

STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT 27 OCTOBER 2021



SUSFOOD2

SUSFOOD2 is an ERA-NET Cofund with the aim to reinforce the scientific cooperation between EU Countries and associated states in order to maximise the contribution of research to the development of more sustainable food systems by co-funding research and innovation projects. In the 2017 Call for research proposals, SUSFOOD2 has funded 12 transnational projects with a total budget of 11.5 Mio EUR, including Top-Up funding from the European Commission. From mid-2018 onwards, 73 research teams from 17 countries started their three years work at achieving new insights for the field of sustainable food production and consumption.

SUSFOOD2 addresses the entire food supply chain with the main focus on food chain sustainability beyond the farmgate.

A multi-stakeholder approach is needed to redesign and optimize food systems for more sustainable food production that meets consumer demand. Sustainable production and consumption of food with reduced impact on the environment and climate will be most successful when all the food chain actors work together to encourage, produce and consume a healthy, nutritious, affordable and sustainable diet and avoid food spoilage at each step of the food chain.

To achieve this, SUSFOOD2 organised a stakeholders workshop to present summaries of research results, innovative findings, recommendations and potential impact on sustainable food production and consumption of the 12 projects that cover innovation in food processing technologies and products, increased resource efficiency and reduction of waste in sustainable food systems and understanding consumer behaviour and food choices.



STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP

SUSFOOD2 organised the Stakeholders workshop to inform a wider interested audience on the progress made by SUSFOOD2 funded projects and to explore the next steps to enable interaction between the research teams and stakeholders. The workshop was mainly an online event, due to Covid 19 pandemic and the still strict travel restrictions in many countries.

Of 110 registered persons, 60 attended the stakeholders workshop. The main group of participants thereby came from academia and research institutes, followed by policymakers and funding agencies as well as a few participants from industry and NGOs.

During the event, we discussed three different topics in four breakout sessions.

- "Smart" consumers: How can R&I lead to well-informed consumers
- Value from waste: Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems
- Bringing new sustainable technologies to the market- changes and barriers: Acceptance and adoption-bottlenecks for new food technology

In order to have an overview of the work done by the 12 projects, everyone was invited to watch the videos that each project had prepared: <https://susfood-db-era.net/main/projects-presentation>

The coordinators first gave a short presentation of their project, focusing on the applicability of the results and what future research needs remain. In addition, a message was formulated for the stakeholders and the end-users. Many substantive discussions were held, in which the questions were motivated through the use of Slido. The discussions also touched upon important other new research themes, missing actors to advance R&I even faster in future projects, next steps towards innovation. Finally, an evaluation of sorts was made and questions were asked as to how SUSFOOD2 could further support the research and researchers in the field of sustainable food systems.

Agenda stakeholders workshop 27 October 2021 (CEST)



09:00	Welcome Welcoming words by the coordinator (JUELICH)	
09:15	Group 1 - Value from waste: Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems <ul style="list-style-type: none">- SUSPUFA: Sustainable production of health-promoting n-3 LCPUFA using agro food industry by-products through microalgae- SPAREC: Sustainable Processing of Agrofood Residues to Elicitors and Chemicals- InProVe: Innovative Processing of Vegetables and Potato	Group 2 - Bringing new sustainable technologies to the market- chances and barriers: Acceptance and adoption-bottlenecks for new food technology <ul style="list-style-type: none">- MEFPROC: Improving Sustainability in Food Processing using Moderate Electric Fields (MEF) for Process Intensification and Smart Processing- ProSeaFood: Innovative processing of seaweed for novel, healthy food products and ingredients- BIOCARB4FOOD: Extraction and characterization of BIOactives and CARBohydrates from seaweeds and seagrasses FOR FOOD-related applications
10:45	Coffee Break	
11:00	Group 3 - Value from waste: Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems <ul style="list-style-type: none">- FUNBREW: Biotransformation of brewers' spent grain: increased functionality for novel food applications- DISCOVERY: Disaggregation of conventional vegetable press cakes by novel techniques to receive new products and to increase the yield- ImPROVE: Innovative (pre)POmace Valorization process	Group 4 - "Smart" consumers: How can R&I lead to well-informed consumers <ul style="list-style-type: none">- AVARE: Adding value in resource effective food systems- PLATEFORMS: Sustainable Food Platforms: Enabling sustainable food practices through socio-technical innovation- SUSCHOICE: Towards Sustainable Food and Drink Choices among European Young Adults: Drivers, Barriers and Strategical Implications
12:30	5 minutes technical break	
12:35	Plenary session & Closing session	



SUSFOOD2 Break-out session

Moderator: *Marijke Hunninck, ILVO*

Slido: *Nikola Hassan, PtJ*

Rapporteur: *Hendrik DeRuyck, ILVO*

Group 2 - Bringing new sustainable technologies to the market- chances and barriers: Acceptance and adoption- bottlenecks for new food technology

- **MEFPROC:** Improving Sustainability in Food Processing using Moderate Electric Fields (MEF) for Process Intensification and Smart Processing
- **ProSeaFood:** Innovative processing of seaweed for novel, healthy food products and ingredients
- **BIOCARB4FOOD:** Extraction and characterization of BIOactives and CARBohydrates from seaweeds and seagrasses FOR FOOD-related applications



Findings from the research projects

- Carbohydrates and bioactives from seaweeds and seagrasses can be extracted using new environmental-friendly processing techniques (US, Mw, enzymes), simplified processes and residues can be valorized for bioactive packaging (or other multiple application possibilities)
- The use of Moderate Electric Fields enables direct heating of various types of foods with different material properties at various scales and shows advantages regarding lower energy consumption, better process control and high product quality; uptake and introduction by industry and consumers is needed
- Processing of seaweed using various technologies (thermal/ mechanical, enzymes, fermentation) lead to optimized nutritional quality and availability (reduction of iodine, salts and increase of proteins and minerals) as well as suitable sensory properties for use in safe and healthy food products

Follow-up / next steps

- Technology transfer and scale-up
- Connection to industry and legislation
- Consumer Engagement

Recommendations towards SUSFOOD

- Innovation-friendly funding as well as follow-up funding of successful projects
- Support with partnering to build consortia and having stakeholder advisory boards during the project runtime
- Offer training that set the level of understanding, e.g. on food systems approach for applicants

What are the most important future research themes?





SUSFOOD2 Break-out session

Moderator: *Marijke Hunninck, ILVO*

Slido: *Nikola Hassan, PtJ*

Rapporteur: *Christophe Cotillon, ACTIA*

Group 4 - "Smart" consumers: How can R&I lead to well- informed consumers

- **AVARE:** Adding value in resource effective food systems
- **PLATEFORMS:** Sustainable Food Platforms: Enabling sustainable food practices through socio-technical innovation
- **SUSCHOICE:** Towards Sustainable Food and Drink Choices among European Young Adults: Drivers, Barriers and Strategic Implications



Findings from the research projects

- Food waste that occurs in restaurants/ canteens etc. can be tackled by 1) prevention on the spot 2) food donations and 3) by valorization of unavoidable food waste, e.g. utilizing biogenic residues to produce DHA more sustainably using microalgae (instead of fish)
- Analysis of food and drink choices with regard to sustainability among European young adults reveals the importance of information (transparent and measurable), social sustainability, education (experience and entertainment) as well as innovation actions by producers (intersectoral collaboration) and consumers (sustainable lifestyles) alike
- New ways of how food enters households (online platforms) can make consumption more sustainable but existing routines and practices are key and convenience is still the major driver to take into consideration

Follow-up / next steps

- Involve new actors: consumer associations/ initiatives, local/ regional community actors, industry, retailers, manufacturers, regulators, marketing experts
- Intervention Studies
- Piloting

Recommendations towards SUSFOOD

- Support identification and connection with potential partners
- Connect industrial projects with consumer projects through the calls to avoid a knowledge divide
- Connect to policymakers
- Offer suitable funding schemes and support on national level

What are the most important future research themes?



CONCLUSION

The 12 projects nicely displayed that there are various ways to work towards more sustainable food systems. Many research questions remain and the highest-ranked topics of interest include: „food waste“, „sustainability“, „food systems“, „scale-up“, „food citizenship“ and „food councils“.

It became very clear that next steps towards innovation need technology transfer and scale-up but also the engagement of various actors along the value chain and within the food systems (from private sector to local authorities, consumer associations and transdisciplinary experts). Support in connecting with stakeholders was also the main point where participants saw a strong role for SUSFOOD2 network, followed by offering funding as well as multiplying and disseminating the outcomes of the research projects. Some examples of needed support include partnering to build transnational consortia as well as dissemination to stakeholders and their engagement (e.g. via advisory boards).

