

SU-EATABLE LIFE KICK-OFF: THE PROJECT THAT PROMOTES SUSTAINABLE PLANET-SAVING DIETS IN COMPANY AND UNIVERSITY CANTEENS, IN ITALY AND IN THE UK

- *Our food systems account for up to 37%¹ of global greenhouse gas emissions, and are intensive in terms of water consumption*
- *Following the UK, the experimental phase of the SU-EATABLE LIFE EU-project is now starting also in Italy. Four companies and three universities in Italy and in the UK will promote healthy and sustainable menus to reduce CO₂ emissions and water use connected to food production and consumption*
- *As this challenge requires everyone to change their dietary habits, SU-EATABLE LIFE provides 8 practical tips that each one of us can follow at home to benefit our health and the health of the Planet.*

Rome, Feb 13th - **2,200 people involved** daily on average in Italy (3,150 in total including those in the UK). **Four companies and three universities** in Italy and the UK. A twofold objective: **to save around 5,300 tons of CO₂ equivalent and around 2 million cubic meters of water over 3 years**, promoting healthy and sustainable menus in company and university canteens. These are the ingredients of the SU-EATABLE LIFE EU-project, the experimental phase of which starts in Italy today. The Barilla Foundation is leading the project, with the participation of other partners: [greenApes](#), the Benefit Corporation providing the digital platform to engage canteen users, [Wageningen University](#), responsible for scientific data analysis along with Barilla Foundation, and the [Sustainable Restaurant Association](#), supporting the development of the initiative in the UK. Following the launch in UK canteens in January (involving City University of London, University of Worcester, and two company canteens operated by catering companies Artizian and Fooditude), it's now Italy's turn, where SU-EATABLE LIFE will be launched in the canteens of the University of Parma, Barilla Group (Novara plant) and Ducati Motor Holding. Operationally, the project will involve the contribution of catering companies Felsinea Ristorazione and Camst Group – Catering and facility management company, and the participation of ER.GO (Emilia-Romagna Regional Authority for the Right to Higher Education).

“Our food systems, the dietary choices we make every day and - even before that - the way we produce food, are moving us away from the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda. While globally more than 820 million people still do not have enough food, almost the same amount suffer from obesity and health problems connected with a wrong diet. Food systems account for up to around 37% of global greenhouse gas emissions and for an average of 70%² of the fresh water consumed. Not to mention that every year we waste a third of the global food production. By adopting a sustainable diet every day, we can benefit our health and the health of our Planet. SU-EATABLE LIFE aims to achieve this goal. The experimental phase has kicked off today in Italian university and company canteens, where we will promote sustainable menus, educational activities, plus the use of a dedicated digital platform to engage users, with the aim of reducing the carbon and water footprint connected with people's daily diet”, explains the project coordinator **Prof. Riccardo Valentini**.

SU-EATABLE LIFE aims to inspire EU citizens to adopt healthy and sustainable diets every day. A healthy and sustainable diet is based on complete and balanced meals (in nutritional terms), with a prevalence of plant-based products (vegetables, pulses and fruit) and cereals (e.g. spelt, barley, rice), or their derivatives (e.g. pasta, bread, couscous, polenta), preferably wholegrain, preferring seasonal raw materials.

In a healthy and sustainable diet, no nutritional source is completely eliminated, instead they are balanced throughout the week by limiting the frequency of the ingredients, such as red meat, which are less beneficial for the health and the environment, in favor of more sustainable ones such as pulses, fish and poultry.

¹ IPCC Report, August 2019, “Land and Climate Change”

² Data: FAO website, <http://www.fao.org/aquastat/en/overview/methodology/water-use>

SU-EATABLE LIFE, FROM THE TRIAL PHASE TO THE APP REWARDING VIRTUOUS BEHAVIOR

The aim of SU-EATABLE LIFE experimental phase is threefold: **increase awareness** among canteen users of the benefits of adopting a healthy and sustainable diet; assess the efficacy of different types of intervention aimed at **encouraging the adoption of healthy and sustainable diets, measuring their effects** in terms of carbon and water footprint reduction; provide recommendations to **improve the supply of food** in canteens.

The experimental phase will last 7 months and will be articulated in **3 areas of action**:

- a. the introduction of **educational materials** (posters, banners, etc.) and thematic campaigns to promote the adoption of a healthy and sustainable diet by canteen users;
- b. strengthening the supply of healthy and sustainable food in canteens through the daily promotion of a series of dishes marked as optimal from the nutritional and environmental point of view (**My Plate 4 the Future - MP4F**). The dishes served by the participating canteens will be associated with an indication of environmental impact, to make it easier for users to choose among them. In particular, the dishes with the “My Plate 4 the Future” logo will be those that, according to the SU-EATABLE LIFE project indications, generate between 0.80 and 1,0 kg of CO₂ equivalent per meal (**carbon footprint**) and that require less water to be produced (**water footprint**);
- c. actively involving people via the **greenApes digital platform and the use of reward mechanisms**. The objective is to encourage users to adopt a sustainable diet thanks to the informational and educational contents provided, individual and group challenges and activities, and rewards to be won for choosing sustainable “My Plate 4 the Future” dishes in canteens.

EIGHT TIPS FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY DIET

The SU-EATABLE LIFE project aims not only to promote the adoption of a more sustainable diet by canteen users, but also to achieve an overall improvement in people’s dietary habits. For this reason, SU-EATABLE LIFE has come up with eight tips to improve people's health and ensure they are less of a “burden” on the Planet through healthy and sustainable food choices:

1. Eat vegetables, fresh and dried fruit, pulses and whole grains.
2. Choose seasonal ingredients, local or traditional varieties.
3. Favor fresh and minimally processed food in your diet.
4. Drink lots of tap water and don't waste it.
5. Reduce packaging and disposables, reuse, recycle.
6. Reduce your consumption of meat, especially red and processed meats.
7. Moderate the quantity of dairy products.
8. Avoid food waste by considering your portion size.

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