

## ROSETTA Project 1<sup>st</sup> Press Release- Kick Off Meeting

Reducing food waste due to marketing standards through alternative market access

**Thessaloniki, 24 May 2024**

Food waste is a critical issue affecting global sustainability, with up to 10% of the 88 million tons of annual food waste in the EU linked to marketing standards and date labelling. This pressing challenge not only impacts the environment but also affects economic efficiency and food security.

Introducing the **ROSETTA project**, an innovative initiative funded by the **Horizon Europe Programme** (HEU), which officially commenced in January in Thessaloniki, Greece. With a budget of approximately **five million euros** and a duration of **thirty-six (36) months**, ROSETTA aims to revolutionize food marketing standards and significantly reduce food waste.

Specifically, ROSETTA focuses on:

- Assessing the impact of current food marketing standards on food waste through comprehensive research, surveys, data analysis and stakeholder consultations.
- Developing innovative solutions and testing new marketing standards and practices through five pilot cases across different regions in Europe, focusing on key food research areas: fruit and vegetables, dairy, cereals, and meat.
- Engaging stakeholders by establishing a Community of Practice (CoP) to facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- Providing evidence-based policy recommendations to support the adoption of new marketing standards that prioritize sustainability.

The project will examine four key food commodities: fruit and vegetables, dairy, meat and cereals.

## Background

The importance of ROSETTA's mission is underscored by the European Union's commitment to reducing food waste as part of its broader sustainability and environmental goals. Marketing standards play a crucial role in the food supply chain by ensuring products meet consumer expectations and facilitating trade. However, these standards also contribute to food waste, particularly through cosmetic specifications and date labelling. Suboptimal products, which deviate from cosmetic or peripheral aspects but not from intrinsic quality or safety, are frequently discarded due to consumer perceptions of lower quality. The retail sector significantly shapes and reinforces these consumer behaviours, further complicating the issue.

ROSETTA aims to provide new insights into the establishment of marketing standards and their contribution to food waste. By employing a mixed-methods research approach, the project will explore the motivations and criteria behind private marketing standards, examine consumer expectations, and assess the true impact of these standards on food waste. Additionally, ROSETTA will develop innovative

estimation models to quantify food waste generated by marketing standards and identify trade-offs between food waste reduction and other sustainability objectives.

ROSETTA aligns with EU's policy framework, contributing to the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, which emphasize sustainable food systems and reducing environmental impact.

## Consortium Partners

The project brings together a diverse group of leading institutions and organisations, each contributing unique expertise and resources towards our shared goal of revolutionizing food marketing standards. Specifically, the consortium comprises seventeen (17) partners from seven (7) different EU Member States and EU Neighbourhood countries. **Q-Plan International** leads the project as the coordinator, collaborating with Teagasc- Agricultural and Food Development Authority, Copenhagen Business School, Geoponiko Panepistimion Athinon, White Research SRL, Pedal Consulting Sro, Polytechnio Kritis, Universitat Wien, Draxis Environmenal SA, Fruitevegetables Europe, FBCD AS, Fundaja Unimos, Chalkiadiakis AE, Mochnik Jerzy Michal, Freshis Agritech SL, Safe Food Advocacy Europe and Naturmaelk AMBA.

## Quote

**Eirini Efthymiadou,**  
Project Coordinator

*"Food waste isn't just about what's left on our plates; it's also about what never makes it to our plates due to strict marketing standards. Projects like ROSETTA aim to change that, making food systems more efficient and sustainable."*

For more information

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