

NEWSLETTER

December 2024



Figure 1: EXCEL4MED at the Malta's Festa Ikel Malti (October 20, 2024).

Driving Innovation in Mediterranean Food Production

We are thrilled to share the latest updates on the EXCEL4MED project, dedicated to fostering innovation and sustainability in Mediterranean food production. Below are some key highlights from our recent activities:

Recent Events

Festa Ikel Malti (October 20, 2024): EXCEL4MED's Maltese partners participated in Festa Ikel Malti, held in Pitkalli Vegetable Market, to celebrate Malta's culinary traditions. The event attracted 50,000 attendees, featuring traditional dishes, local produce and activities supporting businesses. The Malta Food Agency, together with Koperattivi Malta, Malta Life Sciences Park and Mġarr Farming, hosted a booth offering pomegranates, fruit bags, notebooks and juice, showcasing EXCEL4MED's commitment to sustainability.

Online Seminar on Pomegranate Seed Oil (November 5, 2024): Grigorios Chalmoukos, PhD candidate at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, delivered an online seminar on the innovative use of Pomegranate Seed Oil (PSO) in the food industry, reflecting EXCEL4MED's focus on sustainable Mediterranean food systems. The event, hosted by the University of West Attica, gathered faculty, staff and students.

4th Athens Conference Advances in Chemistry - ACAC 2024 (November 6-8, 2024): during the ACAC 2024 Conference, EXCEL4MED shared research on optimising natural compound extraction from PSO using ultrasound-assisted technology, which aims to establish an eco-friendly process for maximising oil yield and total phenolic content in PSO).

2nd Living Lab in Greece

On September 27, 2024, the “2nd EXCEL4MED Living Lab in Greece” took place at the Agricultural University of Athens, uniting stakeholders from the Greek food and beverage sector to foster collaboration and sustainability. Organised by SEVT – Federation of Hellenic Food Industries, in collaboration with the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, ELGO-DIMITRA, Smart Agro Hub and the Region of Attica, the living lab included an engaging session on business models in the agri-food sector, focusing on the methodology behind the Business Model Canvas.

The event featured insightful presentations from Alkmini Gavriil (SEVT), Professor Vasilis Valdramidis (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens), Dr. George Katsaros (ELGO-DIMITRA) and Professor George Kleftodimos (CIHEAM-IAMM). Additionally, the living lab had the pleasure of having Artemi Chatzigeorgiou, R&D Director of DELTA FOODS SA, who shared practical strategies and best practices for developing new and innovative products that meet both consumer needs and environmental standards.

Watch the video about the 2nd Living Lab in Greece on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4rAOoDEOxE>

Living Lab in Malta

On the November 21, 2024, EXCEL4MED Maltese partners hosted the 2nd Living Lab in Malta, bringing together stakeholders to address key challenges in the agricultural and food industries.

The event served as a platform for collaboration, innovation and the promotion of sustainable practices within the local food ecosystem.

The producer's workshop was a central feature, identifying critical economic, environmental and social challenges while exploring practical solutions. Using the Triple Business Model Canvas, participants mapped their operations, gaining valuable insights into aligning strategies with sustainability goals and community needs. This exercise encouraged attendees to rethink traditional practices and embrace innovative approaches.

The Living Lab fostered collaboration among producers, policymakers and experts, creating a foundation for future initiatives to drive economic growth, reduce environmental impact and enhance social equity.

Participants left with a clearer understanding of how to integrate sustainability into their operations, marking a significant step toward a more inclusive and innovative Mediterranean food system.



Figure 2: The second living lab in Greece, hosted at the University of Athens and organized by SEVT – Federation of Hellenic Food Industries (September 27, 2024).



Figure 3: A living lab organized by the Malta Food Agency in collaboration with the Malta Enterprise (November 21, 2024).

Further Highlights



Figure 4: Freshly squeezed pomegranate juice served at Festa Ikel Malti (October 20, 2024).

Radio Interview with Amalia Altinou (October 9, 2024)

Amalia Altinou, from E.K.PI.ZO, was interviewed on the Municipal Radio of Larisa, to discuss food waste and promote EXCEL4MED.

Video interview "What is EXCEL4MED? Insights from Project Coordinator Vasilis Valdramidis" (November 2024).

Watch the full video on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JP0eXdXOkKk&t=28s>

EXCEL4MED Presentation at MCAST (November 8, 2024)

Koperattivi Malta presented EXCEL4MED to students from the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology.

EXCEL4MED at "The Green Shift" Webinar (December 12, 2024)

Smart Agro Hub presented EXCEL4MED during the "The Green Shift" webinar, organised by Smart Agro Hub, Europe Direct Attica and Europe Direct Central Macedonia.



Prepared by Malta Food Agency

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