

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOODINTEGRITY

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Food Integrity “the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished or in perfect condition”. Providing assurance to consumers and other stakeholders about the safety, authenticity and quality of European food (integrity) is of prime importance in adding value to the European Agri-food economy. The integrity of European foods is under constant threat from fraudulently labelled imitations that try to exploit that added value. The FOODINTEGRITY project will directly address this issue and will be an international focal point for harmonisation and exploitation of research and technology for insuring the integrity of European food. Comprising an inner core of project participants from industry, academia, research institutes, technology providers and a global network of stakeholders, FOODINTEGRITY will rationalise and harmonise capability to provide a coherent structure and process for assuring the food supply. FOODINTEGRITY will: facilitate the sharing of information between stakeholder groups regarding European food integrity; establish processes for harmonising and exploiting existing databases; establish fit for purpose methodology to address stakeholder needs; identify and address research gaps by procuring and delivering €3M of commissioned projects; establish a self-sustaining Food-fraud early warning system for identifying emerging food fraud risks; establish a self-sustaining worldwide network of stakeholders to ensure maximum uptake of the project legacy. Improved verification procedures will be developed for food control and industry stakeholders using 3 key commodities as exemplars: olive oil, spirit drinks and seafood. In addition a consumer study in China will assess their consumer attitudes in the face of substantial counterfeiting of European food. Finally it will establish expert food authenticity platforms that will supply independent expert opinion on food authenticity/food fraud to the European Commission, Codex and other national/international bodies.

Keywords: food integrity, food safety, food quality, food authenticity, food traceability

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