



Enhancing cultivation and use of traditional European cereal varieties

Press release

May 2017

An integrated approach to diversify the genetic base, improve stress resistance, agronomic management and nutritional/processing quality of minor cereal crops for human nutrition in Europe

The EU-funded project – HealthyMinorCereals – aims to boost cultivation and consumption of five cereal crops – **rye, oat, spelt, einkorn and emmer**. These are classified by the EU as “minor cereals” due to their currently small areas of cultivation, especially compared to common wheat and barley, which are intensively bred for high yields and dependent on high inputs of artificial fertilizers and pesticides.

The main challenges of the HealthyMinorCereals project are to diversify grain production in Europe and to develop new cereal products of high nutritional quality. Minor cereals and crop wild relatives that are studied by the project offer a wider genetic variety to select those with traits for resistance to crop disease and drought that is important for sustainable cereal production. Furthermore, minor cereals are thought to have retained higher concentrations of nutritionally desirable compounds and therefore have a great potential for the development of new food products of high nutritional quality.

The Greek partner Geokomi is an SME business based in Crete which focuses on (a) Organic olive production systems, (b) Applied contract research and technology transfer. Most R&D projects focus on addressing problems faced by farmers in Crete. The last three and half years Geokomi is carrying out field experiments with spelt and oat in west Messara valley in Crete - a typical Mediterranean semi-arid region. Four varieties of spelt have been grown under different irrigation regimes and fertility input types. Also two varieties of oat and two varieties of spelt are compared using different intercrops and fertility types.

At the upcoming meeting of the HealthyMinorCereals project to take place on Crete on 11-12 May, all 16 project partners will discuss the progress of the project achieved during the past three and half years. The main achievements of the project so far will be summarised and presented to the public at the stakeholder workshop on Saturday 13 May starting at 10h at the Livadopa Field Research Station, Sivas Village.

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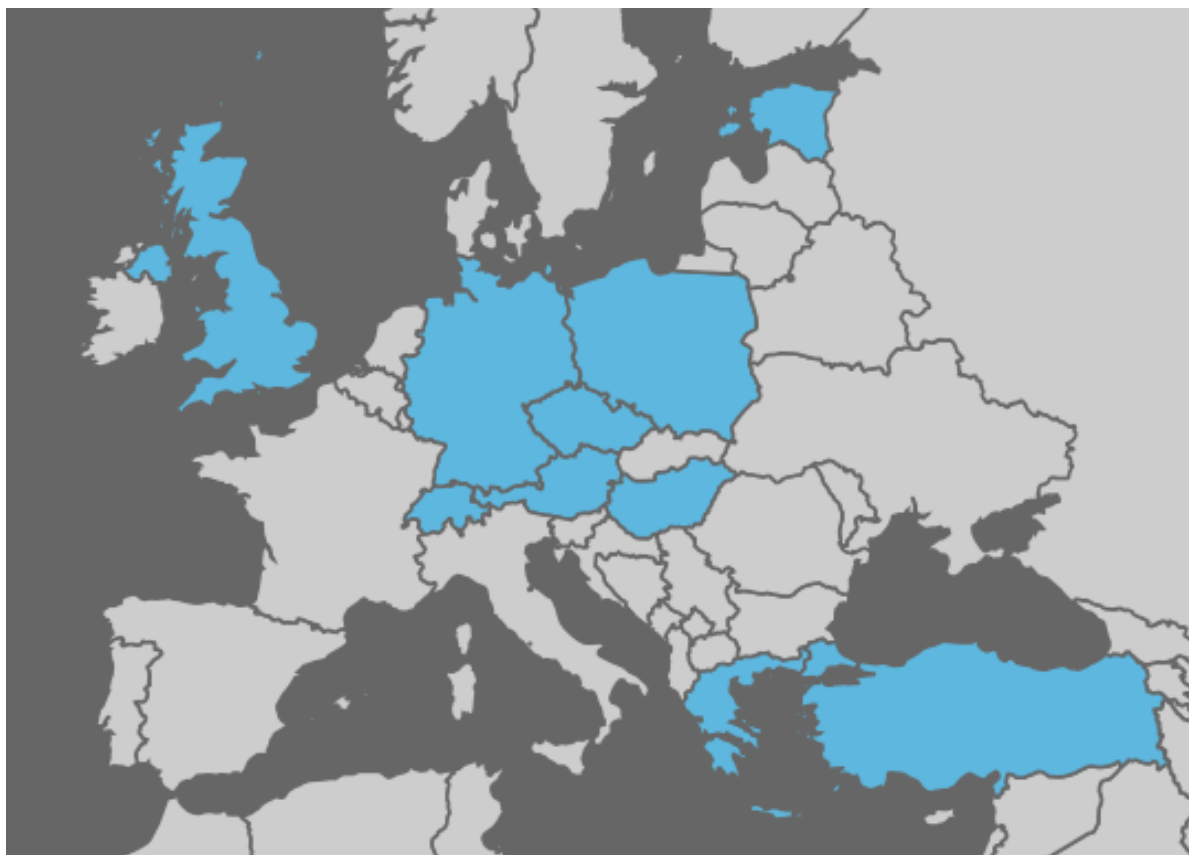
More information about the project can be found at: www.healthyminorcereals.eu

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HealthyMinorCereals partners



Participant no.	Participant organisation name	Country
1 CRI	Výzkumný ústav rostlinné výroby, v.v.i.	Czech Republic
2 PROBIO	PRO-BIO, obchodní spol. s r.o	Czech Republic
3 SEL	Selgen a.s.	Czech Republic
4 UNEW	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	United Kingdom
5 GIL	Gilchesters Organics Ltd	United Kingdom
6 SU	Sabancı University	Turkey
7 FiBL	Forschungsinstitut für Biologischenlandbau Stiftung	Switzerland
8 GZPK	Getreidezüchtung Peter Kunz	Switzerland
9 GEO	Geokomi SA	Greece
10 ETKI	Estonian Crop Research Institute	Estonia
11 BOKU	Universitaet fuer Bodenkultur Wien	Austria
12 ILU	Institut für Lebensmittel- und Umweltforschung e.V.	Germany
13 SB	Stolzenberger Reiner Erich	Germany
14 UNIWZ	Universitaet Kassel	Germany
15 BGK	Grupa BGK Spółka z o.o.	Poland
16 ÖMKI	Ökológiai Mezőgazdasági Kutatóintézet	Hungary

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