**Objective**

In the European Union, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) of the food sector are increasingly under pressure due to developing open markets, increasing demand of standardized and price competitive food products by the consumers, rising importance of large retailers and challenges in obeying governmental regulations. This raises the risk of losing many traditional foods as well as traditional processing techniques which are applied by SMEs using regional raw materials and often have a role in the cultural identity of regions.

In urban centers in Europe, groups of consumers are increasingly demanding traditional, local and/or organic food productions as food poisoning cases and the dispute on GMO undermined public confidence on industrial food producing systems. To reach these markets, SMEs of traditional foods must extend their skills in modern as well as competitive marketing and production techniques to comply with existing European regulations and to promote the aspects of their products related to nutrition and health.

To support these traditional SMEs, a knowledge transfer network shall be established with the focus on different food product sectors: Grains, fishes, fruits, vegetables and mushrooms. These food sectors are traditional, healthy foodstuffs which are essential for a balanced nutrition. To support traditional SMEs in these food sectors, a European network will interlink researchers, knowledge transfer organizations and associations of SMEs on European, national and region levels. The network will act as a mediator of information about innovations in production and marketing of traditional food, will foster entrepreneurship in the sector of traditional food producers and researchers as well as will develop strategic research and innovation agendas for the traditional food sectors to be competitive on future markets.

**Related information**

| Result In Brief | EU-wide network for more efficient communication and transfer of innovations for food producing SMEs |
| Report Summaries | Final Report Summary - TRAFOON (Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation) |
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Agriculture - Biotechnology - Environmental Protection - Scientific Research