



RUR@L

EN RD Newsletter

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NEWS

EN RD REPORT

EU 'Quality Package' Adopted by the Commission

Guaranteeing quality to consumers and a fair price for farmers are the twin aims of the 'Quality Package', adopted by the European Commission on 10 December, 2010. The package represents a comprehensive policy on certification schemes, value-adding terms for agricultural product qualities and product standards. Announcing the package, the EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr. Dacian Cioloş said: "This Quality Package is a first step on the path to building on a stronger and more dynamic farming sector, which will be followed by other initiatives". Click [here](#) for further information.

New Measure to Improve Stability in Dairy Sector

The European Commission adopted a legislative proposal on 9 December on "contractual relations in the milk and milk product sector", aimed at boosting the position of the dairy producer in the dairy supply chain, and preparing the sector for a more market oriented and sustainable future. The Commission also presented a report on the dairy market, within the context of gradually phasing out the milk quota system. For further information, click [here](#).

Agricultural Exhibition in Hungary Focuses on Innovation

The EN RD was represented at Hungary's largest agricultural exhibition - AGRO and Mashexpo in Budapest - on 26-29 January. This year's theme was 'innovation' and over 20 000 visitors attended. The European Commission had its own stand at the event, where participants could hear about relevant project examples co-financed by the EAFRD. In addition, two specific days focused on rural development themes - one on 'new technologies and diversification of activities' and another on 'local products and quality policy'. Click [here](#).

POLICY BRIEF

300 New LAGs Attend Leader Event in Brussels

The European Network for Rural Development (EN RD) organised an event for new Local Action Groups (LAGs), entitled "Leader as a driver for Rural Europe: workshop for new Local Action Groups" on 19-20 January, 2011, in Brussels.

Some 300 'new' LAGs took part in the event, which provided new or less experienced LAGs with advice and further training on how to efficiently implement Local Development Strategies; and best-practice in terms of transnational cooperation (TNC). Members of the EN RD Leader sub-committee were also represented at the event.

Participants learned how the Leader method has been implemented by LAGs in different Member States and developed a real understanding of the value of cooperation and networking through interaction with other LAGs.

On a practical level, the event also afforded the chance for new LAGs to find potential partners, with similar interests or project ideas for TNC. In addition, participants experienced cooperation on-site, mentoring and assistance regarding different project phases, as well as project and partnership management.

Speaking to the EN RD Contact Point after the event, the newly elected President of the European Leader Association for Rural Development (ELARD) Petri Rinne said: "I'm really happy that the EN RD organised this [event] for new LAGs because Leader has been extending so quickly, particularly in



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European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development,
Dacian Cioloş

new Member States. So, for many, this was the first time they got to feel part of this European Leader family and realise that there are many others also living in rural areas in Europe, working towards the same goal".

Of course the lynchpin for the event was the promotion of the Leader method. Speaking on Leader, EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Dacian Cioloş spoke optimistically about its place in future agricultural policy after 2013: "Local Leader-type initiatives will remain at the heart of rural development policy. Our objective is not only to reinforce such initiatives, but also to expand upon them, as much as possible, in the organisation and structuring of local agriculture and the development of local products". Click [here](#) for further information.

Please note: 'Rur@l News' is an online publication; for further information, please go to <http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>



- French language version of the EN RD website. Click [here](#)
- EAFRD Project Examples in the ICT sector published. Click [here](#)
- Revamped EN RD events and meetings section launched. Click [here](#).
- New Leader cooperation video added to the media gallery. Click [here](#).

International Green Week, Berlin: Focus on Rural Development

DG AGRI and the EN RD were represented at the highly anticipated 'International Green Week' (IGW) event in Berlin on 21-30 January. With around 450 000 visitors this year, IGW is now one of the most important events for the food, agriculture and horticulture industries. Producers from all over the world exhibit and test-market a variety of food products, from fruit and vegetables to fish, meat and dairy products, as well as a vast selection of speciality wines, beers and spirits. There were also agricultural, forestry and landscaping exhibits, on themes such as renewable resources and scientific livestock breeding in Central and Eastern Europe. In total, 1 632 exhibitors attended the event from 57 countries.

DG AGRI had its own stand, offering a range of activities, including three thematic days - supported by the EN RD and focusing on 'Quality' (26/01), 'Organic Produce' (27/01) and 'Rural Development' (28/01). German rural development projects co-financed by the EU were also presented on these days.

In addition, a series of seminars and workshops were held (18 in total), grouped together under the theme of "Forum on the Future of Rural Development". Speaking to an audience of over 800 representatives of farmers, rural stakeholders, LAGs and public

administrations, Federal Minister of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Ilse Aigner, underlined the need to add more value to products. Minister Aigner praised a number of innovative initiatives and good practices presented during the Fair. The DG AGRI representative, Director Antonis Constantinou, delivered a speech on the future of rural development, emphasising the need to address the new challenges and priorities of the EU, taking account of the needs, possibilities and strengths of each country and region. He also highlighted the need for better integration of the various EU instruments to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth under the EU 2020 strategy.

The increasing importance of sustainability and green growth considerations and approaches was demonstrated during the IGW, through an array of exhibits and successful project examples, including those supported by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). This was convincing evidence that environmental and climate change requirements can be turned in to an advantage; and furthermore, "green" technologies can help raise the competitiveness of European agriculture and food. Click [here](#) for further information.



COUNTRY FOCUS



Portugal Size: 91 909 km²
Population: 10.5 million

Portuguese territory is composed of mainland (96.6% with 38% covered in forest) and two autonomous regions: the Azores (2.5%) and Madeira (0.9%) islands. Rural areas represent a large part of its territory: 85% in the mainland, 99.6% in the Autonomous Region of Azores and 81.4% in the Autonomous Region of Madeira. However, only about 30% of the population live in rural areas, largely characterised by an aging population, limited rural employment prospects and a strong rural exodus, especially among young people. Wine and vegetables in the agro-food chain, and cork in the forest chain represent the greatest share of agricultural and forestry production. Portugal has a high degree of biodiversity and natural and environmental resources, and a wide variety of quality local products and capabilities which can contribute to the sustainable development of rural areas – the key focus of the Portuguese RDPs. Click [here](#) for further information.

