

Press release

Organizing of Training Seminars of the CheeseCULT project, co-funded by "Interreg IPA II Greece - Albania Programme 2014-2020"

From 20 to 22 September 2021, the Dairy School of Ioannina successfully organized the training seminars of the project "CheeseCULT - Cheese Route as an Innovative Cultural Heritage Driving Force for Rural Tourism Development in the Cross-Border Area", which is co-funded by the Interreg IPA II Greece-Albania Programme 2014-2020 and more specifically by the European Union and National Funds of Greece and Albania.



The purpose of the training seminars was to train the stakeholders involved in the Project (cheesemakers, breeders, etc.) on Agritourism, Cheese Production, Cheese Quality, Marketing and Culinary Innovation, to acquire the necessary knowledge for their active participation in the "Cheese Route", currently under development. In the context of the seminars, presentations were made by representatives of the two Greek Partners of the Project and in particular by Professor Giannis Skoufos and PhD candidate Ms. Ekaterini Nelli of the Department of Agriculture of the University of Ioannina which is the

Project's Lead Partner, Ms. Alexandra Mega, Director, and Ms. Panagiota Papapetrou, Trainer in the Dairy School of Ioannina, and by Mr. Anastasios Tzikas of the Directorate for Control Management on Milk and Meat, ELGO Demeter, as well as by external collaborators of the project, Mr. Nikolaos Kasalias and Ms. Eleni Kasalia.

During the three-day period the following presentations were made:

In the Section "Cheese Production", special reference was made to the production of traditional cheeses of Epirus but also to the importance of single-breed cheeses of Epirus and a traceability system of feta and kefalograviera made from the milk of Boutsiko and Karamaniko sheep breeds by the Department of Agriculture of the University of Ioannina. Additionally, a demonstration of the cheese production process took place at the premises of the Dairy School of Ioannina.

In the Section "Cheese Quality", emphasis was placed on highlighting the importance of locality of cheese, traceability and the application of safety standards and principles of Health and Safety in the production of traditional cheese.

In the Unit "Culinary Innovation" traditional and innovative recipes were presented together with the methods of integrating the Epirus cheese in modern Greek gastronomy, while the "Marketing" section analyzed the general principles and the current trends in the dairy market.

In the "Agritourism" section, a presentation was made on how Agritourism can be a tool in the development approach of the region of Epirus, as well as the institutional challenges for its development.

In addition, the participants were informed about the operation of the platform developed in the framework of the project to capture the Cheese Route using the GIS application, as well as the possibility of their active participation in the transnational network.

The training seminars were attended by prominent cheesemakers of Epirus and many breeders of sheep and goats particularly including those involved with indigenous breed populations that showed great interest and willingness to participate in the project.

It is noted that via the activities of the CheeseCult Project at cross-border level, it is attempted to connect primary production and in particular the production of dairy and cheese products with the sustainable tourism development in the area of reference.

For more information about the event, visit the Project website (www.https://cheesecult.eu/)

www.greece-albania.eu

The Interreg IPA CBC Programme "Greece - Albania 2014 - 2020" supports the cooperation between the two countries. Under a common fund, the two countries join forces and capitalize on the advantages of the cross-border region to achieve benefits for both countries.