



Announcing the launch of Ferdoñana water efficiency training for berry farmers in the region of Doñana

Brussels, 8 November 2016

In December, SAI Platform will launch the Ferdoñana, a multi-stakeholder, farmer oriented, water efficiency project in berry agriculture in the Doñana region.

This project's scope is to help farmers optimise water use, which will contribute to economic benefits and reduce the risk of aquifer decline as well as water contamination. It should ultimately also help in reducing the risks of water shortages for berry production.

The training part of the project will include: in-room good practice modules, individual assessment, show-case and field visits. Furthermore, an online knowledge sharing platform which will be also accessible on smart-phone will help to facilitate the overall project.

The official launch of the project will take place on 15 December 2016 in the Doñana region in Spain. 100 farmers will be trained in the first year, covering about 2000 ha. The objective is to cover up to 7000 ha over the next 3 years.

The training will be directed by a technical committee composed of experts from the region. The results will be measured through e-water meters, tracking initial and latest consumption versus optimal best practice values.

"Within this project various key stakeholders will work together to protect the soft fruit industry and our environment, with clear and aligned objectives. I am confident we will succeed together", said Sébastien Guéry, Ferdoñana Project Director.

"We have an opportunity to help secure not only the future of Donana national park, but also the livelihoods and jobs of many people connected to soft fruit", said Andy Mitchell, Product Specialist at Marks and Spencer, and co-chair of the Doñana Group of SAI Platform.

Jobien Laurijssen, Sustainability Manager at SVZ, a major berry processor and SAI Platform member highlights the importance of the Doñana project: "It is our common obligation to protect the wonderful and iconic natural park of Doñana, while securing the supply of strawberries and thereby also the safeguarding the future incomes of many people that are dependent on this industry".

About SAI Platform

SAI Platform is the primary food & drink value chain initiative for sustainable agriculture. With over 90 members including leading brands and retailers, SAI Platform develops tools, guidance and projects for the efficient production of safe, high quality agricultural products, in a way that protects and improves the natural environment, the social and economic conditions of farmers, their employees and local communities. The Doñana Berries and Sustainable Water Management Group is a SAI Platform project involving more than 12 members to secure sustainable water management in the Doñana region.

For more information, please contact Sébastien Guéry, Ferdoñana Project Director (director@ferdonana.es), or visit www.ferdonana.es