# Main results of the FC4EU project for EMILIA-ROMAGNA region

**FINAL CONFERENCE**

**October 7, 2021**

# Identification of the need of the regional agri-food system: the process

The very first step has been the identification of the need of the regional agri-food system, to be addressed by the project.

The need was not yet so clearly expressed by companies, at that time: it has been identified trough a discussion and analysis between researchers and the regional administration (triple helix model)

Once identified, it has been proposed and approved also by companies.

# Identification of the need of the regional agri-food system: the topic

Some key characteristics of the regional agri-food system:

- Many relevant agri-food chains,

- 44 products with Geographical Indications (PDO, PGI).

- Most of these products are sold not only locally but on the global market (Parmigiano-Reggiano, Grana Padano, Prosciutto di Parma, Mortadella di Bologna, Coppa piacentina, Aceto balsamico di Modena, etc.)

- Most chains are characterized by many SMEs

- For dairy products and meat, the issue of PACKAGING is very important (products must remain fresh and retain their high quality over time, to travel).

- The issue of SUSTAINABILITY of packaging is therefore absolutely crucial!

# Identification of the policy need of the region with reference to this topic

Once the region has identified and verified a new research need for local agri-food chains, policy tools may be used in order to drive, somehow, applied research and innovation effort in this direction.

The **ERDF** is the key policy instrument that can be used in order to promote innovation in the desirable direction.

However, also **EAFRD** has the possibility to promote innovation in agri-food chains, involving also food companies, together with farmers.

An "unexpected" objective emerged: how these two funds can be coordinated?

# The opportunity:
# the presence of a dynamic agri-food system and a district of packaging

In the Emilia-Romagna region there is not only a strong agri-food system, very much focused on GI products and export, but also a technological district working on innovation in packaging.

Moreover, regional Universities are quite involved in innovation projects with local companies in both industries: food and packaging.

# The challenge:
# timing of the project and of ERDF fund management in the ER region

When the INTERREG project was starting to address the issue of how to modify policies in order to answer to these specific needs, the ER region had already allocated or spent all the resources of the ERDF for innovation.

Therefore we had to work more on the interactions among the ERDF fund and the EAFRD fund.

It is very important to note that both funds have the possibility to promote innovation in the agri-food system and in food companies, in particular.

# The action plan

After a very fruitful peer review, we finally had the possibility to modify a specific call (the last one available at that time in the issue of innovation involving also food companies) of the measure 16 of the EAFRD.

As a result of the project, a specific budget has been defined to promote innovation on the topic of SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING for agri-food products, with specific emphasis on GI and quality products.

# Main results

The call has been closed in March 2021

Several projects have been presented and 5 of them have been financed in different, using all the budget available for innovation in sustainable packaging, for different industries:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Meat products
- Fresh F&V and meat

# Indirect results

The need of stricter coordination among EU funds promoting innovation in the agri-food system

The need of stricter coordination in the management of these two funds by different regional ministries (agriculture and industry)

The need to promote continuous interaction among institution responsible for planning and managing these funds, universities and research centres, companies (both in the food industry and agricultural sector).

*Thanks for your attention*