



Added Value of Networking

Success Story

Success Story title *"Networks of Cooperation – New strategies for improving the competitiveness of the Cypriot agro-food industry"*

Theme *Network communications; Training; Cooperation*

NRN *CYPRUS* Coordinator *Cypriot National Rural Network*

Partners *Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Cyprus food and drinks, ITALIA Trade Commission, Department of Agriculture*

Period *30 March 2011* Resources *14,800 Euro*

Geo-location *Hilton Park hotel, Nicosia*

Beneficiaries *Members of the Network, Farmers Associations, Local Action Groups, Personnel of Department of Agriculture*

Background

Due to a significant lack of cluster and networking knowledge with regards to strategic marketing and organizational activities in the agro-food sector in Cyprus, the activities were necessary to educate the local stakeholders about the different forms of successful clustering in other member states. The success stories selected originated from three different member states (Greece, Italy, UK) and aimed at addressing issues on clusters and co-operation in the agro-food sector, drawing experiences from different regions and examining ways of implementation in the local sector.

Main activities

The activities involved a morning session during which six distinguished guests covered different areas of networking, namely Export Consortia in the agro-food, R&D clusters, networks of regional quality products, producer organisations, networks of PDO promotion etc. The presentation sessions were followed by afternoon workshops covering the above mentioned areas of interest, during which the audience were invited to discuss in small groups the potential of establishing similar networks in Cyprus. Each workshop was coordinated by the invited speakers and a local expert, and each workshop discussed further clarifications with the invited speakers and had to come up with ideas, problem identification and steps ahead for co-operation networks in each particular field.

Main results/benefits

To date no firm action has been undertaken with regards to network and cluster formation in Cyprus. Yet, discussions are being carried out with stakeholders and processes are being developed to establish similar clusters, based on the proposed examples presented by the speakers at the event.





Contribution of the NSU

The NSU acted as a joint coordinating body, leading the following tasks: preparing the list of potential participants; undertaking the logistics associated with the meeting; arranging for printing and promotion, communicating the event; the management of the day's event was significant as the morning conference was followed by four workshops in which participants had to select and join. Finally, the NSU had the responsibility of inviting the two Ministers (Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Commerce) to attend and address the conference. The NSU also helped in the evaluation of the event.

Contribution of the partners

The event was co-organised by the Network of the agro-food sector, an integral part of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) and by a joint committee of the four agricultural organisations operating in Cyprus. CCCI was the leading part of this project with the prime responsibility of inviting the quest speakers, communicating the event to its member – businesses and taking a leading role in the planning and execution of the event. Furthermore, CCCI was allocated the task of preparing and coordinating three of the four workshops that took place during the afternoon sessions, while the fourth was prepared and coordinated by the joint committee of the agricultural organisations. Finally, this committee was responsible for communicating the event to the primary sector (growers and farmers) through the members of their organisations.

Success factors

The event was carried out in co-operation between three parties, the NSU, the CCCI and the Agricultural Organisations. These three partners managed to co-operate in a meaningful way and capitalized on synergies for driving the event to a successful execution. Additionally, the know-how and expertise brought by the distinguished guests, coming from three different Member States, was of major importance in transferring knowledge of networks in different forms and fields.

