

## **Press release - PATHWAY-27**

### **Paving the way for food innovations with scientifically proven health benefits**

Every year European countries spend millions of euros on the treatment of conditions such as metabolic syndrome, heart disease, diet-related diseases and diabetes. Notably, diet can help greatly reduce risk factors for these conditions, including elevated blood pressure, blood lipids and blood sugar. Efforts are thus warranted to ensure the wide availability of tasty foods with scientifically proven health benefits. This is where the EU-funded project PATHWAY-27<sup>1</sup> ([www.pathway27.eu](http://www.pathway27.eu)) comes in.

PATHWAY-27 thoroughly studies selected bioactive compounds as ingredients of foods that, within the common diet, could significantly benefit human health and wellbeing. Bioactive compounds have a positive effect on health over and above their nutritional value. Three model compounds (docosahexaenoic acid - DHA, beta-glucan - BG, and anthocyanins - AC) and three model food matrices (bakery, dairy and egg products) are being explored to derive conclusions that would be applicable to a wide range of products and bioactive ingredients.

The objectives of PATHWAY-27 are:

- to better understand the potential benefits and mechanism of action of the selected bioactive compounds; and
- to develop improved food formulations that can lead to the production of bioactive-enriched foods with a scientifically demonstrated impact on health.

Based on the gained knowledge on bioavailability, activity, synergism and mechanisms of action of bioactive compounds, different guidelines and best practices will be developed for:

- undertaking intervention studies;
- validating innovative biomarkers; and
- substantiating nutritional and health claims on bioactive-enriched foods.

Specific guidelines for the food industry will help increase the innovation potential and competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises. In addition, the project will support the implementation of European legislation on health and nutrition claims.

**Note to editors:**

<sup>1</sup> PATHWAY-27 is the acronym for "Pivotal Assessment of the Effects of Bioactives on the Health and Wellbeing, from Human Genome to Food Industry". The project is supported by the EU within the Seventh Framework Programme and coordinated by the University of Bologna (Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna – UNIBO). It includes 25 partners from different European countries and different organisation types, namely: Universities, Research Institutes and small and medium-sized enterprises. PATHWAY-27 started 1 February 2013 and will run for five years.