

KEY FACTS

- 3 years, 2018-2021
- 40+ partners from 11 European countries
- 9 Innovation Hubs
- Joint Stakeholder Platform
- 18 case studies of short food supply chains

SMARTCHAIN aims to foster and accelerate the shift towards collaborative short food supply chains by linking scientists with practitioners and stakeholders in the sector. Through specific actions and recommendations, SMARTCHAIN will introduce new robust business models and innovative practical solutions that enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the European agri-food system.

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Project coordination

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Short food supply chains, which involve very few intermediaries, represent an alternative to conventional longer food chains where small farmers or cooperatives often have little bargaining power and the people cannot trace the food to a known producer or local area. Advantages of short supply routes include reduction of carbon footprint, access to locally produced food of known origin, and sustainable small farms and businesses.

Concept

SMARTCHAIN will stimulate demand-driven innovation in short food supply chains to improve competitiveness and foster rural development using a multi-actor approach. This method puts into practice the "interactive innovation model" where all actors involved in the project are working together to make best use of scientific and practical knowledge for the co-creation and diffusion of novel solutions ready to solve practical problems. SMARTCHAIN –Building more resilient and efficient short supply food chains in Europe



Community

The SMARTCHAIN consortium strongly believes that many issues blocking the transition of short food supply chains from a niche to a larger market share could be (at least partially) solved by building an international community of short food supply chains (e.g. to share concerns/ experiences/best practices, to discuss, to collaborate together).

SMARTCHAIN will use its networks to create this international community of short food supply chains that can grow and pollinate on local, regional, national and European level, creating cross sectoral connections between stakeholders and consumers. This community will represent a force of unprecedented size.

18 short food supply chains

The project will assess the barriers, bottlenecks, success factors, and potentials of innovations along short food supply chains in different countries of Europe. The selected case studies cover all types of short food supply chains i.e. whether this is amongst producers, or between producers and consumers, or between producers, consumers and local institutions and the most commonly consumed food in Europe, (e.g. fruit and vegetables, meat, dairy and bakery products) from both organic and conventional sectors.

Joint Stakeholder Platform (Virtual Innovation Platform)

SMARTCHAIN will create and implement a Joint Stakeholder Platform (Virtual Innovation Platform) that facilitates knowledge, innovative practical solutions and know-how transfer.

- Generate, share and utilize information on suitable innovations;
- Engage stakeholders in the short food supply chain sector;
- Disseminate events related to innovation and cooperation in the short food supply chain domain;
- Organize training activities and generating training materials on best practices in innovation;
- Build an international community of short food supply chains through a gamification study.

9 Innovation Hubs

To strengthen co-creation and collaboration between partners and ensure double-directional flow of information between research and practice within the SMARTCHAIN consortium, 9 Innovation and Collaboration Hubs will be established from the very beginning of the project. The hubs will lead to a permanent association of stakeholders at national level, working on the improvement of short food supply efficiency and the economic growth of the sector for the benefits of European farmers and citizens.



Partners

