



PRESS RELEASE

AREFLH shares some innovative water management initiatives in agriculture in Europe

Yesterday, 1^{er} February, [AREFLH](#) organised a hybrid conference on the use of water in agriculture at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels. The event brought together a large number of stakeholders from the sector: political decision-makers, project leaders, researchers, technical directors, agronomists, consultants, etc.

The panel of speakers, composed of representatives of institutions (Committee of the Regions, European Commission, Regions), scientists and experts, aimed to advance the debate on the serious water situation in Europe and its impact on the agricultural sector.

"No food without soil and water" was the message from Pedro Narro from the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), who launched the conference.

Luca Perez, from the European Commission's DG Environment, then stressed the importance of having a debate based on facts and a holistic approach to water resilience.

Global action is needed on water, which is not just a problem for Europe but also for neighbouring countries and has a direct impact on human rights, conflicts and immigration. The solution in Europe leads to a global solution.

The second part of the conference provided an overview of local initiatives, projects and technological innovations in France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and around the world.

Simona Caselli, President of the AREFLH, said: "Today's conference brings the AREFLH to the very heart of its mission, that of bringing together the sector's stakeholders, disseminating existing solutions and sharing knowledge".

In her conclusion to the event, she emphasised the importance of innovation and her conviction that the young farmers of today and tomorrow will find it increasingly easy to make use of it. Finally, the President also pointed out that the essential tool for meeting the challenges and gaining access to innovation is for producers to come together: in producer organisations, associations of producer organisations or cooperatives.

Furthermore, it is also important to create collaborative infrastructures in the field of research, innovation and technology in order to integrate them into the development of the Common Agricultural Policy.

This conference is part of the work begun by the AREFLH last year with the creation of a working group on water made up of members representing regions, experts and fruit and vegetable producers. The topic will also be on the agenda of the public conference to be held on 21 March, in conjunction with the AREFLH general meeting.

A replay of the conference is available until August 2024 at <https://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/water-management-agriculture.aspx>.

Photo ©AREFLH, from left to right: Simona Caselli (AREFLH), Pedro Narro (European Committee of the Regions) and Luca Perez (European Commission).

The mission of **AREFLH**, the Assembly of European Horticultural Regions, is to :

- Represent its 17 regions and 43 POs/APOs and associate members from 13 European countries,
- Defend the economic and social interests of the fruit, vegetable sectors in dealings with European institutions,
- Encourage exchanges of experience, partnerships and joint projects between regions and professional organisations,
- To be a driving force behind proposals on the main issues affecting the future of fruit and vegetable production in Europe.

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