

## Press release

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Athens, March 23rd, 2016

### **Launch of Smart-AKIS, Smart Farming Thematic Network. Embracing Smart Farming in Europe.**

*Response to the global food challenge of feeding more than 9 billion people in 2050 and the sustainability and competitiveness challenges of the European agricultural sector, demands a wider adoption of Smart Farming technologies allowing for a more sustainable, resource efficient and more productive EU agriculture. To support this goal, the Smart-AKIS Thematic Network on Smart Farming was launched today in Athens by the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), Network Coordinator, together with 12 other partners from 7 EU countries.*

#### **The third Green Revolution goes digital**

Following the plant breeding and genetics revolutions, a third Green Revolution is taking over the agricultural world based upon the combined application of modern information technologies and solutions such as precision equipment, the Internet of Things, positioning systems, Big Data, drones, robotics, etc.

Adoption of Smart Farming technologies allows for increases in the sustainability, resource efficiency and yield of the agricultural production. However, a number of technological, social, regulatory and economic factors have hindered the widespread adoption of these technologies, both in large but also in small and medium scale farms. Amongst these factors, the gap between the needs, interests and expectations of the research and the farmer communities has greatly contributed to the low adoption of these technologies, preventing to fully tap their potential for a more productive, resource efficient and sustainable EU agriculture.

A call for mainstreaming Smart Farming in Europe was made in 2015 by the European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' (EIP-AGRI), challenge responded by the Smart-AKIS Thematic Network.

#### **Smart-AKIS. Smart Farming Thematic Network**

The goal of the Smart-AKIS Thematic Network, supported by the Horizon 2020 programme, is to increase the adoption of Smart Farming technologies by the European farmer community. To that end, Smart-AKIS will:

- Create and disseminate an inventory of direct applicable solutions from the large stock of research results and commercial applications in Smart Farming in Europe, tailored to the needs of farmers.
- Foster the collaboration between the farmer community, extension and advisory services, research and Smart Farming technology and solution providers for the promotion of new innovation projects and processes for the development of new Smart Farming solutions taking into consideration end-users' needs and interests.





Such approach will take place both at national level, in 7 countries (France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Serbia, Spain and UK) as well as at a European wide level. A Smart Farming Community Platform, operational in 2017 and integrated within the EIP-Agri database from 2019 onwards will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the initiative.

Smart-AKIS is composed of 13 partners from 8 countries, representing academia and research, farmers associations and cooperatives, advisory and extension services and the agricultural equipment industry: Agricultural University of Athens (Greece), DLO Foundation and Delphy (Netherlands), Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research-ZALF (Germany), BioSense Institute and Government of Vojvodina (Serbia), Technical Institutes of Agriculture-ACTA and National Federation of Cooperatives for Agriculture Material Users-CUMA (France), Institute for Agri-food Technologies and Infrastructures of Navarra-INTIA and Iniciativas Innovadoras (Spain), the European Agricultural Machinery Association-CEMA (Belgium) and the European Network for Engineering and Systems in the Rural Sector-EurAgEng (UK).



The **European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' (EIP-AGRI)** was launched by the European Commission in a bid to promote innovation in the agricultural and forestry sectors and bring research and practice closer together. [www.eip-agri.eu](http://www.eip-agri.eu)

**Thematic Networks** are a particular format of multi-actor projects promoted by EIP-AGRI and funded by EU's Horizon 2020 programme. They collect existing but insufficiently used scientific knowledge and best practices, making it ready to be used by practitioners through accessible and understandable materials, resources and tools that will enrich the EIP-AGRI database with concrete solutions that farmers can easily implement.

For more information, please contact Dr. Spyros Fountas, Smart-AKIS Coordinator, at [sfountas@aua.gr](mailto:sfountas@aua.gr).



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