THEMATIC SESSION

Sustainable Food Systems - *The Case of the Mediterranean Diet*

The Mediterranean Diet: Driver of sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean area

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Relations between diets, food systems and food security in the context of sustainability

The Mediterranean diet: Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO

The Mediterranean Diet as a case study of CIHEAM-FAO for assessing diets and food consumption patterns sustainability

Med Diet Expo 2015 Call: Time to act for promoting the Mediterranean diet as a sustainable dietary pattern

Med Diet 4.0: 4 sustainability dimensions and 4 benefits

Mediterranean diet and typical/traditional agro-food products: Case of Apulia region, Italy

Some proposals for a research and policy agenda on the Mediterranean diet
Sustainable Diets, Sustainable Food System (SFS) and Food Security and Nutrition (FSN)

Source: Gitz (HLPE-FSN/CFS), 2015.
The Mediterranean diet

The Mediterranean diet (MD) was inscribed, in November 2010, by UNESCO on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The nomination was supported by Italy, Spain, Greece and Morocco but the MD is a common and shared Mediterranean cultural heritage.

Cyprus, Croatia and Portugal joined in 2013.
Mediterranean diet: UNESCO’s intangible cultural heritage of humanity

The Mediterranean diet constitutes a set of skills, knowledge, practices and traditions ranging from the landscape to the table, including the crops, harvesting, fishing, conservation, processing, preparation and, particularly, consumption of food...the Mediterranean diet (from the Greek diaita, or way of life) encompasses more than just food. It promotes social interaction, since communal meals are the cornerstone of social customs and festive events.

Source: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00394
Mediterranean Diet Pyramid: a lifestyle for today
Guidelines for Adult population

- Serving size based on frugality and local habits
- Wine in moderation and respecting social beliefs

- Potatoes ≤ 3s
- Red meat < 2s
- Processed meat ≤ 1s

- White meat 2s
- Fish/Seafood ≥ 2s
- Eggs 2-4s
- Legumes ≥ 2s

- Dairy 2s (preferably low fat)

- Olives / Nuts / Seeds 1-2s
- Herbs / Spices / Garlic / Onions (less added salt)
- Variety of flavours

- Fruits 1-2 | Vegetables ≥ 2s
- variety of colours / textures
- (Cooked / Raw)
- Olive Oil
- Bread / Pasta / Rice / Couscous / Other cereals 1-2s
- (preferably whole grain)

- Regular physical activity
- Adequate rest
- Conviviality

- Biodiversity and seasonality
- Traditional, local and eco-friendly products
- Culinary activities

2010 edition
The Mediterranean Diet: a case study for assessing diets sustainability

The Mediterranean diet has been identified by FAO and CIHEAM as a case study for the assessment of the sustainability of dietary patterns in different socio-cultural contexts and agro-ecological zones:

✓ Given its health and environmental benefits, and
✓ because it concerns a vast number of countries
Sustainable diets: Definition

“...are those with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources”.

Source: FAO, Rome; June 7, 2010; Technical Workshop “Biodiversity in Sustainable Diets”
Mediterranean diet sustainability: Our integrated approach

Enhancing the Sustainability of the Mediterranean Diet in the Mediterranean Region

- Health and nutrition
- Society and culture
- Environment
- Economy
- Agro-biodiversity

Mediterranean Community Dietary Behaviour

Source: Lacirignola et al., 2012
Despite its growing popularity all over the world, the Mediterranean diet is now at risk in all countries of the Mediterranean, as a result of globalization processes, changes in lifestyles, loss of biodiversity, etc. which are leading to a growing erosion of the Mediterranean food-related heritage, represented by the Mediterranean diet.

This poses significant threats to the sustainability of the transmission of the Mediterranean diet to future generations.
CIHEAM seized the opportunity of international momentum of Expo Milan 2015 to launch the *MED DIET EXPO 2015 CALL: TIME TO ACT*. As a contribution to the Charter of Milan towards more sustainable food systems, the CALL invites:

- To acknowledge the Mediterranean diet as a significant part of Mediterranean food systems, from consumption to production, and not only just as a dietary pattern;
- To enhance sustainable food consumption and production in the Mediterranean area;
- To revitalize the Mediterranean Diet heritage, as a sustainable dietary pattern, as well as a contemporary sustainable lifestyle.

*Source: Capone, 2015*
MED DIET 4.0

Source: Dernini et al., in press
Mediterranean diet and typical/traditional agro-food products: Case of Apulia region, Italy

Source: Capone, 2015
Way forward: what is needed?

- The Mediterranean diet should be considered as a driver and lever for enhancing food system and consumption patterns sustainability in the Mediterranean area.

- Promotion of the Mediterranean diet should go hand in hand with valorisation of traditional and typical products on which it is based.

- There is need for awareness campaigns and nutrition education to increase adherence to the Mediterranean diet especially among the young.

- The Mediterranean diet, common heritage of all Mediterranean people and countries, should be valorised as a tool for fostering research cooperation and agricultural diplomacy in the Mediterranean region.
Proposals of CIHEAM

- CIHEAM, in collaboration with FAO, plan to implement in Mediterranean and Arab countries a pilot project for assessing and improving the sustainability of diets and food consumption patterns. The Mediterranean diet could be used as a model to describe, understand and enhance the sustainability of current diets in the context of sustainable food systems.

- CIHEAM, in collaboration with the International Foundation for the Mediterranean Diet (IFMeD), will use the Mediterranean diet pyramid, prepared in accordance with the innovative Med Diet 4.0 approach, as an educational and communication tool to raise awareness of consumers about the Mediterranean diet and its multifaceted benefits.
For more information about CIHEAM-Bari activities on the sustainability of the Mediterranean diet: dietamediterranea.iamb.it

Thank you for kind attention