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NetGrow - Enhancing the innovativeness of food SMEs

NetGrow, a European FP7 project with a duration of 4 years, started the first of May 2010 and aims at enhancing the innovativeness of food SMEs through an improved management of network learning and strategic network behaviour. NetGrow bundles the capacities of research institutions and SME organizations from 9 different countries [Belgium, Ireland, Netherlands, Hungary, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, France and Germany]. NetGrow invites SMEs from all over Europe to take part in the development of an innovation toolbox that will be designed according to the company needs.

Innovation Problems in the food industry

The innovation rates in the food industry are far below what this vitally important sector deserves. Strategic network behaviour is of crucial importance for innovation as it enables the food company to expand its resource base and to absorb new trends and technologies. It is observed that food SMEs often fail in establishing a strategic and efficient network. NetGrow aims at supporting SME's (strategic) network learning for achieving higher business success and business performance.

Made to measure business

The strength of the toolbox lies in its confrontation with the business perspective throughout its whole development. The toolbox will be tailor-made for SMEs based on their input during the research phase of the project and tested in a two-stage testing within both, SMEs and network organizations. Their feedback will help us to fine tune the business tools and to bring them to a higher level.

Project partners

The project is coordinated by Prof. Xavier Gellynck from Gent University [Belgium]. Partners in the project are: Teagasc – Agriculture and Food

Development Authority [Ireland], Stichting Food Valley [Netherlands],
Debrecen University [Hungary], Skåne Food Innovation Network [Sweden],
Institute for Food Studies & Agro Industrial Development [Denmark],
Bologna University [Italy], LaSalle Beauvais Polytechnic Institute [France],
Bonn University [Germany]

If you would like more information please visit our website
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