



Report on COST863 Workshop

‘DEFINING NEEDS OF BERRY INDUSTRIES’

held in Odemira-Portugal from 20th to 21st March 2009

The Workshop ‘Defining needs of berry industries’ was held at the southwest coast of Alentejo, at Caixa de Crédito Agrícola Mútuo de S. Teotónio auditorium. It was organized by Instituto Nacional dos Recursos Biológicos with the collaboration of Fundação Odemira and Centro Operativo e Tecnológico Hortofrutícola Nacional. The aim of the Workshop was to further integrate researchers and Industries and get a better understanding on what is done at research level and how we can collaborate with the industry for new projects. The Workshop counted with 102 participants from 31 countries.

For the Workshop **10** experts were invited from different berry companies and representing diverse parts of the world. After the Management Committee Meeting all participants travelled by bus to Vila Nova de Milfontes where they stayed in different residential Hotels. The Workshop was divided in four sessions and started in the morning of March 20. After the welcome ceremony with local authorities the **Session I - Presentation of the COST863 Euroberry network** took place with oral presentations made by: 1) Bruno Mezzetti - Chairman COST863; 2) Philippe Chartier - Genetic Resources, Breeding and Biotech; 3) Audrius Sasnauskas - Variety Network; 4) Paivi Parikka - Pest and Diseases; 5) Pedro B. Oliveira - Cultivation Systems; 6) Erika Kruger - Climate Change; 7) Margit Laimer da Camara Machado - Bioactive Compounds.

At **Session II - World Perspective**, participants had the opportunity to take notes from presentations dealing with the state of the art of berry industry at **USA** (Fumiomi Takeda, USDA-ARS Agricultural Research Service, Apalachian Fruit Research Station, Kearneysville – ‘North American Berry Industries and Research Areas’), **New Zealand** (Jill Stanley, The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited – ‘The New Zealand Berry Industry and Main Research Areas New Zealand’), **Sweden** (Magnus Engstedt, County Board of Agriculture – ‘Berry Industry in Nordic-Scandinavian Countries’), **Poland** (Bozena Nosecka, Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – ‘Berry Industry in Poland’), **Portugal** (Marta Baptista, Driscoll’s of Europe – ‘A Contribution for Research Needs on European Grown Berries’) and **Turkey** (Sezai Ercisli, Ataturk University – ‘Berry Industry in Turkey’).

At **Session III - Plant Material**, three major topics were presented: ‘Research on Viruses and Phytoplasma Infecting EU Berries – Advances, Challenges and Threats’ by Josef Špak, from the Biology Centre, Institute of Plant Molecular Biology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic; ‘What Challenges Lie Ahead for the

Blueberry Varieties of the Future?’ by Mathieu Billotte from Multibaies, France and 'New Fruits Breeding Programme Developing in Europe' by Danilo Bernardini, Newfruit Cesena, Italy.

The Workshop ended with **Session IV – Others**, where different subjects were addressed by berry companies from different parts of Europe. Snjezana Sredojevic from the company **Frigogrand, Serbia**, made a presentation on 'How to Use Scientific Proves to Create a Retail Brand Name in Frozen Fruit Bussines - Example 'First Fruit', SERBIA'; Bo Ahlstedt, from **Olle Svensson Company, Sweden**, made also a presentation about the company 'Olle Svensson AB as Part of Nordic Food Group'; Nicola Fuzzati from **Indena, Milan, Italy** presented '*Vaccinium myrtillus*: Features of an Industrial Medicinal Plant' and Annalisa Bacchi, from the **Barilla Company, Parma, Italy** presented the 'Barilla Company and Interest on Berry Fruit'.

Abstracts of all this presentations can be downloaded from the COST863 web site at <http://www.euroberry.it/workinggroup/index.html>

At the end of the day participants had the opportunity to taste 13 different strawberry cultivars commercially grown in Portugal and Spain. Later a farewell dinner was served at Hotel Social, Vila Nova de Milfontes. During dinner an "Alentejano" traditional choral group, made only with male singers, had the opportunity to entertain the delegates.

On March 21 the group visited two commercial farms in the region. At the first farm (**Wellpict Portugal**) participants travelled through strawberry fields of cultivar Candonga – Saborosa grown under protected cultivation. At the end of the visit a brief stop was done in order to allow the delegates to ask questions about early strawberry production system and taste some berries. At the second farm (**BerryPort, Lda**) it was possible to visit strawberry, raspberry and blackberry fields under protected cultivation. All participants had the opportunity to interact with field personnel and ask questions to the technicians responsible for running the fields.

Participants defined this Workshop as extremely valuable for both research and industry since during the three days of the Management Committee and Workshop in Portugal was possible to establish new contacts and develop new ideas for the European berry group.