

AGRO4AGRI project receives EU funding to empower sustainable agriculture by developing and demonstrating agrochemical solutions for plant nutrition and protection



AGRO4AGRI project's kick-off meeting held in AINIA facilities (Valencia, ES) on 28th-29th of May.

- AGRO4AGRI aims to pioneer the development of new plant nutrition and protection products through the use of nano and biotechnology to enhance fertilizer efficiency and introduce species-specific nematicides. By implementing the Safe and Sustainable by Design (SSbD) framework and assessing social readiness, the project will deliver sustainable and innovative solutions, positioning Europe at the forefront of the agroindustry.
- Led by AINIA (ES), the project unites a diverse array of partners, including prestigious academic centres, research organizations, SMEs, foundations (both EU and non-EU), and large companies.
- The European Union has allocated approximately 5.3 M€ from the Horizon Europe Programme to fund this project.

Paterna, May 29th, 2024. The Horizon Europe project **AGRO4AGRI** has kicked off on 28th – 29th May in Paterna, Valencia. Funded with 5.3 M€ from the European Commission, the initiative will seek to provide ground-breaking and **SSbD solutions** for plant nutrition and protection aiming to **reduce the use of agrochemicals in agriculture and minimise their negative environmental impact**.



The project consortium is formed by **12 high-profile European and non-European beneficiaries and associated partners** from **7 different countries**. AGRO4AGRI is coordinated by [AINIA](#) (ES), a specialised technology centre with more than 35 years of experience in R&D&I in the agri-food sector, and has the participation of the [Technological Centre CTC](#) (ES), the [University of Southern Denmark – SDU](#) (DK), the [Technical University of Denmark - DTU](#) (DK), [Fundación Grupo Cajamar](#) (ES), [Research Centre Hoogstraten](#) (BE), [SIPCAM OXON](#) (IT), [Institute for Advanced Studies Vienna – IHS](#) (AT), [Syspro](#) (ES), [Mirat Fertilizantes](#) (ES), [FI Group](#) (PT and ES) as well as [Optimat](#) (UK) as an associated partner.

The project celebrated its **kick-off meeting** on 28th and 29th May, hosted at AINIA, in Valencia. The kick-off meeting launched a momentous first contact among all partners, where they showcased their technical background and outlined their anticipated contributions to the project. The meeting ended with an insightful visit to AINIA's R&D facilities.

Julia Ponce, project coordinator at AINIA, commented:

“We are very excited to coordinate this project with such an exceptional consortium. We have high hopes that we can contribute to achieving a more sustainable and competitive European agriculture.”

AGRO4AGRI: paving the way for higher efficiency and less environmental impacts of the agroindustry

By the implementation of nano and biobased controlled delivery systems for fertilisers combined with plant biostimulants plant nutrient use efficiency will be enhanced. On the other hand, the development of target-specific biopesticides based on RNAi technology will avoid the use of chemicals that result toxic and bioaccumulative for humans nor non-targeted organisms. AGRO4AGRI's aims to deliver agrochemical solutions that will be biodegradable in the environment and safe for farmers, reducing at the same time the amount of inputs needed for crop productivity.

In this context, the scientific achievements of this European project will have enormous societal impacts, simultaneously addressing the top environmental challenges of current agricultural practices in Europe, the overuse of fertilizing and biocontrol products and their ecotoxicity, by the development and demonstration of safe, sustainable and cost-effective agrochemical alternatives.

AGRO4AGRI: impacting EU's policies and strategies to strengthen its leadership in the agro-food sector

AGRO4AGRI R&D and validation stages predict to **cut the use of nutrient elements in agriculture by more than 40% and pesticides by more than 50%** to be aligned with the current policies and initiatives such as the European Green Deal, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), The farm to Fork Strategy and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal.



Consequently, this project aims to **significantly influence EU policies and strategies** by addressing **soil contamination and degradation, reducing water consumption, improving the efficiency of agrochemicals, minimizing water body pollution, promoting the shift to sustainable food systems**, and ultimately **strengthening the EU's industrial competitiveness and leadership in the sustainable agro-food sector**. This will be achieved through the commercialization of innovative solutions, driven by the growing focus on sustainable agriculture and the use of safe inputs in both EU and global markets.

About Horizon Europe

With a budget of €95.5 billion for the period 2021-2027, Horizon Europe is currently the main funding programme of the European Union for research and innovation projects.

While supporting R&D&I and strengthening the European Research Area, the programme also aims to prevent climate change, contribute to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (ODS) and boost Europe's competitiveness and growth.

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