



Four years of FAIRCHAIN project: insights on the achievements and main outcomes

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The **HORIZON 2020 project FAIRCHAIN**, launched in November 2020 and coordinated by INRAE (France), **aimed at developing intermediate value chains for more sustainable food systems**, combining elements from both short and long value chains. Efforts **focused on the fruit and vegetable and dairy sectors**. The project was organized into six case studies, in six European countries, to address specific bottlenecks associated with local supply chains and work to enable small and mid-size farmers and food producers to scale up and expand production of nutritious food through competitive intermediate value chains at local and regional level. The consortium used a **co-creation approach**, by bringing together stakeholders in each supply chain and working together to find the most suitable solutions.

Achievements of the Case Studies:



➤ In **AUSTRIA**, the **Food Innovation Incubator** has developed innovative solutions to convert fruit and vegetable co-products into unique regional products like apple sorbet, vegetable soup, freeze-dried tomatoes and garlic paste, and supported farmers scaling them up.

➤ In **BELGIUM**, a **prototype mobile and flexible packaging machine** was developed with high standards of hygienic packaging design. This was a solution for small and mid-sized companies, that fill in fruit juices and purees manually, which hinders productivity and potential market exploitation.



➤ In **FRANCE**, **innovative fermented drinks** based on whey and fruit (or vegetable) juices were developed with good acceptance by consumers. These drinks offer an alternative way of valorising whey, a by-product of cheese production, often sent to waste by small companies. This is a zero-waste product, since the distribution is made in returnable glass bottles.



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➤ In **GREECE**, a **traceability system, using blockchain technology**, was implemented in a local dairy production company to share ready and reliable data along the food chain reaching consumers expectations to transparent information on food quality, integrity, and origin.



➤ In **SWEDEN**, an innovative **ICT-tool has been developed for mapping wild berries**. The identification of areas with high berry yields is expected to encourage local picking, and contribute to establish new local companies, for a more profitable local market and improved social cohesion.

➤ In **SWITZERLAND**, innovative business models were developed to valorise co-products like fruit pits and apple pomace. A vinegar has been developed and successful tested as an alternative cleaning agent and biochar was produced via pyrolysis with multiple soil benefits.



Project results were shared through a wide range of dissemination resources and activities including newsletters (16), scientific publications and publications in technical magazines (23), practice abstracts (52), organisation of events (31), participation in events (54), and videos (75). These were targeted to different audiences and have reached more than 200k people in English and in the national languages of the CSs countries.



Also, results were showcased during the final event held in Nov. 2024, in Bruges, BE. The event included a plenary session at the 38th EFFoST International Conference 2024, focused on lessons and achievements from the six Case Studies of the project, and a NETWORKING Forum/Tasting Event where attendees enjoyed sampled food products developed with the projet innovations while engaging with the project partners and case study leaders.



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Further, FAIRCHAIN implemented different training approaches with innovative methodologies and targeted to various stakeholder types:

- ✓ Three online courses complemented by two blended sessions, to food chains professionals, academics, policy makers, advisors and students, available on the [ISEKI Moodle](#)
- ✓ Three Food Factory 4Us international student competition game
- ✓ The Food Hack
- ✓ Six CS workshops and demonstrations

FAIRCHAIN was also manager of the [Sustainable Food System Innovation Platform](#), an online environment for sharing information about sustainable food systems, and related projects, at the moment lodges the outcomes of 16 European projects, including innovations, case studies, practice abstracts or training offer.

ISEKI-Food Association **was the leader of Dissemination, Communication Exploitation and Training Work Package** and is very proud to have been part of this project and to have contributed to all the excellent achievements over the past four years!

