



**GIANT
LEAPS**

giant-leaps.eu



valpropath.eu



CONFERENCE

PROTEIN TRANSITION: **GIANT LEAPS Ahead and** **VALPRO Paths to Follow**

Developing pathways and guiding policy supports

AGENDA

25 JUNE 2026

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM



Co-funded by
the European Union

AGENDA

REGISTRATION, COFFEE, NETWORKING & POSTER SESSION

8:30-09:00

OPENING ADDRESS

09:00-09:30

- Paul Webb, Head of Department for “Green Europe” Research, Executive Agency for Research (REA)
- Dr. Ewen Mullins, VALPRO Path Project Coordinator and Head of Crop Science Department at Teagasc
- Dr. Paul Vos, GIANT LEAPS Project Coordinator & Expertise leader Nutrition Quality & Health, Wageningen University & Research

UNDERSTANDING THE BARRIERS TO ALTERNATIVE PROTEIN ADOPTION

09:30-10:00

Moderator: Dr. David Hunt, Senior Research Community Manager, GFI Europe

- From a Croatian Farm to Europe’s First Fava Protein Platform - what scaling European protein actually takes - Zvonimir Sedelic, CEO of Nutris
- Challenges with Developing Alternative Protein Supply Chains in Europe - Dr. Juha-Pekka Pitkanen, Chief Scientific Officer & Co-Founder, Solar Foods
- Q&A

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS TO OVERCOME ADOPTION BARRIERS

10:00-10:45

Moderator: Dr. Federico Ferreira, Associate Professor, Instituto Superior Técnico

- Simplifying fractionation processes and byproduct utilisation of protein crops - Mark Fenelon, Head of Food Programme, Teagasc
- Scaling Innovation: Food Processing Advances - Dr. Emanuele Zannini, Professor in Food Science, University College Cork
- The Impact of Food Processing on Digestibility & Health - Dr. Andre Brodkorb, Principal Research Officer, Teagasc
- Q&A

COFFEE BREAK & POSTER SESSION

10:45-11:15

ASSESSING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE PROTEINS IN THE DIETARY SHIFT

11:15-12:00

Moderator: Dr. Dorinde Kleinegris, PI Microalgae & Associate Professor, NORCE Research, University of Bergen

- What Does it Take to Know if an Alternative Protein is Sustainable? Lessons from Four Years of Integrated Assessment - Dr. Birgir Örn Smáráson, Research Group Leader, Matís
- Sustainability Assessments of Plant Protein Business Opportunities - Dr. Tryfon Kekes, Senior Researcher, National Technical University of Athens
- The Link between Health and Safety, and Sustainability of the Dietary Shift - Dr. Clare Mills, Professor of Food and Molecular Immunology, University of Surrey
- Q&A

AGENDA

PATHWAYS FOR EUROPE'S PROTEIN TRANSITION

12:00-13:00

Moderator: Marin van Damme, Co-Founder, The Protein Project

- Future EU Diets: Pros and Cons of the Dietary Shift - Dr. Esther van Asselt, Senior Scientist Food Safety, Wageningen University & Research
- Turning Innovation into Action - Dr. Richard Lynch, Research Officer, Teagasc
- Development of Transition Pathways towards alternative proteins- Maeve Henchion, Principal Research Officer, Teagasc
- Policy Briefs to support Europe's Protein Transition - Dr. Hans Verhagen, Owner & Consultant, Food Safety & Nutrition Consultancy
- Q&A

LUNCH & POSTER SESSION

13:00-14:00

PARALLEL 1: FROM CROPS TO PRODUCTS: ADVANCING PRIMARY PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING FOR ALTERNATIVE PROTEINS

14:00-15:00

Chair: Dr. Ewen Mullins, Project Coordinator, VALPRO
Path and Head of Crop Science Department at Teagasc

- Pedoclimatic, Knowledge and Management Factors that Drive European Grain Legumes in Europe - Dr. Moritz Reckling, Researcher, ZALF
- Exploring Solutions to Sensory and Functional Challenges in Alternative Proteins -Margrét Geirsdottir, Project Manager, Matís
- Product Formulation & Development - Dr. Eimear Gallagher, Principal Research Officer, Teagasc
- Field Traceability and Carbon Footprint Intelligence; case study of a plant-based burger – Dr. Vasileios Moysiadis, Farm B

PARALLEL 2: ENSURING SAFE, HEALTHY AND TRUSTED ALTERNATIVE PROTEIN APPLICATIONS

14:00-15:00

Chair: Dr. Paul Vos, Project Coordinator & Expertise leader
Nutrition Quality & Health, Wageningen University & Research

- Hermetic Storage and Modified Atmospheres for Quality Preservation of Food-Grade Legumes - Dr. Ricardo Enrique Bartosik
- Consumers' Perspective on Alternative Proteins, Trade-Offs, and Policies - Dr. Fabienne Michel, Established Researcher, ETH Zurich
- FAIR Data Sharing: the GIANT LEAPS Cloud Data Platform - Dr. Sergiy Smetana, Professor of Food System Analysis, DIL
- From Science to the Classroom: Teaching the younger generations about the Future of Food - Gloria Bevilacqua, Project & Communication Manager, Europamedia

COFFEE BREAK & POSTER SESSION

15:00-15:30

AGENDA

PLENARY - FUTURE RESEARCH & INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

15:30 - 16:30

Moderator: Rosalinda Scalia, Deputy Head of Unit, DG RTD

- Fabrizio Fabbri, Food and Sustainability Policy Manager - Acting Secretary General, EuroCoop
 - Mathilde Loas, RD&A Senior Scientist, Kerry Group
 - Geert Van Royen, Assistant Manager at ILVO – Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
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CLOSING NOTES

Dr. Paul Vos, Project Coordinator & Expertise leader
Nutrition Quality & Health, Wageningen University & Research

16:30-16:35

Dr. Ewen Mullins, Project Coordinator, VALPRO Path
and head of Crop Science Department at Teagasc

GOODBYE COFFEE & NETWORKING

16:30-17:00
