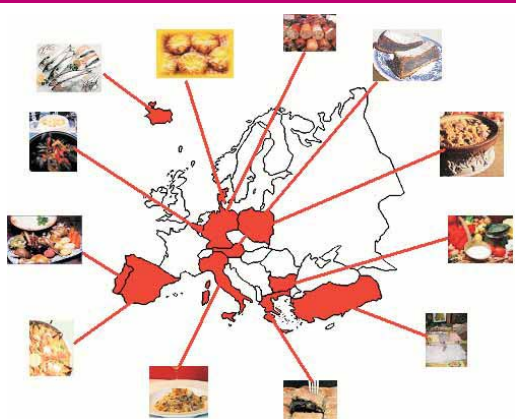


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Whats in your food?

European Food Information Resource Network (EuroFIR)

Food composition databases form the basis by which dietary adequacy is assessed, dietary intake is measured and assessments of risks made to inform policy. They also provide the fundamental information by which dietary intake goals can be established and achievement monitored at a population level. Having data of sufficient quality and in sufficient quantity is essential for all these functions.

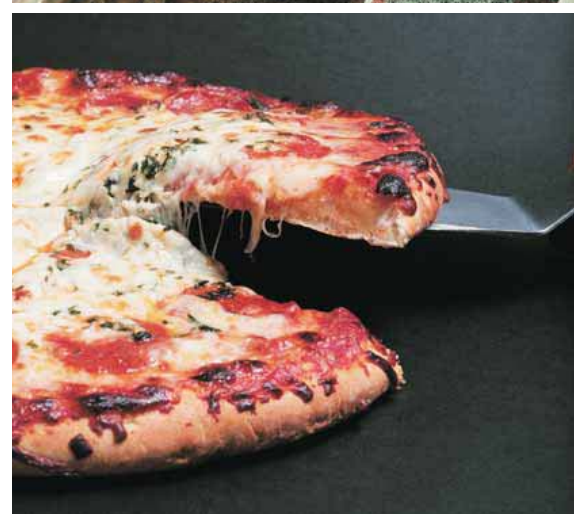
EuroFIR will provide the first comprehensive pan-European food information resource, using state-of-the-art database linking, to allow effective management, updating, extending and comparability. It will also identify and provide new information for missing data for nutrients and non-nutrient bioactive compounds, across all food groups including traditional and ethnic foods. EuroFIR is seeking views with all user and stakeholder groups, in order to establish and deliver their requirements for sustainable food databank systems.

EuroFIR will establish permanent structures to maximise the scientific contribution of Europe in this area; create a clear link between the national compilers and needs of the various users and stakeholders; accelerate the application of research results to policy and health developments, as well as develop partnerships with the private sector.

This project is funded under the EU 6th Framework Food Quality and Safety Programme (FOOD-CT-2005-51394)

www.eurofir.net

www.ifr.ac.uk



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EuroFIR Bioactive Databank Systems

It is increasingly recognised that biologically active substances in plants have proven or potential beneficial effects on health. Evidence is growing that these constituents may help reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as cancer, coronary heart disease, stroke and Alzheimer's disease. There are various classes of phytochemicals found naturally in foods, for example flavonoids (e.g. isoflavones from legumes, flavonols such as quercetin from fruit and vegetables, flavan-3-ols such as the catechins in tea, and anthocyanins in berries), glucosinolates from brassica vegetables, phenolic acids in tea and coffee, and carotenoids (vitamin A precursors) prevalent in red, green and orange fruits and vegetables.

Information about food sources and concentrations of these bioactives is not always easy to find and data are often inconsistent and incomplete, but the need for this data is becoming more important to researchers and the food industry. To ensure this information is easily accessible, relevant and usable across Europe, EuroFIR is building on previous EU work to pull together a reliable and valid database of foods detailing the type and quantity of classes of bioactives, including flavonoids, isoflavones, carotenoids, phenolic acids, lignans and phytosterols. A unique feature will be the combination of compositional data with information on biological effect.

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