



Press release  
Paris, June 12<sup>th</sup> 2015

## “Healthy Diet, Healthy Environment within a fruitful economy: The role of fruit and vegetables”

### Conclusions of the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference of EGEA June 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> 2015, Milan

The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of EGEA Conference took place\* on June 3 – 5, 2015 in Milan (Italy) and brought together more than 200 participants from 30 countries to discuss the role of fruit and vegetables for a healthy diet and environment within a fruitful economy.

Considering the growing increase of non-communicable diseases (i.e., cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer and diabetes) as well as overweight and obesity<sup>(1)</sup>, food quality is a crucial issue not only in terms of public health but also economically. Indeed, many studies and scientific publications have demonstrated the importance of eating fruit and vegetables to improve diet quality and prevent such diseases. But, a decrease in consumption was observed in Europe over the last decade.

#### More than 50 prominent speakers

Representatives of the lead DG of the European Commission, the European Parliament, WHO, FAO, WCRF, and eminent scientists from well-known universities as well as representatives of different global organizations from all over the world presented their work and discussed with the public during 3 days in order to try to meet tomorrow's food challenges.



<sup>(1)</sup> Currently, 50% of the European population is overweight or obese. Overweight is increasing particularly among young people: 1 out of 3 children in 2010 versus 1 out of 4 in 2008.

## Developing policies for a healthy diet

EGEA conference allowed putting forward numerous recommendations in different fields to encourage and promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables. Especially:

- **Information and education:** Incorporate nutrition into the curricula in national education systems and increase consumers' sensitivity on subjects linked to health issues in line with WHO guidance.
- **Food environment:** Support the fruit and vegetable sector's promotion and marketing efforts. Promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables in schools, thereby supporting the European Program "School Fruit Scheme" and promote healthy food in public institutions. Encourage access of fruit and vegetables among the most disadvantaged populations.
- **Food system:** Give financial support to the fruit and vegetable production as much as the agri-food sectors, and encourage the supply chain in its actions to ensure better and wider choices to consumers. Support research to increase the production and the variety of fruit and vegetables in an environmentally responsible manner. Thus, this increase will create new jobs.

**A higher intake of fruit and vegetables will be helpful for agriculture, employment and health.**

## A one-day focus session on child nutrition

As eating habits are acquired very early in life, one-day focus session was dedicated to child nutrition, in which family plays a crucial role at a young age, and even during pregnancy.



*"Acceptance of food preferences are defined by three factors: patience, joy, and curiosity."*

**Margherita Caroli**, Paediatrician and Nutritionist, Head of the Nutrition Unit, ASL Brindisi, Italy.

*"Any child who is exposed to a certain kind of food for more than 8 times is more prone to accept it; unfortunately, mothers give up after 2 or 3 times if they see their children don't appreciate it."*

*"Mothers' diet during pregnancy and breastfeeding does influence children's tastes."*

**Sylvie Issanchou**, Research Director, INRA, France





## EGEA Conferences aim to translate science into action

Since 2003, under the chairmanship of Professor Elio Riboli, Aprifel developed the EGEA Conference, a strategy for evidence-based policymaking which brings together multi-disciplinary knowledge and stakeholders to explore and develop concrete recommendations for policy and practice changes.

### Abstract book and poster winners available on:

[www.egeaconference.com](http://www.egeaconference.com)

*\* Organised by Aprifel and Interfel with the support of FranceAgriMer and the Ministry of Agriculture, Agribusiness and Forestry, and with the participation of the European Commission.*

#### **About Aprifel**

Established in 1981, Aprifel, Agency for research and information on fruit and vegetables, focuses on the dissemination of scientific data on fruit and vegetables among professionals of the health sector, within fruit and vegetable valuechain, and consumers' associations. Its role of international interface in the field of scientific information is due to different initiatives, such as Nutrifel database (a collection of scientific studies), monthly scientific magazines (IFAVA Scientific newsletter and Equation Nutrition), experts' committees (the Scientific Committee and the Consumers' Committee), as well as a number of conferences (EGEA, "Rencontres de l'Aprifel").

For further information: [www.aprifel.com](http://www.aprifel.com)

#### **About Interfel**

Established in 1976, Interfel (Interbranch association for fruit and vegetables) brings together and represents all the fruit and vegetable professions, from production to distribution, including mass catering (producers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, Department Managers of retail brands). As a body governed by private law and initiative, Interfel is a national agricultural interbranch association recognised by the French rural law, and by the European Union on 21 November 1996 within Single OCM Regulation (Common Market Organisation). Interfel drafts interbranch agreements which have the effect of law and implement specific actions with information and promotional-advertising purposes.

For further information: [www.interfel.com](http://www.interfel.com) / [www.lesfruitsetlegumesfrais.com](http://www.lesfruitsetlegumesfrais.com)

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