This presentation shall neither be binding nor construed as constituting commitment by the EC. Only the work programme prevails.
Participatory workshop, 17 October 2017

• Organised by DG RTD and DG AGRI in cooperation with the SCAR SWGs AKIS and Food Systems
• Linked to the European Commission conference Harnessing Research and Innovation for FOOD 2030: a Science Policy Dialogue
• 60 participants:
  Mainly Agri-food SMEs, also innovation managers, intermediaries, experts, retailers, consumer representatives and policy makers
• 23 Agri-food SME presentations of collaboration on innovation.
Objectives of the workshop

Discussions, formulate recommendations and list best practices on:

• Agri-food SMEs' main challenges, opportunities and collaborative innovation approaches
• knowledge flows/exchange among Agri-food SMEs and along the supply chain
• cross-fertilisation between Agri-food SMEs and all links in the chain
• consumer expectations (quality, local, organic, traditional food) and environmental aspects
• market opportunities and challenges (economic aspects)
Setting the scene

- **Barend Verachtert (DG RTD) and Rob Peters (DG AGRI)**
  - stressed the importance of the food systems approach - joint forces by both DGs

- **Aniko Juhasz, AKI - HU:**
  - many SMEs in the EU do not innovate sufficiently or rely solely on in-house expertise; stimulating collaboration on innovation is essential

- **Cristina Mota Capitao, Inovisa - PT:**
  - CropUP initiative develops an ecosystem of start-ups and other actors to contribute to the technology revolution and to collaborate on knowledge and innovation

- **Inge Arents, Flanders’ FOOD - BE:**
  - Flanders' Food enhances innovation capacity by leading to knowledge, leading in knowledge, accelerate efficient and effective innovation and creating/crossing value chains
Collaboration on innovation: 23 presentations

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Discussing co-creating innovation: what and who?

• Form **multi-actor innovation clusters** to stimulate innovative activity by interactions, by sharing facilities, exchanging knowledge and expertise to contribute effectively to technology transfer, networking and dissemination

• Better **connect agri-food SMEs** to the other links in the food chain which are **closer to the final consumers**, and support them in more direct connections with the end-consumers of their products

• create **better understanding of the interconnection** between food production and consumption in the value chain

• Co-creating innovation in agri-food is not only about better connections in the chain; it is also about **involving local and regional communities**

• Next to research, focus on **instruments and public-private actions** that enhance the innovation ecosystem such as EIP-AGRI, EIT Food, public procurement, etc.
Discussing co-creating innovation: how?

• Supporting the search for the right **knowledge, developing skills, expertise and competence** is equally important as providing funding: creating an 'innovation supporting environment'

• **More support infrastructures and networks/hubs** such as Inovisa and Flanders’ FOOD should be developed at regional, national and EU level

• **Networking, (physical) events and workshops** are important to demonstrate the latest technology and to exchange best practices at regional/national and EU level

• Focus on knowledge exchange and demonstration across borders to enhance **possibilities of replicating** examples and mechanisms from one region to another (EIP-AGRI)
Tips for successful collaboration

- Trust, transparency and expectations
- Team facilitation: the spider in the web
- Win-win for both economic and societal impact
Potential solutions for future collaboration

Improve possibilities for exchange of data & information in the agri-food chain

The right funding in the right phases of the innovation process

Enforce multi-actor approach for an optimal combination of equipment and skills
Types of support to stimulate collaboration

- Towards a mature innovation ecosystem
- Policy and regulation to foster cooperation, a level playing field and create synergy
- Financial support to prepare innovation projects
Thank you!

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