

## Successful final conference in the European Parliament for the AgroFE project

Preceding Agrof-MM, the European AgroFE project - Agroforestry Education in Europe – held its final conference on the 9th of December 2015 in the European Parliament. Titled “Education in agroforestry: building today’s and tomorrow’s agriculture” and organised by the partners of the project in collaboration with the Brussels based agency, AliénorEU, the event brought together over 60 people: European policy makers, national and regional representations, research centers, universities, NGOs and businesses.

“It is essential to have the support of European policy makers in order to give a boost to the education in agroforestry of the agricultural stakeholders. A pilot project or any other EU initiative would make durable the efforts already made in this area and would allow to cover all European countries,” said Charles Burriel - Professor at AgroSup-Eduter Dijon -.

Chaired by Ricardo Serrão Santos, Member of the European Parliament (MEP), the conference shed light on the promising results of AgroFE. As recalled by Stephen Briggs, agroforester and founder of ABACUS, "further development in agroforestry requires adequate skills and skills development require training." This is the reason why, the AgroFE project established a training system adapted to the six countries concerned and integrated in the existing or new courses. Farmers and future farmers, students, advisors and tutors in France, Belgium, UK, Hungary, Czech Republic and Romania benefited from classrooms, workshops, field visits, on-line multi-country lectures as well as a wide range of multimedia tools allowing them to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge on agroforestry. A major achievement of the AgroFE project was the establishment of a book of professional reference for agroforestry practitioners that outlines the activities that those people should be able to perform. Another important step in France was the integration of agroforestry in the official training programs.

"Targeted education makes the link between the scientific and the agricultural world," said Mr. Serrão Santos. As recalled by Rosa Mosquera - President of the European Agroforestry Federation-, this is even more important for an innovative and sustainable agricultural production system whose economic and environmental benefits are well proven but which is not extensively used by European farmers. “Agroforestry is one of the solutions to fight climate change”, concluded MEP Paul Brannen.

### Project coordinators

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