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**Profile of winners of the 2009 “European Award for Cooperative Innovation”
and their innovative projects**


Category	Name of the Cooperative	Sector	
Food processes	<p align="center">FEIRACO S.C.G.</p> <p align="center">(Spain)</p> 	Dairy	<p><u>Profile:</u></p> <p>Feiraco is one of the main dairies active in the Spanish market, producing a variety of traditional as well as novel types of fresh milk, milk products, yoghurt and cheese.</p> <p><u>The problem:</u></p> <p>Farmers as well as cooperatives are very familiar with the problem of low farm-gate prices, leading to very narrow profit margins (if at all). This is even more so for food products traded as commodities (e.g. homogeneous products without any distinctive traits).</p> <p>Thus product differentiation is critical in order to increase profit margins. This can be done by adding value to the product in such a way that corresponds to consumer demands.</p> <p>To develop new products with higher value added, food producers have, in practice, two main options: either to invest in processing equipment, or; in branding and communication (if they prefer a more offensive marketing strategy).</p> <p>It is therefore particularly challenging for a dairy to develop a completely new system of feed composition, production and feeding methods, that would in turn produce as output, milk with different characteristics. This complex and knowledge intensive method to introduce a major innovation (through) a series of micro innovations, , has been a response to new consumer concerns for more “natural”/ less artificial methods of food production.</p> <p><u>Innovation:</u></p> <p>FEIRACO S.C.G. has introduced important innovations both in feed production techniques, as well as in animal feeding methods. The entrepreneurial objective of this approach is, to differentiate, in a natural manner, one of the most important products milk. Such a differentiation is necessary in order to build a distinctive brand identity and ultimately to claim an increased proportion of the consumers’ price in the value chain</p>

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<p>Food processes</p> <p><i>“Special Achievement Award”</i></p>	<p>COSELVA S.C.C.L.</p> <p>(Spain)</p> 	<p>Olive Oil, Dried Fruits, Nuts</p>	<p><u>Profile:</u></p> <p>COSELVA, is a cooperative with deep historic roots in the agriculture development of its rural community. In this long period since its creation COSELVA has adapted to different conditions, activities and structures. Currently it focuses on the production and marketing of hazelnuts, nut products and olive oil, while it also provides inputs, supplies and credit services to its 1177 members.</p> <p>Coselva is a small scale cooperative providing employment to 80 people and its sales volume reached last year 21 million €.</p> <p><u>The problem:</u></p> <p>COSELVA competes in the international segment of the nuts (hazelnuts) market where it faces fierce competition from strong multinationals (e.g. Nestlé).</p> <p>In order to improve its competitive position and reach new segments of the international market, it was imperative to improve the quality of its hazelnut paste and other hazelnut products (targeting the big international chocolate industry).</p> <p>The existing technology was not able to address this objective and therefore COSELVA decided to devote significant efforts to the development of its own technological solutions.</p> <p><u>Innovation:</u></p> <p>COSELVA developed a tailor made system (equipment and processing methods) to peel hazelnuts. By introducing this self-invented and specifically adapted new processing method, COSELVA will be able to support its product differentiation objective. This strategy aims to improve the quality of its' products as well to improve the effectiveness of processing, leading to marketing and improved economic results.</p>

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Non-Food processes	<p data-bbox="201 271 443 360">CANTINA PRODUTTORI CORMONS s.c.a.</p> <p data-bbox="284 394 363 421">(Italy)</p>  <p data-bbox="193 600 448 663"><i>Cantina Produttori</i> CORMONS</p>	Viticulture /Wine	<p data-bbox="639 271 735 297"><u>Profile:</u></p> <p data-bbox="639 320 1449 477">Cantina Produttori Cormòns was founded at the end of the nineteen sixties, in order to take stock of the centuries old wine tradition in the region. The founding members envisaged a unique way to match tradition with modern wine making methods and development of the local community.</p> <p data-bbox="639 544 810 571"><u>The problem:</u></p> <p data-bbox="639 593 1449 683">Creating a different identify, profile and recognition for wine, has been the long standing quest of countless wine producers around the world.</p> <p data-bbox="639 705 1449 795">Local characteristics of this wine production region related to the nature, history, culture and tradition, have often been associated with the virtues of particular types of wine.</p> <p data-bbox="639 817 1449 907">Thus the challenge is to conceive ways of presenting such extrinsic product characteristics, in a manner that will attract the interest of consumers as well as of well informed wine-lovers.</p> <p data-bbox="639 929 1449 1019">Is even more challenging to combine these elements of tradition, with characteristics of new technologies that will also meet consumer's needs for safety, convenience, and versatility.</p> <p data-bbox="639 1075 790 1102"><u>Innovation:</u></p> <p data-bbox="639 1124 1449 1214">CANTINA PRODUTTORI CORMONS has launched a number of innovative activities related to the production, processing and marketing of wine. Such examples are:</p> <ul data-bbox="735 1236 1449 1594" style="list-style-type: none"> - the wine of peace that is created from a unique vineyard consisting of a unique collection of (500) vine varieties throughout the world, - the articulation of local art creation in wine production (marketing and communication), - the Guinness world record for the biggest wine bottle , and finally - the world patent for a single portion of wine bottle /glass that is convenient to consume in the horeca self service sector <p data-bbox="639 1662 1449 1785">Because of the integrated nature of these innovations in different parts and stages of the whole wine making and marketing chain, CORMONS was awarded the prize in the non-food category.</p>

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Environment	<p data-bbox="240 271 480 331">Badischer Winzerkeller eG</p> <p data-bbox="288 365 432 394">(Germany)</p> 	Viticulture / Wine	<p data-bbox="676 271 772 300"><u>Profile:</u></p> <p data-bbox="676 320 1469 539">BADISCHER WINZERKELLER was established in 1952, with the creation of a large, modern cellar and the development over the years of what is now one of the most productive wineries in the country. The long term strategy of the cooperative relies on the balance between tradition and new technologies. The objective being the creation of wines that fulfil the most demanding expectations of wine consumers.</p> <p data-bbox="676 607 847 636"><u>The problem:</u></p> <p data-bbox="676 656 1469 745">Farmers are particularly keen to promote the sustainability of the ecosystems of which their farms/ vineyards constitute and indispensable element.</p> <p data-bbox="676 766 1469 891">Apart from using environmental friendly production techniques at farm level, producers that cooperate at the processing level, apply alternative methods to promote the sustainability of their operations, within the food chain.</p> <p data-bbox="676 911 1469 1001">Current technological solutions of sustainable energy production from renewable resources, are increasingly being adapted and adopted at farm and agri-business level.</p> <p data-bbox="676 1021 1469 1146">Cooperative wine makers could benefit of their collective scale, to invest in such renewable energy technologies, as a mean to contribute to a more sustainable ecosystem, whilst befitting of significant financial returns.</p> <p data-bbox="676 1214 826 1243"><u>Innovation:</u></p> <p data-bbox="676 1263 1469 1352">BADISCHER WINZERKELLER has undertaken innovative initiatives to improve the sustainability of wine production , marketing and communication methods .</p> <p data-bbox="676 1373 1469 1435">A large sized solar panel energy system has been installed in the roof of the winery, with a twofold purpose:</p> <ul data-bbox="676 1456 1469 1592" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="676 1456 1469 1518">-To improve the energy footprint of the cooperative (positive contribution to environmental sustainability) <li data-bbox="676 1538 1469 1592">-To profit from financial returns, by operating as a net energy provider to the general energy system.

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Co-operative Entrepreneurship/ Member service	<p style="text-align: center;">CARNES OVIARAGON S.C.L.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Spain)</p> 	Meat	<p><u>Profile:</u></p> <p>Grupo Pastores, was created 25 years ago by 25 sheep farmers active in the Spanish region of Aragon. Since then it has developed into the leading Cooperative in the Spanish sheep meat sector, with a current number of 1300 members and is organised in multiple vertically integrated enterprises.</p> <p><u>The problem:</u></p> <p>The sheep meat sector, being one with a traditional structure, and limited scale in Europe, has been lagging behind in comparison with production, processing, and marketing methods applied in other more intensive sectors (pork, poultry) .</p> <p>Despite the fact that consumption of red meat continuously increases, such products are prepared mostly from other types of meat rather than sheep meat.</p> <p>Sheep meat is considered and marketed either as a commodity product, in lower-end market segments, or as a premium product at a certain niche market segments.</p> <p>In order to penetrate wider market segments, the sheep meat sector must adopt similar meat processing, preparation, distribution and marketing methods, already applied by other meat segments.</p> <p><u>Innovation:</u></p> <p>CARNES OVIARAGON has engaged in a series of innovative actions, to improve the services provided to its members in multiple ways and in various stages of production.</p> <p>This innovative project is a demonstration of how to efficiently respond to consumer demand, in a food category characterized by structural deficiencies and that also faces many restrictions.</p> <p>Carnes Oviaragon has engaged its members into innovative animal rearing techniques, and meat processing methods, thus improving effectiveness across the entire chain of operation.</p> <p>As a direct result of these innovations, Carnes Oviaragon, managed to improve processing efficiency, to apply stringent food safety standards and to produce new types of ready to cook meat products.</p> <p>The overall outcome of this innovative approach, has allowed Carnes Oviaragon to expand its transactions with members and ultimately to expand into new markets and new market segments.</p>

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Food Chain	<p data-bbox="197 271 429 389">The Greenery U.A. (The Netherlands)</p> 	Horticulture	<p data-bbox="639 277 738 309"><u>Profile:</u></p> <p data-bbox="639 329 1425 423">“The Greenery” is a market-oriented horticultural cooperative owned by 1,250 members, and is one of the leading concerns in Europe in the vegetable, fruit and mushroom sector.</p> <p data-bbox="639 443 810 474"><u>The problem:</u></p> <p data-bbox="639 490 1466 696">Food retailers and food service providers are nowadays struggling to comply with myriads of technical standards concerning food safety. In particular the monitoring of different MRLs (Maximum Residue Levels) of plant protection products for hundreds of fresh products, with a very short life and distribution cycle, is particularly risky, burdensome and costly.</p> <p data-bbox="639 714 1422 777">Eventual mistakes can have disastrous implications to retailers and thus to their suppliers.</p> <p data-bbox="639 795 1458 857">For that reason retailers rely, mostly, on external inspections and controls to ensure that their providers abide to strict standards.</p> <p data-bbox="639 875 1466 969">Thus a provider that could effectively respond to these challenges, would be promoting his credibly and ultimately improve his position in the food chain.</p> <p data-bbox="639 1037 791 1068"><u>Innovation:</u></p> <p data-bbox="639 1084 1437 1274">THE GREENERY introduced an effective way to improve the performance of the cooperative in collaboration with partners in the food chain. This project demonstrated how cooperatives in close collaboration with their members and partners in the food chain, may innovate and improve their effectiveness with the ultimate objective to improve competitiveness.</p> <p data-bbox="639 1292 1453 1449">In concrete terms, The Greenery, in collaboration with its members and its clients, developed an Information system, based on an on-line database that continuously monitors the MRLs (Maximum Residue Levels) of all products throughout all the stages of distribution.</p> <p data-bbox="639 1467 1465 1561">The system provides benefits for clients (retailers) as it guarantees on a continuous basis that products carrying The Greenery logo are safe and comply with the highest food safety standards.</p> <p data-bbox="639 1579 1466 1704">Such a close collaboration with partners in the food chain, apart from the technical aspect, it is of strategic importance allowing the Greenery to promote its profile as a key food and vegetable provider to the major European retailers</p>