



6th EUROPEAN AWARD FOR
COOPERATIVE INNOVATION

European Award for Cooperative Innovation **The Final Ceremony**

Recognising outstanding sustainability-driven innovations of European agri-cooperatives

Organised by:



Powered by:



Celebrating the:



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FOREWORD FROM THE COGECA PRESIDENT

It gives me immense pleasure, and indeed great pride, to introduce this brochure celebrating the awardees of the European Award for Cooperative Innovation. This sixth edition is particularly significant, coinciding with the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives (IYC 2025), celebrated under the banner, “Cooperatives Build a Better World.” The innovations detailed within these pages are the most powerful testament to that mission.

Celebrating innovation, securing our future

The cooperative model is not merely a business structure; it is an economic and social pillar supporting the European agri-food, fishery, and forestry sectors. For decades, it has proven to be a model that works and delivers, stabilising markets, sharing knowledge, and returning value directly to our members—the farmers and forest owners who manage our landscapes and feed our continent. Our awardees demonstrate how we are already leading the transition towards sustainability, driving systemic change, and pioneering digital transformation. We must ensure that policymakers do not jeopardise this proven model through ill-fitting or overly burdensome legislation.

A call for robust support and recognition

As we celebrate these outstanding achievements, we must also look ahead. Our sector faces unprecedented global challenges, from climate volatility to geopolitical disruption and generational renewal. Meeting these challenges necessitates a strong vision but more importantly a robust and effective budget support. It is also fundamental to provide the necessary financial and policy frameworks to sustain the innovative efforts of our cooperatives and ensure the continued resilience of our primary producers.

Furthermore, these awards highlight a model that demonstrably improves the functioning of the entire value chain, not just for profit, but to genuinely support farmers and rural communities.

Our cooperatives are the engine of rural vitality, creating job opportunities and providing essential support for local initiatives, ranging from cultural and sports activities to educational programmes. They are the bedrock of local economies and the guardians of rural heritage.

To all the awardees, you represent the best of what European cooperation can achieve. Your vision, dedication, and solidarity inspire us all. Let us work together to ensure that the European political framework continues to recognise and champion this indispensable model for a prosperous and sustainable future.



Lennart Nilsson
President of Cogeca

ABOUT THE AWARD

The European Award for Cooperative Innovation, organised by Cogeca (the General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives) with the support of Cajamar, stands as the continent's pre-eminent accolade celebrating outstanding innovation and demonstrated excellence across the agri-food, fishery, and forestry sectors.

As one of the longest and most esteemed awards schemes dedicated to these industries, the Award provides a crucial platform for cooperatives to elevate the promotion of their brands, secure pan-European appreciation, and affirm their leading role in shaping the future of rural economies.

The 2025 Edition: A focus on sustainable excellence

The launch of the sixth edition of this prestigious Award is particularly significant, coinciding with the United Nations 2025 International Year of Cooperatives. This commemoration underscores the pivotal role co-operatives play in global sustainability efforts.

Accordingly, the 2025 edition places a distinct focus upon 'sustainability-driven' innovation. The laudable entries in this cycle demonstrate success in harnessing economic, social, or environmental objectives to create innovative services, market opportunities, processes, and business models.

Categories of Distinction

Winners of this highly contested award have secured distinction within one of the three core innovation fields, reflecting a comprehensive approach to value creation:

Economic Value Creation: Recognising innovative practices and processes aimed at the successful creation of new products, services, market space, and business models driven by robust economic objectives.

Social Value Creation: Highlighting practices and processes dedicated to the furtherance of new products, services, and models driven by demonstrable social objectives, such as community welfare or improved member engagement.

Environmental Value Creation: Commending innovative solutions that generate new products, services, and business models driven by vital environmental objectives, including resource efficiency, biodiversity protection, and climate change mitigation.

Cooperation for Sustainability; Recognising partnership and collaborative efforts that drive long-term environmental, economic, and social sustainability across value chains.

Special recognitions at the final ceremony

In addition to the main category winners, the final ceremony will honour eleven cooperatives with a recognition of prestigious outstanding Innovation, celebrating their exemplary achievements across various critical areas of the sector. These special acknowledgements highlight the breadth and depth of groundbreaking work being carried out by European agri-cooperatives, specifically for:

- Operational Efficiency
- Digital Transformation & Cooperative Efficiency
- Strategic Branding and Market Value Creation
- Innovative Value-Chain Coalition
- Decarbonisation and Accelerating the Transition
- Systemic Change
- Farming for Water
- Cooperative Roots for Community Strength
- Cultivating Tomorrow's Leaders
- Cooperation for Agricultural Futures
- Strategic Public-Private Model



International Year of Cooperatives

Cooperatives Build
a Better World

The United Nations General Assembly has officially proclaimed **2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC 2025)**, celebrated under the resonant theme: “**Cooperatives Build a Better World**”. This declaration, following the success of the first IYC in 2012, is a powerful, year-long, global initiative intended to draw widespread public attention to the unique and vital contributions of **cooperative enterprises**. It serves to highlight the cooperative business model as an alternative means of conducting business that inherently balances economic success with social and environmental responsibility.

The primary purpose of IYC 2025 is to **raise public awareness** of the invaluable impact that **cooperatives** have on major global issues, including poverty reduction, employment generation, and social integration. Cooperatives, which are businesses owned and controlled by their members, are recognised for their democratic, member-driven nature, which ensures that decisions benefit both their members and the wider community. This year encourages governments, policymakers, institutions, and the public to recognise and support these enterprises as key drivers of **inclusive and sustainable economic growth**.

Crucially, the International Year of Cooperatives underscores the vital role the **cooperative movement** plays in accelerating the global effort to implement the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** by 2030. Under the “Cooperatives Build a Better World” banner, the initiative showcases how **cooperatives** drive progress across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability. The Year advocates for the creation of **supportive legal and policy frameworks** globally to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem for cooperatives and promote their growth in all sectors.

For stakeholders in the agri-food, fishery, and forestry sectors, the IYC 2025 provides a pivotal moment to highlight the sustainable innovations originating from **cooperatives**. It is an unparalleled opportunity to reinforce the message that cooperative values—such as self-help, solidarity, and concern for community—are essential solutions for tackling contemporary challenges like climate change and economic inequality. By inspiring **purposeful leadership** and engaging youth, the Year aims to mobilise stakeholders worldwide to expand and support cooperatives everywhere, thereby strengthening their enduring impact for a better world.

“...you are driving development across large and small communities, fighting poverty and social exclusion, strengthening food security, helping local entrepreneurs access national and international markets and so much more...”

António Guterres UN Secretary-General message on the International Year of Cooperatives 2025 launch

“The positive impact and influence European agri-cooperatives can have on farmers’ needs, for the competitiveness of the sector, for the environment and society is exponential. Our big job is to make sure more people know and understand the cooperative model.

Lennart Nilsson - Cogeca’s President

THE JURY OF THE 2025 AWARD



ELLI TSIFOROU



FLORENTIN BERCU

Vice-President of Cogeca



ROBERTO GARCÍA TORRENTE

Chief Sustainability Officer at Cajamar



GIUSEPPE GUERINI

President of Cooperatives Europe and Member of the European Economic and Social Committee



HÉLÈNE-DIANE DAGE

Deputy Head of Unit GROW/F3 Textiles, Food and Retail at European Commission

OUR SPONSOR: CAJAMAR CAJA RURAL

Cajamar Caja Rural, a Credit Cooperative Society, is the leading cooperative banking group in Spain and a significant financial entity within the Spanish banking system. Founded upon the principles of cooperation and social responsibility, the group is committed to providing comprehensive financial services that cater specifically to the distinct needs of self-employed professionals, SMEs, and local economies.

Indispensable support for the agri-food sector

Cajamar holds a unique and long-standing commitment to the agri-food sector, which forms part of the bank's core identity and expertise, encapsulated by their profound "AGRO DNA" philosophy. This is the formula that aims to sustain the world, addressing the challenge of creating new forms of food production, income, and life for an increasingly global, human, and sustainable society. Cajamar recognises the necessity of responding to new production and consumption models that secure the future of the sector.

The bank offers a comprehensive suite of specialised financial instruments, but its support extends significantly beyond mere finance, demonstrating a deep expertise within the agri-food sector:

- **Investigating:** The bank supports 75 agrosustainability projects at its experimental stations, driving practical research.
- **Training:** It fosters a network of over 3,000 experts focused on agri-food knowledge and innovation.
- **Promoting:** Cajamar organises approximately 150 agri-food events annually, attracting over 20,000 attendees to share knowledge.
- **Sharing:** The bank disseminates expertise through over 600 publications of studies and agri-food knowledge.

Furthermore, Cajamar has established key platforms to accelerate sector development:

- **Cajamar Innova:** This initiative actively supports entrepreneurs and companies in developing new projects specifically tailored to address the **global challenges of water**, fostering an innovation ecosystem dedicated to sustainability.
- **Plataforma Tierra:** This digital platform acts as a community for sharing experiences, market and legal information, events, trends, digital insights, and sustainability knowledge within the agri-food sector.

By coupling tailored financial products with dedicated research and knowledge transfer initiatives, Cajamar solidifies its position as a central strategic partner, indispensable for fostering a more sustainable, human, and globally competitive European agri-food sector.

For more information: <https://www.cajamar.es/en>

THE HOSTS OF THE 2025 AWARD



ANDRÉ FRANQUEIRA RODRIGUES

Member of the European Parliament and Vice-President of the PS/Azores

André Franqueira Rodrigues is a Member of the European Parliament since 16 of July 2024.

He is the S&D coordinator in the Committee on Fisheries and a member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, as well the Committee on Transport and Tourism, on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and on the Committee on Security and Defence.

He was a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region of the Azores, in the XIII legislature term, and Vice-President of the Socialist Party Parliamentary Group. He also served as an advisor to the President of the Regional Government of the Azores during the XI and XII Regional Governments.

Franqueira Rodrigues holds a degree in Law and has completed the coursework component of a Master's degree in Legal and Forensic Sciences at the Faculty of Law of the University of Coimbra.

He is currently the Vice-President of the PS/Azores.



FRANCISCO ASSIS

Member of the European Parliament and President of the General Council of the Polytechnic Institute of Porto

Mr Francisco Assis was born in 1965 in Amarante, Portugal, and has a degree in Philosophy from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Porto. He served as Mayor of Amarante from 1989 to 1995 and has since held several positions for the Portuguese Socialist Party. He was a member of the Portuguese Parliament (from 1995 to 2004, from 2009 to 2014 and in 2024), President of the Socialist Parliamentary Group (from 1997 to 2002 and from 2009 to 2011) and member of the European Parliament (from 2004 to 2009 and from 2014 to 2019).

From 2020 to 2024, he was President of the Economic and Social Council of Portugal.

He is currently a Member of the European Parliament and President of the General Council of the Polytechnic Institute of Porto.



6th EUROPEAN AWARD FOR
COOPERATIVE INNOVATION

www.agricoopativesaward.eu

Award Ceremony of the 6th Edition

19th November 2025
18.30

European Parliament,
Room ANTALL 4Q2,
Brussels



Co-hosted by:
MEP André Franqueira Rodrigues
MEP Francisco Assis

18.30

Welcome session

Welcome by the Master of Ceremony **Ksenija Simovic**, Copa-Cogeca
Welcome speech by **Lennart Nilsson**, President of Cogeca
Welcome speech by **Francisco Assis**, MEP (S&D Group, Portugal)

18.40

Keynote address and speeches

Roberto Garcia Torrente, Chief Sustainability officer at Cajamar
Hélène-Diane Dage, Deputy Head of Unit GROW/F3 Textiles, Food and Retail at
European Commission

19.00

Presentations of the Awards

- Presentation by **Herbert Dorfmann MEP**, of Highly Commended Innovation Awards for: Cooperative roots for community strength, Cultivating tomorrow's leaders, and Cooperation for agricultural futures

Announcement of the Winner of the Award for Social Value Creation

- Presentation by **Carmen Crespo Díaz MEP**, of Highly Commended Innovation Awards for: Operational efficiency, Digital transformation and cooperative efficiency, and Strategic branding and market value creation

Announcement of the Winner of the Award for Economic Value Creation

- Presentation by **Barry Cowen MEP**, of Highly Commended Innovation Awards for: for Decarbonisation and accelerating the transition, Systemic change, and Farming for water

Announcement of the Winner of the Award for Environmental Value Creation

- Presentation by **Stefano Bonaccini MEP**, of Highly Commended Innovation Awards for Strategic public-private model, and Innovative value-chain coalition

Announcement of the Winner of the Award for Cooperation for sustainability

End of the Ceremony

20.30

Cocktail dînatoire at Atelier 29
(Rue Jacques de Lalaing 29, Brussels)

Awardees for
ECONOMIC VALUE CREATION



VICASOL (SPAIN)

Awarded for outstanding innovation in the field of Operational efficiency: Achieving superior profitability and market defence through automated and precision quality control

Vicasol, a leading cooperative in the production and marketing of plum tomatoes, is fundamentally committed to securing superior profitability for our farmers. To compete effectively against emerging global markets with inherently lower production and marketing costs, Vicasol has executed a strategic, three-pronged focus on field operations, marketing strategy, and advanced packaging processes.

Strategic innovation: The core innovation is the radical modernisation of the packaging process through comprehensive automation, robotisation, and digitalisation. This strategic overhaul drastically reduces reliance on manual labour, reserving human intervention primarily for essential control and monitoring functions.

Key Operational Objectives:

- **Enhanced labour efficiency:** Achieve superior yields per operator-hour by increasing kilograms prepared per unit of labour, directly reducing the average cost.
- **Precision quality control:** Utilise advanced technology to perfect product selection, thereby eliminating defects and quality excesses. This prevents costly order rejections and minimises financial loss from over-grading.

Technological advancements in quality sorting

A major operational improvement stems from replacing manual sorting with sophisticated automatic sorting and grading:

External quality - “Globascan 7”: This machine vision system uses HD CMOS cameras (colour + infrared + ultraviolet) and LED lighting to grade fruit into 8 colours and 8 grades based on external defects, shape, and diameter. It allows real-time calibration to meet the exact external quality requirements for any specific order.

Internal quality - “Insight” machine: This non-destructive transmission spectrum analyser (near-infrared and visible light) measures crucial internal quality parameters, including Brix, acidity, dry matter, firmness, ripeness, glassiness, internal browning, and internal colour. This ensures maximum product utilisation and minimal waste.

Integrated logistics and efficiency gains: Beyond quality control, Vicasol has invested in comprehensive process optimisation:

- **Improved working conditions:** Heavy load handling, once manual, is now performed by machinery, significantly improving operator ergonomics and safety.

- **Advanced internal logistics:** The entire process now utilises unmanned vehicles, whose movement is optimised by Artificial Intelligence (AI). This enhances workplace safety and traffic optimisation, resulting in considerable savings in both vehicle numbers and electricity consumption.
- **Repetitive task elimination:** The incorporation of rapid pack lines automates the tedious work of filling trays. Operators now focus only on efficient product arrangement, rather than individual manual selection.

Cost reduction: The overall increase in productivity per unit of labour has resulted in a significant reduction in the unit production cost.

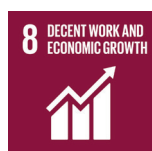
Financial returns: A successful investment

This innovation delivered immediate and substantial returns, validating Vicasol's commitment to efficiency:

- **2024/2025 Campaign performance:** A total of 54,940,000 kg was processed, yielding an average saving of €0.120 per kilogram, for a total realised saving of €3,228,311.
- **Investment and amortisation:** The total project investment of €6,000,000 (executed across 2022 and 2023) was strategically financed. Utilising the Cooperative's Operating Funds (e.g., OPFH) covered 50% of the cost. The project was fully amortised in the 2023/2024 financial year, with the remaining €3,000,000 recovered through savings generated directly from the improved handling work.

"This innovation has been a major step forward in securing our business in a sector that will continue to undergo transformation".

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:





DEUTSCHER RAIFFEISENVERBAND E.V. (GERMANY)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of Digital transformation and cooperative efficiency: Delivering measurable cost reduction and enhanced farmer profitability via digitalisation

Raiffeisen NetWorld GmbH is the leading force driving the digital transformation of the German cooperative agricultural sector. Formed from the merger of Raiffeisen NetWorld and Land24, the organisation combines deep cooperative expertise with robust digital development capability. Our mission is to provide cooperatives and farmers with practical, advanced digital tools that strategically simplify processes, strengthen competitiveness, and ensure sustainable economic success.

Context and need: Traditional workflows within many agricultural cooperatives remain paper-based, fragmented, and resource-intensive. Simultaneously, modern farmers require simple, mobile, and fully integrated solutions. Raiffeisen NetWorld's objective is to bridge this gap, enabling efficient, fully transparent, and legally compliant processes that deliver measurable economic value for both the cooperative and its members.

The Innovation: A unified digital ecosystem. The solution is a complementary ecosystem of three high-value applications, designed to cover the entire agricultural business workflow, ensuring end-to-end digital integration:

- **Genossenschafts-App: The digital gateway.** The Genossenschafts-App serves as the primary digital gateway for farmers. It provides transparent, immediate access to critical information such as market prices, existing contracts, delivery status, and stock levels. The App is customisable for each cooperative, fundamentally strengthening member proximity. Its principal role is informational, directing transactional activity to the central platform, Akoro.
- **Akoro: The central process platform.** Akoro is the core transactional platform where all mission-critical business interactions are executed. It manages a wide range of functions, including online ordering, contract lifecycle management, sales offer acceptance, price alerts, delivery tracking, and essential compliance functions like nutrient and phosphorus balancing and master data management. Developed fully in-house, Akoro is a modular, expandable, and highly scalable system capable of cooperative-specific customisations.
- **Ackerprofi: Field management and compliance.** As the official distributor, we provide Germany's leading field management software, Ackerprofi. It enables legally compliant documentation and systematic, sustainable farm planning, perfectly complementing the App and Akoro to create a complete, integrated workflow solution.

Delivering measurable value: The Raiffeisen NetWorld ecosystem translates directly into tangible benefits and operational efficiencies for both our cooperatives and their members.

I. Impact for cooperatives (Efficiency and member retention)

- **Administrative relief:** Significant reduction in manual tasks and a decrease in telephone enquiries related to missing documents or stock levels.
- **Cost reduction & acceleration:** Automated order and contract processes substantially reduce operational costs and accelerate critical business workflows.
- **Strategic organisation:** Optimisation of logistics centres is achieved through alignment with Akoro's digital processes, enabling higher overall efficiency.
- **Enhanced member ties:** Stronger member retention is built through seamless digital communication and service delivery.
- **Marketing scalability:** The system provides full marketing support (newsletters, social media, digital advertisements) without the requirement for incremental staffing costs.

II. Impact for farmers (Transparency and time savings)

- **Time efficiency:** Significant time savings realised through mobile access and fully digital workflows.
- **Planning certainty:** Increased transparency on prices, contracts, deliveries, and stock levels improves financial and operational planning security.
- **Regulatory assurance:** Legal certainty and full traceability are ensured via robust digital documentation within Ackerprofi.
- **Market accessibility:** Easier access to cooperatives, even beyond traditional regional boundaries, is enabled through efficient online ordering and delivery arrangement.

Quantifiable results and financial success : Raiffeisen NetWorld delivers clear economic value, demonstrating a rapid return on investment:

- **Cost savings:** A comprehensive cost-benefit analysis showed average operational savings of €20 per user per year using Akoro. This translates to an annual saving of €20,000 for a cooperative serving 1,000 users.
- **Growth trajectory:** Launched in 2022 with 8 cooperatives, the Akoro platform is projected to expand to at least 28 cooperatives by 2026.
- **Farmer adoption:** Nearly 2,000 new farmers join the platform annually, with substantial growth anticipated through upcoming cooperative migrations.
- **Market expansion:** Cooperatives report verifiable customer acquisition and growth beyond their traditional geographical regions, directly attributable to the convenience of online ordering and streamlined digital services.

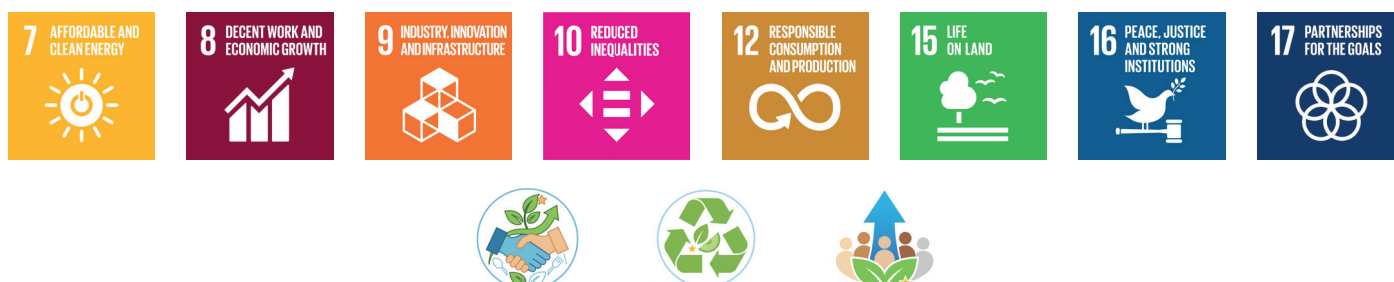
Conclusion

With the Genossenschafts-App as the key gateway, Akoro as the central transactional platform, and Ackerprofi as the integrated field management solution, Raiffeisen NetWorld GmbH empowers cooperatives to proactively shape their digital future. By providing administrative relief, empowering farmers with efficient tools, and delivering measurable cost savings, our innovation secures the future of cooperative agriculture: modern, competitive, and sustainable.

We are creating a marketable, comprehensive digital solution with great future prospects that strengthens cooperatives and secures their long-term competitiveness."

Marius Scholten

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:





COOPERATIVAS AGRO-ALIMENTARIAS DE ESPAÑA (SPAIN)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of strategic branding and market value creation: Creating a shared market identity to drive differentiation and enhance the competitive position of cooperative products

This strategic initiative aims to enhance consumer awareness of agri-food cooperative values, increase the visibility of cooperative products, and ultimately boost sales across Spain.

In a global climate where consumers increasingly seek local, value-driven products, the cooperative model offers unique benefits: direct producer relationships, wealth distribution back to rural areas, profit sharing, and an unwavering commitment to regional roots (Territorial Rootedness).

Strategic foundation: Research-backed values. The project is built on robust market insights and sector collaboration:

Core Values and Expert Consensus

Its identity is rooted in the “Ten Commandments of Cooperative Products,” which define the sector’s contribution across areas like Quality, Producer Care, Environmental Sustainability, Rural Revitalisation, and CSR/SDG Values.

- A commission of marketing experts from prominent cooperatives (e.g., Anecoop, Central Lechera Asturiana, Covap) provided crucial, multi-sectoral expertise to define the brand’s strategic focus and regulations.

Kantar worldpanel market research

A study with 12,500 panellists revealed key strategic findings:

- **Awareness:** 40% of households are familiar with cooperative brands.
- **Purchase intent:** 50% of households would buy these products if they were available in their usual store, showing high latent demand.
- **Primary barrier:** Consumers perceive products as unavailable or struggle to locate them.
- **Valued attributes:** Consumers highly value authentic flavour, rural origin, national producers, and quality assurance.

Brand identity and compliance

These insights directly led to the brand’s core identity:

- **Slogan and Logo:** “Cooperative Product, authentic taste from the countryside.”

To use the logo, cooperatives must meet a rigorous compliance framework.

There are 10 mandatory parameters that must be respected, ensuring core cooperative principles, e.g., Democratic Management, Transparency, Economic Management, Quality/Traceability, CSR, Equality/ Training Plans).

Additionally, two out of nine additional parameters must be respected ensuring business excellence e.g., Local Resources, Responsible Marketing, Management of Waste, Water, Energy, Emissions, and Voluntary Gender Equality Policies. Random audits ensure adherence.

Implementation and financial sustainability

The project employs an innovative financing model designed for long-term independence from public subsidies. Participating cooperatives provide proportional financial contributions to cover campaign costs, ensuring full commitment. Public aid will only be used to extend the campaign's reach.

- **Implementation status:** The project is in the recruitment phase, with a promoter group of 27 cooperatives currently integrating the logo onto their products, many of which are already available on shelves.

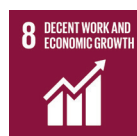
Next steps: The multi-year promotion campaign

The project is entering its full promotion phase:

- **Campaign launch:** A creative agency is being contracted to define and execute a multi-channel communication plan, slated to launch in the final months of 2025 (commencing in October).
- **Channel strategy:** The campaign will leverage media, social networks, and in-store promotional activities.
- **Distribution alignment:** Meetings are successfully underway with major food distribution companies to introduce the initiative and align the cooperative brand concept with their existing sustainability strategies.

This brand creation effort represents a multi-year investment, with the ultimate goal of significantly improving the penetration and visibility of cooperative products in new channels and markets, expanding their shelf presence across food distribution companies.

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:



Awardees for
ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE CREATION



TEREOS (FRANCE)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of decarbonisation and accelerating the transition

Tereos has launched “Cultivate Net-Zero,” an ambitious innovation designed to strategically address three critical challenges: decarbonising agricultural production, promoting regenerative farming practices, and simplifying complex Scope 3 carbon reporting for its clients. This initiative transforms regulatory and environmental constraints into a powerful lever for differentiation and growth.

Context and strategic objectives

In response to escalating climate risks and increasingly stringent carbon regulations, Tereos aims to provide its clients and cooperative members with a certified, transparent, and auditable solution. This innovation is central to a comprehensive global decarbonisation strategy, with targets validated by the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi). These ambitious goals include achieving a 36% reduction in agricultural GHG emissions and a 50% reduction in industrial emissions by 2033, with the ultimate aim of reaching Net Zero by 2050. The strategic objective is to deliver reliable data that assists clients in meeting their own carbon reduction goals while simultaneously enhancing the resilience and security of their supply chains.

The innovation: the “Cultivate Net-Zero” product line

“Cultivate Net-Zero” is structured as a product line comprising three complementary, phased offers, allowing clients to engage at any stage of their decarbonisation journey:

- **Activate:** Kick-start the journey with raw materials that enable immediate, measurable reductions in the client’s carbon footprint.
- **Connect:** Accelerate the path to carbon neutrality through a personalised programme for precise management and reporting of carbon performance.
- **Engage:** Commit to long-term regenerative agriculture through a structured partnership based on robust, auditable sustainability indicators.

Methodology and compliance

Tereos’s approach to decarbonisation follows a rigorous, internationally compliant methodology structured in three phases: 1) Efficiency improvements (optimising energy use and industrial processes), 2) Electrification (replacing fossil fuels with proven electric technologies), and 3) Renewable transition (shifting to renewable energy while minimising biomass use).

- **Standards:** The methodology is fully transparent and compliant with international standards, including GHG Protocol, ISO 14067, and SBTi FLAG.
- **Traceability:** The mass balance method is utilised to ensure full traceability and prevent double counting, enabling up to a 60% reduction in GHG emissions in products.

- **Regenerative farming:** Regenerative agriculture is certified using the rigorous “Label Bas Carbone” (Tier 3) framework, guaranteeing traceable, farm-level carbon diagnostics and ensuring stable, long-term partnerships (for a minimum of three years).

Measurable results and value creation

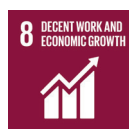
“Cultivate Net-Zero” is strategically reinforcing Tereos’s competitive position and delivering measurable transformation across the value chain:

- **Market leadership:** Tereos is the first sugar cooperative to offer a comprehensive certified low-carbon solution, successfully opening new, premium markets.
- **Industrial transformation:** An €800 million investment across 16 industrial sites is funding over 100 decarbonisation projects, projected to achieve a 65% GHG reduction in European industrial operations.
- **Supply chain transformation:** The Engage programme supports regenerative agriculture, with over 300 carbon diagnostics already completed and 1,000 more planned (75% of which will be funded directly by Tereos).
- **Economic incentives:** Regenerative farmers receive significant premiums of €50–150/ha for beet cultivation, incentivising sustainable transitions.
- **Strategic partnerships:** Tereos participates in major regenerative programmes (e.g., Vivescia’s Transitions, PADV’s COVALO, Earthworm initiatives).
- **Transport decarbonisation:** Recognition by the Fret21 label for sustainable freight practices validates the commitment to reducing Scope 3 logistics emissions.

These systemic efforts not only strengthen Tereos’s sustainability credentials but also enhance profitability through the achievement of higher margins on premium, low-carbon products.

“Cultivate Net Zero promotes our regenerative agriculture and decarbonisation practices across the entire value chain.”
Jérôme Hary

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:





SAT 2803 TROPS (SPAIN)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of Systemic Change: A model of agriculture through Integrated digitalisation, research, and cooperative governance

TROPS, a Spanish agricultural cooperative based in Andalusia, represents more than 3,300 members cultivating avocado and mango across 6,000 hectares. Operating within a Mediterranean territory increasingly threatened by drought, climate volatility, and rising sustainability demands, TROPS has undertaken a bold and systemic innovation process. This transformation integrates digitalisation, applied research, and participatory governance, positioning farmers at the core of a cooperative-led, future-ready model of agriculture.

The three axes of systemic innovation

The cooperative's transformation is driven by three interconnected strategic axes:

1. Digitalisation (the smart ecosystem): TROPS has deployed an intuitive mobile app and over 150 sensors across representative farms. These tools, supported by AI and local weather data, provide farmers and technicians with real-time, personalised recommendations on irrigation, fertilisation, and disease prevention. This system empowers small and medium-scale producers to make better decisions with fewer resources, already achieving:

- o Water use reduced by up to 25%.
- o Fertiliser use reduced by 18%.
- o Production costs cut by 12–15%.

2. Research and demonstration (the TROPS Innovation Centre - CIT): The CIT is a 40-hectare experimental farm embedded in the cooperative's production logic. It tests new varieties, implements regenerative agriculture practices, and evaluates energy-efficient technologies like solar-powered irrigation. Unlike pure academic stations, the CIT provides practical, field-tested results immediately transferable to members, acting as a living lab for continuous improvement and training.

3. Cooperative governance: TROPS has embedded innovation into its DNA by ensuring farmers are active participants. Members are involved in co-design sessions and field trials, ensuring a constant dialogue between innovation and field reality. This involvement, alongside programmes for young farmers and inclusive recruitment, has helped reverse rural depopulation trends and attract new talent.

Measurable environmental value creation (focus)

TROPS has achieved market leadership in sustainability performance, generating significant environmental and commercial advantages:

- **Net-positive carbon impact:** The cooperative's orchards absorb five times more CO₂ than its total emissions across Scopes 1, 2, and 3. TROPS was one of the few Spanish agricultural organisations to verify its comprehensive carbon footprint. This net-positive status is both environmentally relevant and

commercially strategic.

- **Water leadership:** TROPS was the first European cooperative to certify the water footprint of its avocado production under rigorous ISO standards, highlighting efficiency gains from smart irrigation.
- **Waste reduction and circularity:** The creation of Frumaco, a fruit processing subsidiary, has reduced waste by more than 20% and opened new revenue streams (equivalent to 5% of total income). Nearly all packaging is reused or recycled, with biodegradable alternatives actively being tested.
- **Adoption of sustainability practices:** The work of the CIT and the digital ecosystem are successfully driving the adoption of smart irrigation and regenerative farming practices across the membership base.

Broader economic and social impact

The integrated strategy has delivered significant multi-dimensional impacts:

- **Economic growth:** Turnover has grown by over 60% in the past five years, now exceeding €200 million annually. The cooperative secured better commercial conditions through certified sustainability, transparency, and traceability.
- **Social anchor:** TROPS generates over 1,300 jobs annually and maintains high seasonal re-employment rates. It acts as a rural anchor, offering professional development, stability, and community support.
- **Model scalability:** The TROPS experience aligns with EU policy goals and is highly viable and scalable. The CIT attracts frequent visits, and the cooperative is an active participant in major EU-funded projects (e.g., Horizon Europe).

TROPS demonstrates that cooperatives are powerful drivers of change, connecting economic growth with environmental stewardship and social inclusion, and offering a replicable model for resilient, sustainable agriculture across Europe

"At TROPS I found support, and the confidence that working the land truly has meaning and a future."
Farmer-owner

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:





TIRLÁN (IRELAND)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of Farming for water: Developing an integrated, science-based blueprint for national water quality improvement

Launched in early 2024 by Tirlán, the Farming for Water: River Slaney Project is a flagship, cooperative-led initiative aimed at significantly improving water quality in the River Slaney catchment—an area identified as an Irish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 'Catchment of Concern'. The project is a proactive response to environmental and regulatory challenges, particularly securing the future of the Nitrates Derogation, which is vital for the viability of Ireland's grass-based family farming model.

Strategic partnership and funding

This initiative represents a powerful alliance of partners—Tirlán, Teagasc, LAWPRO, Uisce Éireann, ASSAP, and ifac—united by a mission to deliver measurable, science-based improvements while enhancing farm profitability and rural sustainability. The project is underpinned by substantial funding, including the €60 million Farming for Water European Innovation Partnership (EIP) and Tirlán's own €16 million Sustainability Action Payment programme.

The innovation: integrated delivery model

At the heart of the project is the Farm Support Service, a dedicated team of Tirlán advisors who work one-on-one with farmers. This tailored approach involves risk assessment, development of action plans, and implementation of targeted measures such as nutrient management, rainwater planning, biodiversity enhancement, and infrastructure upgrades.

The project's delivery model is innovative in its integration of:

- Advisory support and education.
- Financial incentives.
- Strong multi-stakeholder governance.

This model is designed to be scalable and replicable, positioning the Slaney catchment as a national pilot for broader adaptation. Governance is reinforced by the establishment of Tirlán's dedicated Farm Support Service and a multi-stakeholder steering committee, ensuring strong alignment with national and EU priorities.

Measurable environmental value creation

The project's progress is strictly science-led, leveraging a network of 40 nitrate monitoring sites to calculate nitrate loading and inform targeted reduction strategies.

- **Evidence-based interventions:** Monitoring data directly shapes advisory work, leading to practical on-farm actions such as establishing buffer zones, implementing improved nutrient planning, and performing infrastructure upgrades.
- **Stabilisation and national alignment:** The initiative is already showing promising signs of water quality

stabilisation in the River Slaney catchment. This work aligns with the national trend, as confirmed by the EPA's 2024 report, showing the lowest national water nitrogen levels since 2016.

• **Scope 3 contribution:** The project is a key component of Tirlán's Living Proof platform, directly contributing to Scope 3 emissions reductions through improved nutrient use efficiency and soil health. Economic value and scalability

Beyond environmental restoration, the initiative delivers clear economic and strategic advantages:

• **Farm viability:** Participating farmers report direct financial benefits, including improved nutrient efficiency, reduced fertiliser costs, and better pasture performance, directly enhancing farm profitability and resilience.

• **Brand and market value:** The project provides Tirlán with verifiable sustainability evidence demanded by global customers and strengthens the cooperative's social licence to operate.

• **Blueprint for the future:** The integrated model, combining tailored advice, financial incentives, and governance, is highly scalable and adaptable. Tirlán is actively sharing its learnings with other cooperatives (such as Lakeland and Dairygold), positioning the model to leverage national funding for long-term impact across the country.

The Farming for Water: River Slaney Project stands as a compelling example of how cooperative-led innovation can deliver lasting, multi-faceted value for farmers, the environment, and wider society.

"Everyone has to take responsibility; we're doing our best to protect the river and our land."
Cheryl Poole, Milk Supplier

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:



SOCIAL VALUE CREATION





RAIFFEISEN AGIL LEESE EG (GERMANY)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of Cooperative roots for community strength: Building a stronger network for care, inclusion, and dignified living in rural communities

Raiffeisen AGil Leese eG is a cooperative with deep roots in the agricultural traditions of our region. Over recent decades, rural structures have fundamentally changed: traditional multi-generational households are rare, and families often live far apart. This shift has created increasing social voids, leaving many individuals, particularly elderly citizens, families in need of support, and children with special educational needs, lacking essential everyday assistance.

The family service: a model of social innovation

To address these significant social challenges, the cooperative founded the Family Service over 15 years ago as a dedicated subsidiary. Our mission is to create a robust social network that provides care, inclusion, and security for people of all ages, fundamentally improving their quality of life.

Unique value proposition and scope

The Family Service is unique due to its integration of personalised care and modern support models under one roof. We offer comprehensive services tailored to individual needs:

- **Senior care.**
- **Family and everyday assistance.**
- **School accompaniment for pupils with special educational needs.**

We currently leverage a highly committed team of over 120 employees to support a significant number of individuals and families:

- **195 elderly people.**
- **25 families.**
- **78 pupils.**

The Family Service has become a model of social innovation for rural regions, proving that cooperative principles can successfully be applied to social challenges.

- **Holistic community strengthening:** Through close cooperation with schools, municipalities, and regional partners, the cooperative has built a holistic approach that directly strengthens social cohesion within the community.
- **Independent and dignified living:** The support enables people to live independently and with dignity in their familiar environment, preventing isolation and institutionalisation.
- **Inclusion and security:** It actively provide inclusion for vulnerable citizens and offer a vital sense of

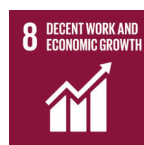
security for supported families and seniors.

• **Measurable social reach:** Demand continues to grow, with more than 400 people directly benefiting from our core services.

By combining traditional cooperative values with innovative, practical social solutions, Raiffeisen AGil Leese eG contributes directly to stronger communities, better inclusion, and a sustainable social future in the rural landscape.

“The harvest of our homeland lies in the seeds we sow with love.”

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:





VALIO (FINLAND)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of **Cultivating tomorrow's leaders: A cooperative network and training initiative to empower young farmers-members**

The **Future Valio Farmers Programme** is a new, strategic training initiative aimed at supporting young dairy farmers or those interested in becoming entrepreneurs in the sector. Launched in spring 2025, the programme is organised jointly by Valio and its cooperatives to support young individuals in developing into top professionals in modern farm management.

Context and strategic purpose

The declining rate of generational renewal is a significant challenge across Finnish agriculture; the average age of dairy farm entrepreneurs in Finland was 50 years in 2024. The sector urgently requires young, innovative, and invested farmers capable of adapting to complex challenges.

Valio, which is owned by 3,200 Finnish dairy farmers through its cooperatives, designed this programme to support young entrepreneurs, ensuring the long-term supply of Finnish milk and significantly improving the profitability of future producers.

Presentation of the innovation: a two-year developmental path

The programme spans two years and is structured around four in-person sessions supplemented by intermediate assignments. The content provides a broad introduction to critical farm business management themes:

- Valio Ltd's operations and strategic management.
- Sustainability and economic management.
- Advanced communication skills.

Structured support and networking: Participants are grouped into teams guided by Valio employees, facilitating regular meetings and communication via a dedicated WhatsApp group. A cooperative representative visits each participant's farm to review the current operation and discuss future plans. The programme also includes surprise meetings at exhibitions, relevant events, and a study trip to a European country after the final session.

The core practical output of the programme is the creation of a comprehensive development plan for each participant's farm, completed under the guidance of expert trainers.

Measurable outcomes and impact

The primary objective is to equip young entrepreneurs with a realistic picture of modern farm management and the necessary skills, fostering an entrepreneurial career path.

- **Participation profile:** Of the 100 participants, 34% are already dairy farm entrepreneurs, and an additional 14% have farm transactions currently in progress, demonstrating a high level of commitment.
- **Participant satisfaction:** Initial feedback is highly positive, with the first session receiving an average

satisfaction score of 9.0 out of 10 from participants.

- **Future monitoring:** The programme’s long-term success will be tracked in the coming years by monitoring the number of participants who successfully transition into entrepreneurial careers and the subsequent development of their milk production volumes.

Overall, the Future Valio Farmers Programme aims to strategically support the success and development of young dairy entrepreneurs, securing the future viability of Finnish agriculture.

“Our aim is to harmonize environmentally friendly cultivation with consumer satisfaction through our healthy vegetable products.”

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:





GARDENERS' COOPERATIVE OF THE SOUTHERN GREAT PLAIN — DÉLKERTÉSZ (HUNGARY)

Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of Agricultural futures: Bridging theory and practice to equip young farmers with modern, and sustainable skills

The Cooperative launched its comprehensive **horticultural mentoring programme** this year. The first core element, set for implementation in 2025, is the establishment of a dedicated research and practical training garden, designed to tackle the future workforce challenge and ensure the sustainability of local production.

Research and development infrastructure

To facilitate hands-on learning and technological trials, the Cooperative is significantly expanding its infrastructure:

- **Initial trials:** During the programme's first two years, essential variety and technological experiments will be conducted within the existing greenhouses of the vocational school.
- **New capacity:** For advanced trials and practical training, the Cooperative will establish a new, **2,000 m² foil-covered greenhouse block**, divided into 8 separately controllable growing sections, alongside 4 additional **500 m² foil-covered greenhouses**.
- **Field production:** Open-field experiments will also be conducted in the experimental garden to improve the efficiency, profitability, and farm management aspects of field production methods.

Strategic objectives and workforce development

The primary aim of the programme is to retain graduating students in the profession and actively encourage them to start production on their own farms.

Students will gain essential, up-to-date practical skills to complement their theoretical knowledge. After completing school, they will be given the opportunity to gain immediate, valuable horticultural experience within the Cooperative's production facilities, creating a direct path to employment or entrepreneurship.

Community engagement and social value

The Cooperative considers the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and associated vegetable consumption habits to be of paramount importance.

- **Promoting healthy lifestyles:** We regularly organise vegetable tastings at local and national events, effectively combining the promotion of domestic, local values with the message of healthy living.
- **Local support:** The Cooperative is a regular and dedicated supporter of numerous local organisations, including municipalities, sports clubs, kindergartens, schools, and children's camps, frequently providing support through vegetable donations.

Excellence and organisational foundation

Since 2003, operating from Szentes, in the heart of Hungary, our Cooperative has poured its heart and soul into providing fresh, healthy, and sustainable vegetables to its customers every single day. This unwavering dedication is powered by **200 permanent employees and 450 growers**.

“For a young farmer it is essential for me to learn about entrepreneurship in general, meet new people during the training, and expand my network”

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:



Awardees for
COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of Strategic public-private model: Climate resilience and sustainable adaptation in agri-food supply chains

Italy is one of Europe's most vulnerable areas to climate change, facing major economic losses due to extreme weather. These changing conditions threaten both productivity and quality, jeopardising the livelihoods of small and medium-sized farmers.

The **ADA project** aims to test, implement, evaluate, and disseminate an innovative model to promote adaptation to climate change through cooperation and systemic partnerships.

The core innovation is built on collaborative risk management that goes beyond individual farm boundaries:

- **Public-private partnership:** ADA implements an innovative model of partnership between insurers, research institutes, farmers, cooperatives, and regional public administrations. This collaboration is essential for defining precise risk scenarios, disseminating reliable knowledge on climate risk management, and planning effective public and private adaptation measures.
- **The insurer's innovative role:** ADA promotes a shared value approach, strengthening the capacities of farmers and producer organisations. The goal is to shift the role of insurers from traditional compensation providers to strategic partners in risk prevention and management. This fosters the adoption of proactive adaptation measures by farmers, which is critical for securing the long-term insurability of the agricultural sector.

Innovation axes and tools

ADA increases resilience in three vital supply chains (dairy, wine, and fruit and vegetables) by transferring knowledge and providing actionable tools:

- **Decision-making tool:** ADA created a robust tool to support farmers in defining adaptation action plans and guiding investment decisions against current and future climate impacts.
- **Organisational resilience:** Producer organisations are equipped to assess the risk levels of their member farms and evaluate the individual adaptation plans, promoting a coordinated, top-down approach to resilience.

Strategic challenges and policy acceleration

Bringing about systemic change required overcoming major challenges highlighting the need for cooperation and integrated governance:

- **Knowledge transfer:** Farmers often see training as a distraction from work. To overcome this, ADA organised online training sessions and podcasts available for flexible access to maximise involvement.

- **Policy strategy:** Large, complex regional administrations slow down decision-making and incentive development. ADA successfully acted as an accelerator, encouraging the Emilia-Romagna region to integrate adaptation principles into its financing schemes. This rewarded structured adaptation efforts with priority access to funding.
- **Data & tools:** Climate data is inconsistent or missing across regions, and farmers resist changing their approach. The ADA tool synthesises complex climate hazard maps, long-term scenarios, and a library of good practices (over 190 in total) into a simplified format.
- **Insurer approach:** Insurers and public authorities are stuck in a short-term, post-damage compensation perspective. ADA highlights the necessity of shifting to a long-term strategic perspective that integrates analysis of future scenarios and proactive adaptation.

By equipping producers, integrating advanced risk tools, and accelerating necessary policy and financial system changes, ADA is demonstrating how cooperation between the private sector, research, and public administration is the essential foundation for building a truly climate-resilient agricultural future.

“Life ADA offers farmers and cooperatives a practical tool for understanding and managing the impacts of climate change.”

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:





Awarded for outstanding Innovation in the field of Innovative value-chain coalition: Low-carbon, high-impact farming

Launched in 2023 by the VIVESCIA cooperative group and its partners, TRANSITIONS is the first large-scale impact program in France and Europe supporting farmers in adopting low-carbon, resilient agricultural practices that benefit soil health and biodiversity.

The initiative brings together the entire plant and cereal sectors, from upstream production to downstream processing, in an ambitious, innovative, and robust program aligned with stringent scientific standards (GHG Protocol, SBTi FLAG, SAI Regen Ag) and externally audited by Véritas.

Achieving large-scale agricultural and food transitions requires a collective response to share costs and risks. TRANSITIONS is defined by its deep, multi-stakeholder model:

- **Coalitions of industrial and agri-food clients:** The programme is financed by a powerful coalition of partners, including VIVESCIA's own industrial companies (e.g., Malteurop, Grands Moulins de Paris) and major external global partners (e.g., Heineken, Roquette, Tereos, Avril/Saipol). This collective approach unites the entire plant and grain value chain.
- **Technical and scientific partners:** These partners ensure the program's foundation is scientifically sound, robust, and aligned with international standards.
- **Cooperative expansion:** The program's replicability is proven through its expansion to TRANSITIONS by NORIAP, demonstrating a scalable model for cooperative-led environmental action across territories.

Impact for sustainability and farmer resilience

The program's framework is designed to deliver systemic, farm-level progress, creating significant environmental and economic impact:

- **Systemic agronomic framework:** The program focuses intensely on soil health, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity at the farm level, which is the most effective lever for progress.
- **De-risking farmers:** Farmers commit to low-carbon practices for a minimum of three years and are supported by a combination of significant financial support, collective training, and personalised guidance to de-risk the economic and technical aspects of adoption.
- **Financial incentives:** Farmers receive premiums (€100 to €150/ha initially) based on their environmental performance. This compensates them for the additional costs associated with adopting new regenerative measures.
- **Digital trust chain:** A robust digital data chain forms the cornerstone of the program. This pioneering methodology ensures transparency and trust in the data collected, which is essential for validating low-carbon claims to industrial clients.

Growth and scalability

The programme has demonstrated rapid growth and scalability since its launch:

- **VIVESCIA Territory:** The programme has grown, strengthened, and expanded, with 420 farmers already engaged as of June 2025. The goal is to reach nearly 1,000 farmers in northeastern France by 2026.
- **NORIAP Expansion:** With the launch of TRANSITIONS by NORIAP in 2025, the model is being replicated, aiming to support 250 farmers by 2028.

TRANSITIONS stands as a compelling example of how cooperatives can leverage partnerships and innovative financial models to drive large-scale, measurable, and sustainable change across the entire agricultural and food value chain.

*“TRANSITIONS gives our profession an extra dimension.
We are able to explain what we do and why”*

It contributes to the following UN SDGs and Aspirational objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices:



How do agri-cooperatives contribute to the achievements of the UN SDGs?



The 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are global objectives that succeeded the Millennium Development Goals on 1st January 2016. The SDGs shape national and regional development plans. From ending poverty and hunger to responding to climate change and sustaining our natural resources, food and agriculture lie at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.



Poverty isn't only about the lack of money. European agri-cooperatives are fully engaged in fighting rural poverty, which is linked to the specific disadvantages of rural areas. With their core activities, they increase farmers' income and find additional sources of income. With their special actions, agri-cooperatives offer farmers and their families the opportunity to increase standards of living, education, participation in cultural activities, well-being and happiness.



Every day European agri-cooperatives produce fresh and processed foods and deliver vital proteins, nutrients and tasty food products to people all over the world. Through partnerships and investments in research and development, European agri-cooperatives always aim at making their products and processes more sustainable.



As agri-food businesses, agri-cooperatives are at the forefront of consumer-led nutrition trends. Their success is dependent on collaboration with customers and strong ties with their farmer-owners and other suppliers. Through these collaborations, European agri-food cooperatives are contributing to solutions to improve health, livelihoods and sustainable food production.



European agri-cooperatives actively contribute to the economic viability of rural areas. The participation of women in the labour market and in the governance of these enterprises is of great importance. Gender representation is improving in agricultural and forest cooperatives and for this reason, they put in place instruments to improve the representation of women in their governance and management bodies.



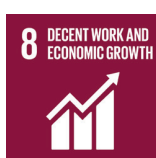
Through their investment in education and training programmes, European agricultural and forest cooperatives have a community of passionate farmers, directors, employees who work hard to build strong and trusted brands, backed by their leadership in education.



The growing global population and economic activity have put increased pressure on the world's water resources and water scarcity is now one of the greatest global challenges. European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are coping with this challenge and saving water, CO₂ and energy without compromising food safety and production.



European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are actively addressing the challenge of reducing energy consumption and increasing the contribution the sector makes to renewable energy production. It is clear that the energy and agriculture nexus is not just about a trade-off. Indeed, it also provides significant opportunities for synergies. The synergies are transposed into benefits for farmer-members.



People working for agricultural and forestry cooperatives bring cooperative values to life and enable the enterprises to fulfil their purpose of delivering high-quality produce and food while empowering farmer members in the food supply chain. The talent, commitment and pride of the people working for European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are fundamental to their long-term success.



Innovation is the catalyst for the growth of European agricultural and forestry cooperatives. By supporting farmers in addressing societal goals, agri-cooperatives became more efficient. They are now excelling in innovation in the sector. They create new products that delight consumers and help them live a balanced and healthier life. Their research, digital and innovation teams push the boundaries of science and technology to build a bright future for agriculture.



Agricultural and forestry cooperatives are acutely aware of their social responsibilities with regard to their farmer-members, employees and society as a whole. They implement initiatives to improve the position of farmers in the food supply chain and their standards of living. They care about the quality of life at work and they support the local and often disadvantaged communities in which they operate.



Minimising resource consumption in the food and fibre production is an integral part of the daily work of all European agricultural and forestry cooperatives. This is especially the case for the consumption of natural resources, minimising waste and implementing cleaner technologies. European agri-cooperative efforts are driven by a common goal: to build sustainable communities.



Food waste is a significant challenge that needs to be tackled from farm to fork because it has a major social, environmental and climate impact. The European Agri-cooperative approach aims to reduce food waste by optimising the food value chain in its entirety and shifting from a linear use of resources to a circular use.



Agricultural and forestry cooperatives are investing in technologies and adopting targeted programmes that will allow them to take climate actions. European agri-cooperatives recognise the importance of becoming ever more efficient and taking every available opportunity to reduce emissions and implement adaptation actions.



European agricultural, fishing and forestry cooperatives prevent and significantly reduce all forms of marine pollution. They do this by selecting suppliers who adhere to marine pollution reduction programmes, especially target pollution resulting from activities carried out on land. Additionally, specific programmes and projects are promoted by ichthyic and fishing cooperative enterprises that aim to preserve local ichthyic reserves.



Through their on-farm programmes, European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are working to enhance both land and water quality, as laid out in Goal 15, which as they interpret it also includes the health and welfare of their livestock and biodiversity.



Democracy lies at the heart of agri-cooperatives and the participation of their farmer-members in the decision-making process is of extreme importance. In this context, European agri-cooperatives put in place participatory stakeholder consultation processes on economic, environmental and social issues to ensure an inclusive decision-making approach. They also develop codes of good governance and reporting related to the financial statements, sustainability and environmental performance of the cooperative enterprises.



European agricultural and forest cooperatives strengthen partnerships to support and achieve the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda, bringing together national governments, the international community, civil society, the private sector and other actors. In this respect, Cogeca, the European voice of agri-cooperatives is also a platform for the exchange of best practices. It allows members to assess the advances in certain areas and the necessary steps to be done to accelerate progress.

Want to
know more?



EU CODE OF CONDUCT ON RESPONSIBLE FOOD BUSINESS AND MARKETING PRACTICES

A common aspirational path towards sustainable food systems

The EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices is a voluntary initiative launched under the previous mandate of the European Commission that encourages actors “between the farm and the fork” to voluntarily commit to improving their sustainability performance.

The code provides aspirational objectives and indicative actions for food manufacturers, retailers, and service operators to help accelerate the transition to a more sustainable food system .

The seven aspirational objectives

The following are the seven aspirational objectives that signatories of the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices commit to:



Healthy, balanced and sustainable diets for all European consumers, thereby contributing to:

- o Reversing malnutrition and diet-related noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in the EU.
- o Reducing the environmental footprint of food consumption by 2030.



Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste



A climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050.



An optimised circular and resource-efficient food chain in Europe.



Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.



Sustainable value creation in the European food supply chain through partnership.



Sustainable sourcing in food supply chains.



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6th EUROPEAN AWARD FOR
COOPERATIVE INNOVATION

Cogeca is the voice of agri-cooperatives in the EU. Created in 1959, Cogeca represents the interests of 22.000 agricultural cooperatives who employ over 600.000 people. Cogeca aims to ensure that the EU agriculture and agri-food sector is sustainable, market-orientated, innovative and competitive so that agri-cooperatives can provide over half a billion people with quality food supplies at a reasonable prices. Cogeca provides a platform for its members to exchange their views and agree on a common position on upcoming issues affecting the EU agri-food sector and agri-cooperatives. Such positions are then communicated to the EU and international institutions and decision-makers to ensure that agri-cooperatives views are taken into account. Cogeca also carries out studies of particular interest for agricultural, forestry, fishing and agri-food cooperatives and promotes their role and business model in EU and worldwide.

Sponsored by:

