeting in January 2023 with the Commission's DG ENV, as well as using meetings with the Committee of the Regions and with MEP Camilla Laureti to communicate these concerns and establish several channels of communication to express concern.

Research and innovation / European projects



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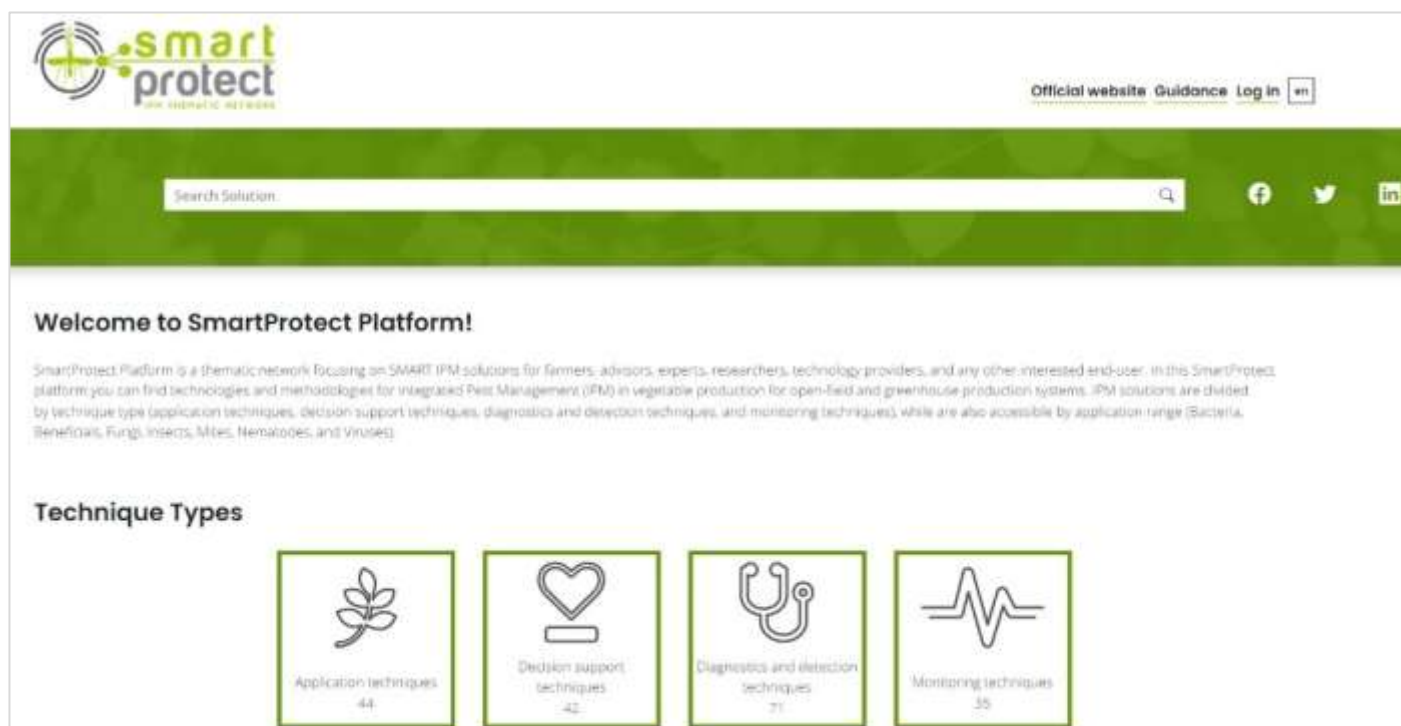
SMARTPROTECT

The SmartProtect project is a **thematic network** focusing on interregional knowledge sharing on **SMART IPM solutions for farmers and advisors.**

Its objective is to **stimulate the flow of knowledge** in regional **AKIS** (Agriculture Knowledge and Innovation Systems) across the EU and to connect them on the innovative potential of advanced methodologies for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in vegetable production, integrating precision farming technologies and data analysis.



During the project, a **SmartProtect platform** has been developed and is now available free of charge to all interested parties at www.platform.smartprotect-h2020.eu/en.



Screenshot extracted from the internet SmartProtect platform

The platform contains a total of **183 innovative IPM solutions** for vegetable pests for end-users such as farmers, agricultural advisors, SMEs, researchers, industry members, aiming to provide access to new available information.

IPM solutions can be found by type of technique or by application range. The platform is available in **12 languages** (Czech, Dutch, English, Estonian, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Latvian, Portuguese, Slovenian and Spanish).

In August 2022 AREFLH was present at the **International Horticultural Congress (IHC)**. The congress was a real opportunity for exchanges, knowledge transfer, partnerships, business and dissemination of scientific and technological advances on an international scale. The themes discussed at the congress were the following:

- Competitiveness of sectors and skills
- Food, health and well-being of citizens
- Sustainability of production systems
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation.

AREFLH actively participated in a presentation on **alternative control methods, in which it presented an e-poster** on SmartProtect. In addition, AREFLH dedicated the exhibition stand to IPM techniques: it showed several traps (Trapviwe, captrap and iscout) tested by scientific partners of the project in the field.

More information on www.smartprotect-h2020.eu

This project is funded by the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020" under grant agreement no. 862563.



NOVASOIL

AREFLH, a partner in the NOVASOIL project which started in late 2022. It focuses on innovative business models for soil health in Europe. **Its overall objective is to highlight the benefits of investing in soil health for society and the environment.** To achieve this objective, a **toolkit** will be developed to analyse the relevance of different business cases that promote soil health. This toolbox will be based on a series of good practices from Europe and other countries, adapted to the needs and demands of society.

The NOVASOIL consortium brings together more than **16 institutions** from **10 European countries** covering a wide range of stakeholders (association, university, company, institutions). The Horizon Europe project will run until 2025 and is expected to deliver its results by then.

AREFLH participated in the kick-off meeting which took place on 29th and 30th November 2022 in an online meeting. This was an opportunity for the project partners to meet and discuss the overall strategy of the project.

As a member of the consortium, AREFLH will be responsible for **testing and developing a toolkit** and creating a **community of practice** and **dissemination strategy** for this project.

For more information: www.novasoil-project.eu

This project was funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 101091268.

CONSOLE

The general objective of CONSOLE was to boost innovation in the lasting delivery of agri-environmental-climate public goods (AECPGs) by EU agriculture and forestry, by building a Community of Practice (CoP), by designing and testing effective and efficient cooperation models and by developing a contractual framework supporting implementation by multiple actors.



As a partner in the project, AREFLH participated in the **final conference** held on **13 and 14 October 2022** in Brussels in a hybrid format.

The aim of the meeting was to present an overview of **the final results** of the activities carried out during the 42 months of the project: the **development of an end-user driven contractual framework** and the **results of the case studies** that were carried out in Europe and beyond.

The lessons learned about the contracts that were parts of the project were also presented during the closing meeting. Here are some of them:

- There is no standard recipe
- Clear incentives are important
- Learning the process is essential
- The legal context (local to international) must be taken into account
- The technological aspects (e.g. for monitoring) are important

So **the applicability issues are difficult with these contracts** because they work very well in a local context. They are so tied to a specific local situation that it is very difficult to export these examples and make them work in another place or in another sector.



Case study in North Yorkshire (Esk Valley), England

Lastly, the meeting saw the presentation of the active follow-up and the creation of the **CONSOLE hub** which gathers information and case studies for future development beyond the project.

www.console-hub.eu.

For more information on the project visit www.console-project.eu

This project was funded by the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020", under grant agreement no. 817947.

LOWINFOOD

The LOWINFOOD project focuses on the **"Multi-stakeholder design of low-waste food value chains through the demonstration of innovative solutions to reduce food loss and waste"**. LOWINFOOD

supports the reduction of food loss and waste in the European Union by demonstrating innovative solutions following a multi-actor approach that involves stakeholders along the value chain.





The project aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of four types of innovations, which should be able to address the problem of food loss and waste along the upstream value chain, from agricultural production to retail.

In practice, **the aim is to measure the extent to which these innovations reduce the loss and waste of fruit and vegetables along the supply chain, improve its efficiency and increase the use and consumption of fruit and vegetables** through recovery and redistribution.

Here are some innovations tested and improved by LOWINFOOD for the fruit and vegetable value chain:

- **A software to manage fruit and vegetable withdrawals and donations to charities**

This institutional innovation consists of a software that registers all fruit and vegetable products withdrawn from the markets by producer organisations. In addition, the software manages the donation of the withdrawn products to charitable entities. It was created by the government of the Emilia-Romagna region (Italy) and has been operating there since 2012.

- **A system of cooperation between farmers and the catering sector**

This organisational innovation aims to promote cooperation agreements between fruit and vegetable producers and restaurants, in order to reuse unharvested or surplus agricultural products. In this way, the gap between farmers and the restaurant industry will be bridged, for economic and professional advantages.

- **A digital B2B marketplace for food waste reduction in the vegetable industry**

Leroma is a start-up that has developed a digital marketplace for basic food products that bridges the gap between producers who offer vegetables and manufacturers or retailers who are looking for these products. Through the digital marketplace, vegetables can be offered locally or globally, and it also reveals alternative distribution channels for products with defects, among others.

- **A sales forecasting software for supermarkets, enabling better order management**

Foresightee, a technology start-up, has developed a machine learning algorithm to forecast fresh produce sales in supermarkets. This new technology allows supermarkets to have a more accurate estimate of future sales. With this tool, orders can also be placed more accurately, resulting in less surplus being thrown away. Food waste is avoided and profit margins increase.

More information on www.lowinfood.eu

This project was funded by the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020" under grant agreement no. 101000439.

CUTE-SOLAR

The CuTe-Solar project (Cultivating a Taste of Europe in Solar Greenhouses) is a **promotion programme focused 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 project was carried out by the horticultural associations APROA, HORTIESPANA and AREFLH.

As a partner in the project, AREFLH participated in the **final conference** held on 1 December 2022 in the **European Parliament in Brussels**.

The event was supported by MEPs Juan Ignacio Zoido, Clara Aguilera and Paolo de Castro, all members of the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development.

At the closing ceremony, the MEPs supported the solar greenhouse production model and praised the enormous effort made by solar greenhouse farmers to place this sector at the forefront of world agriculture.

More information on cutesolar.eu



Product focus: chestnut, pear and hazelnut

EUROCASTANEA - the European chestnut network



The European Chestnut Days (Eurocastanea) 2022 took place in Italy, from 12 to 14 September, in Montella, which is located 80km from Naples, in the Campania region.

A few personalities from the political and agricultural world were present, such as the Italian Minister of Agriculture Stefano Patuanelli, MEP Paolo De Castro, Pascuale Di Rubbo from the European Commission, and a representative of the FAO.

The different sessions of the congress were dedicated to "Production forecasts in Europe", "Industry and mass distribution: market panorama", "Chestnut groves: an opportunity for carbon capture, environmental and landscape protection".



The subject of processing was also **addressed "between traditional and innovative products", as well as the theme of certification: "is it the future of chestnut growing?"**

Simona Caselli, President of AREFLH participated in the session on "Resilience and sustainability in the chestnut sector" and presented the European Farm to Fork strategy.

As every year, the participants of the European Chestnut Days were informed about the latest data on chestnut production in Europe and worldwide, about issues related to resilience and the fight against climate change, but also about imports and exports, market trends, consumption and harvest.

www.eurocastanea.org

Interpera - international pear congress



The 13th edition of Interpera, the international pear congress, took place in June 2022 in Rotterdam, in collaboration with DPA (Dutch Produce Association) a member of AREFLH.



The current situation in the European pear sector is complex. Harvest forecasts are disrupted, consumption is down, exports are limited by the geopolitical situation, and climate change is accelerating, resulting in increased costs.

Since 2008, the Interpera congress has been reporting on market developments and trends in both good and bad times. In 2022, the challenges were many and it was all the more important for the pear industry to come together, to share their experiences and consider solutions together. Such a mission is and has always been the motto of the congress since its creation.

The conference day on 29 June presented the market situation and announced the forecast for the summer pear harvest at a round table of experts from six European countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium and the Netherlands).



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The presentations aimed to encourage producers to adopt a positive attitude. The idea was to propose possible alternatives, to give perspectives in an uncertain environment. For example, the audience could see how Italian production is reorganising and facing the challenges of the market. Other themes were also highlighted, such as the use of data, precision agriculture, Asian bug fight and consumer trends.

The conclusion given to the participants was the importance for the sector to reconnect with consumers, to be aware of their behaviour, but also to "think outside the box" by innovating in new ways of consuming pears.

Hazelnut - Group Corylus Europae



The Group Corylus Europae is composed of organizations representing the **3 main hazelnut producing countries in Europe (Italy, France and Spain)**. Together they represent nearly 80% of European hazelnut production and has set itself the following goals:

- To be a network for the **exchange of information** on all subjects affecting European hazelnuts;
- To **set up common actions**, in particular with the European Union in favor of the hazelnut production sector in Europe;
- To build together a **common identity** and promote a sustainable and quality European production of hazelnuts.

Several meetings of the group took place in 2022, including a meeting with DG AGRI ahead of the annual EU-Turkey meeting. This meeting introduced the members of the group and highlighted the challenges of European hazelnut production:

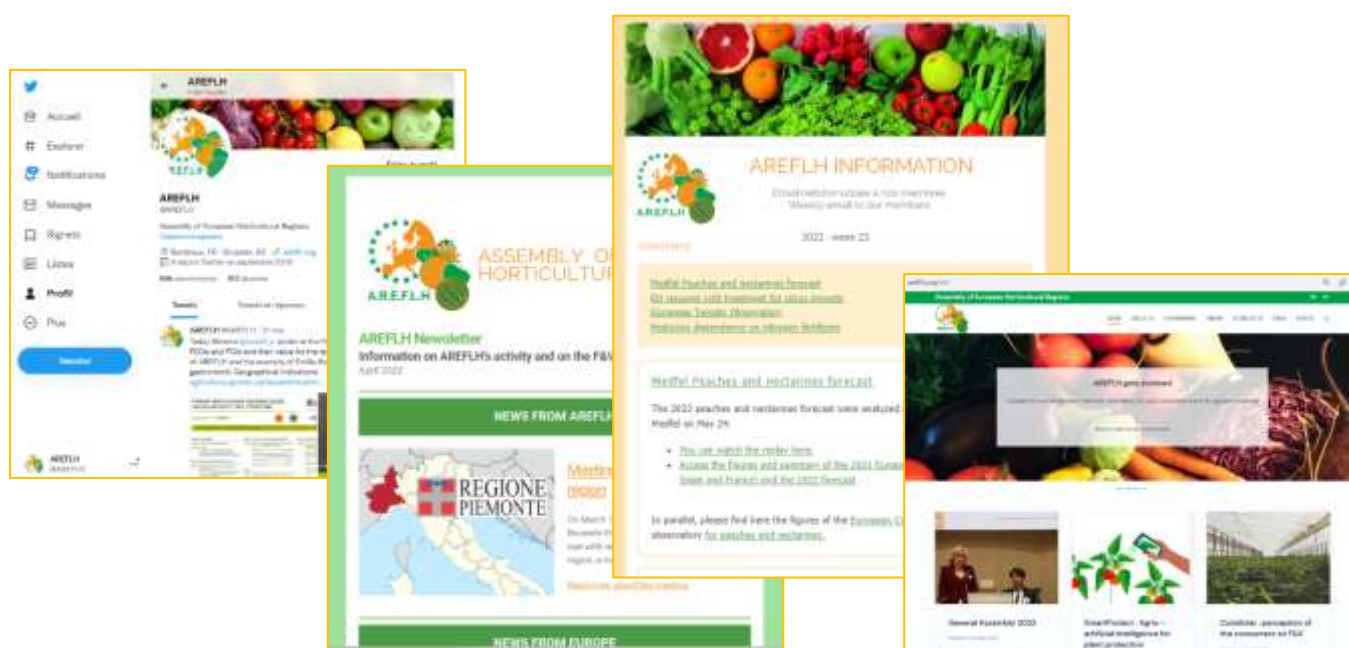
- The ban on phytosanitary products and the lack of alternatives to adequately protect hazelnuts;
- The regulatory imbalance with certain third countries, both for the use of phytosanitary products and for the certification of geographical indications;
- The steady decline in farm yields;
- The challenges presented by climate change such as the spread of certain pests (ex: Halyomorpha Halys);
- Insufficient adaptation time to complete the required transition to production considered more sustainable.

A close-up photograph of a kiwifruit vine. The image shows several clusters of ripe, brown, fuzzy kiwifruit hanging from the branches. The leaves are large, green, and have prominent veins. Some leaves show signs of aging or damage, with some turning yellow and others having brown spots. The background is a clear blue sky.

COMMUNICATION

The means of communication

- The website www.areflh.org.
- Our weekly emails (AREFLH flashnews) to members of the association only, on news from 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.
[Consult the newsletters from the website](#) (media > newsletter)
- The Twitter account [@areflh](https://twitter.com/areflh).
- The monthly members meetings



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NOTES

ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN HORTICULTURAL REGIONS



A.R.E.F.L.H.
MIN de Brienne
110 quai de Paludate
33800 Bordeaux, France

+33.5.33.89.10.19

contact@areflh.org

www.areflh.org

[@areflh](https://www.instagram.com/areflh)