



LEGATO Executive Committee Meeting no. 3
LEGATO First Annual Meeting
and
LEGATO First Stakeholder Workshop on:
“New Perspectives on Grain Legume Production and Uses for Human Consumption”
Alnarp, Sweden, 24-26th February 2015

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) hosted the above mentioned meetings and workshop on its Alnarp Campus.

The Executive Committee Meeting took place on the morning of 24 February. Management issues were addressed, especially the first periodic report to be sent to the EC after month 18 (June 2015) and the subsequent EC review. Other important issues dealt with included the interactions with the Eurolegume project, the next annual & stakeholder meetings and the post-graduate training course, as well as feedback on the annual report, highlighting deviations, delays, status of milestones and deliverables. A roadmap has already been drawn up with all the meetings and events until the end of the project.



Meeting of the LEGATO Executive Committee

The first annual meeting took place on the afternoon of 24 February and throughout the next day. The meeting was opened by Håkan Schroeder, Dean of the SLU Landscape Architecture, Horticulture and Crop Production Science Faculty and Richard Thomson, LEGATO Coordinator. The objective of the meeting was to review the work carried out in the project during the first year, plan the activities for the second year, address relevant scientific and technical issues and also obtain an external view of the project from outstanding experts. For the latter, the meeting counted on Judith Lichtenzweig from Curtin University, Australia, and Bob Rees from SAC, UK. Each WP leader presented the WP objectives, main achievements from the beginning and forthcoming work planned, deliverables and milestones status and interactions between partners, followed by a discussion.

On the evening of 25 February, a buffet dinner with typical Swedish food was organised on the Alnarp campus.



Participants in the LEGATO First Annual Meeting



Buffet dinner with typical Swedish food



The First Stakeholder Workshop took place on the morning of 26 February. The workshop is based on the growing recognition that legumes such as peas, beans and lentils are well-tasting, healthy and environmentally sound food sources, and that increasing the proportion of legumes in our diets will have positive consequences for the sustainable development of agriculture and food systems. In this context, the workshop attempted to answer questions such as: What potential do European-produced legumes for food have to supply our protein needs? And how can their consumption be promoted? The workshop was specially addressed to legume stakeholders (agricultural and food and feed industries, environmentalists, technicians, administration officers, scientists, etc.),

The Workshop was introduced by Richard Thompson - LEGATO coordinator, and Georg Carlsson - SLU; LegSA contact person, and was structured in two main sessions. Session 1 "Levers for boosting EU Grain legume (GL) production and quality ", with two conferences on "Improving key quality traits in GL" and "Brakes and levers on GL production for food and feed". Session 2 "Optimizing GL for human consumption" dealt with "Defining traits adapted to consumers' expectations", and "Which traits for human consumption? – Consumer perception", followed by presentations on "SME experience and feedback".



First Stakeholder Workshop



Conclusions from the Stakeholders Workshop

For the first question, what potential do European-produced legumes for food have to supply our protein needs, the conclusions drawn are that on the macro-economic scale, European agriculture has the potential to supply a significant proportion of our protein needs as pulses. Whether this will occur depends on many factors; competition with cheap soybean imports and more profitable crops, disease and abiotic stress problems which have resulted in diminishing legume crop areas for the past 20 years. The spiralling soybean prices, and the increased restriction on phytochemical inputs have recently led to a more positive political will to promote legume crops, reflected in the CAP which is somewhat "greener", and in national policies such as the French protein plan. The first positive indications on production and consumption are also detectable. Research projects such as LEGATO can help to fuel this positive impetus by providing innovative genetic material better adapted for food and feed, and for low-input agriculture, as well as locally-adapted cropping systems built around grain legumes that optimize their ecological services.

For the second question, and how can their consumption be promoted, the workshop participants provided several innovative examples of how grain legume consumption can be promoted for human consumption through both the development of novel products and marketing strategies, focusing on the merits of local sourcing and the use of traditional varieties and/or recipes. This theme was continued with further examples in the LegSA meeting which took place the same afternoon. Although it is early days, the examples presented, from start-ups or their equivalent, show there is great potential.

The Annual LegSA meeting took place on the afternoon of 26 February.

The LEGATO Consortium wishes to thank SLU and particularly Erik Steen Jensen and Georg Carlsson for their hospitality and excellent organisation